



Escola de Sociologia e Políticas Públicas

Yugoslavia: From Wars to European integration  
Perspectives from university students in Bosnia and Herzegovina,  
Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo

Ricardo Alexandre Encarnação Sousa

Tese especialmente elaborada para obtenção do grau de  
Doutor em Ciência Política – Especialização em Relações Internacionais

Orientador:  
Doutor Luís Nuno Rodrigues, Professor Associado,  
ISCTE-IUL

Co-orientador:  
Doutor José Manuel Pureza, Professor Catedrático,  
Faculdade de Economia, Universidade de Coimbra

Novembro, 2016

Yugoslavia: From Wars to European integration  
Perspectives from university students in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo  
Ricardo Alexandre Encarnação Sousa

Novembro  
2016

## **Abstract**

Quais as condições para a reconciliação em sociedades pós-conflito? Esta foi a pergunta central de partida que orientou a investigação, que incide sobre a antiga Jugoslávia, em particular sobre os territórios das três maiores antigas repúblicas: Bósnia-Herzegovina, Croácia, Sérvia, acrescentando o Kosovo, pelas especificidades que encerra.

Partindo de uma hipótese geral: a concretização de um conjunto de condições políticas, sociais e económicas permitirá um convívio mais tolerante e pacífico entre os povos da antiga Jugoslávia, foram considerados e definidos os objetivos principais da pesquisa: a compreensão da forma como a educação – o sistema educativo dos vários países e entidades constituintes – contribuiu ou não, após as guerras, para a reconciliação entre as várias nações e povos da região; as perspetivas de integração europeia como motor, ou não, de pacificação da região; o papel do discurso do ódio formulado nos media e na cultura e formas de o superar.

Através de uma investigação que se cruza com a actividade profissional do autor – jornalista com vasta experiência na cobertura da região – e utilizando uma combinação de métodos qualitativos e quantitativos (um inquérito que foi respondido por mais de 270 estudantes dos países em estudo), esta dissertação pretende trazer novas pistas para a abordagem dos fenómenos nacionalistas e perspetivas de reconstrução de sociedades pós-conflito, considerando as perspetivas dos estudantes que responderam ao inquérito e apontando um conjunto de condições que se devem verificar para que seja atingido aquilo que esta dissertação definirá como “reconcivication”, uma reconciliação cívica das nações.

## **Abstract**

What are the conditions for meaningful reconciliation in post-conflict societies? This was the departure research question for this research project focusing on the former Yugoslavia, in particular on the territories of the three largest former republics: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, and Kosovo, due to the latter's respective specificities.

Starting out from a general hypothesis: the fulfilment of a set of political, social and economic conditions fosters and enables tolerant and peaceful coexistence among the peoples of the former Yugoslavia, this then shaped and thus defined the main research objectives: understanding the way in which the post-war educational systems have or have not contributed to reconciliation between the various nations and peoples of the region; the prospects of European integration as an engine for pacification; the role of *hate speech* formulated in the media and culture and as well as the means of overcoming it.

Through research that interweaves with the professional activity of the author – a journalist with extensive experience in coverage of the region – and deploying a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (a survey answered by over 270 students from the countries under study), this dissertation strives to provide new clues for approaching nationalist phenomena and perspectives (taking into account the responses of students to the survey this thesis put forward) on reconstructing post-conflict societies and furthermore identifying a set of conditions that must first be verified before ever achieving what this dissertation defines as reconcivication, a civic reconciliation of nations.

**Keywords:** Nationalism, reconciliation, post-conflict, Balkans, Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo.

### **Acknowledgments:**

I am endlessly thankful to my supervisor Luís Nuno Rodrigues and co-supervisor José Manuel Pureza, as well as my prior supervisor Alexandra Magnólia Dias, for all the advice, guidance, windows openings and inspiration. Also always inspirational and a remarkable source of knowledge is my friend José Cutileiro, with whom I have been learning about the Balkans and the world for more than twelve years. The passion for studying national identities came with the eternal friendship of João Nuno Coelho (the oldest member of our Santíssima Trindade, right Nuno Olaio? This is also for you). Pedro Pinheiro was a rather present ‘godfather’ along the way, visiting me while in New York and showing interest and concern for this study, besides our common longing for Bosnia 1996, when I started this Balkans “passion” and met lots of women and men, military and police, foreigners and local civilians, with whom I’ve learnt about the most noble feelings and doings, and about the complete opposite.

I am also very grateful to the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, namely Elisabete Caramelo and Prof. Eduardo Marçal Grilo, whose support enabled me to join the outstanding Transatlantic Leadership Initiative organized by the German Marshall Fund of the United States in the Balkans in 2013, under the guidance of an important reference to this work and my ideas about Yugoslavia: Ivan Vejvoda, former GMF’s Vice-President and the mentor of the Balkan Trust for Democracy. That trip would also not have been possible without the further help of European MP Ana Gomes. I’m also grateful to FLAD (Fundação Luso-Americana para o Desenvolvimento), especially to Vasco Rato, whose support and advice were instrumental to my staying in New York as Visiting Scholar at Columbia University, for which I am in endless gratitude to one of the best historians about Greece and the Balkans, professor Mark Mazower. While there, I was blessed by the hospitality and enthusiastic support of Tanya L. Domi and others at the Harriman Institute, and had the chance to get in touch with extraordinary scholars, such as Severine Autesserre, who introduced me to Elisabeth King, an important reference along this dissertation. Also fundamental were Djana Jelaca, Susan L. Woodward, Laura Silber, Kurt Bassuener, Robert Donia, Jenifer Trahan, Ariella Lang and André Corrêa D’Almeida, as well as friends in New York (Inês, João, Paula, Miguel, Ana). I would like also to mention all my friends in the Balkans or from the Balkans (Emilija, Ana K., Maja, Boris, Igor, Jelena, Indira, among others) and professors Ana Belchior, Andre Freire, José Manuel Viegas and Paulo Pedroso at ISCTE, my doctorate colleagues Tiago Tibúrcio, Alexandre Sousa Carvalho, André Pinto and Diogo Rolo Noivo; all my friends, colleagues and directors at RTP and Antena1. The English revision of this text was a tremendous work by Kevin Rose. As I’m very far from considering myself a fluent Serbo-Croatian speaker, I’m especially thankful to all the patience and teachings of

Anamarija Marinovic.

Last but not least because they are always the first in my thoughts, my family and especially my parents Olivério and Marília, my brother Pedro and his/our family; my wife Sofia and her/our family and the most incredible sons in the world, Gonçalo and Pedro: you two are the best achievements in my life, not what you are about to read, may have read or ever may read, see or hear from this one... who really enjoys being alive.

In Memoriam:

To Stevan Nikšić, a great friend from Belgrade, a Yugoslav, one of the best journalists I have ever met.

## INDEX

INTRODUCTION	11
i. Central research question	12
ii. Conceptualization of research	14
iii. Delimitation of the object of study and its historical-political framework	16
iv. Methodological issues related to the research context	18
v. Target-group and a combined methodology	19
vi. Structure of the dissertation	22
CHAPTER I - THEORETICAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	
1.1. Qualitative primacy and the combined methodology strategy	23
1.2. Comparative method guided by cases in International Relations	24
1.3. Criteria for case studies	25
1.4. Role of the researcher and complementary roles	28
1.5. Researching in divided societies	29
1.6. Ethical challenges to a journalist-researcher	30
1.7. Interviews	31
1.8. Documental and archive research	33
1.9. Survey: guidelines and objectives	34
1.10. Representative and purposive samples	36
CHAPTER II – AN EXTENSIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE STATE OF THE ART	
2.1. Historical sociology and nationalism theories	39
2.2. Ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism	45
2.3. Banal nationalism and militant nationalism	48
2.4. Nationalism and economic development	50
2.5. Politicization of culture and purification of the community	52
2.6. Intellectual elites and nationalism	55
2.7. Media and nationalism: communication, manipulation, action	57
2.8. Cinema and nationalism	60
2.9. Gender and Nationalism	78
2.10. Youth, music and nationalism	90
2.11. Sports: hooliganism and nationalism	96
2.12. Current debates on nationalism and cosmopolitanism	104
2.13. Current scholarly debates about the Balkans	122

### CHAPTER III - FROM DISINTEGRATION TO EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

3.1. Introduction	147
3.2. Systemic constraints and the failed case for endemic violence	150
3.3. European identity and integration as a common goal	172
3.4. Europe: From dream to nightmare (approach to the European crisis)	179
3.5. The EU enlargement policy and challenges ahead	182
3.6 Prospects for a new generation	183

### CHAPTER IV – FROM THE EU’S NEWEST MEMBER-STATE TO THE CLUB OF DREAMERS - CROATIA, BOSNIA, SERBIA AND KOSOVO.

4.1. Politics, economics and European integration	187
4.2. Minorities and human rights	196
4.3. Kosovo: the new country in the Balkans	201
4.4. Rule of law, judiciary and cooperation with the ICTY	205
4.5. Hate speech and reconciliation	219
4.6. Civil society	231
4.7. The media sector	241
4.8. The church	253
4.9. Religion and the European call for Jihad	257

### CHAPTER V – EDUCATION IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES - FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTIONS

5.1. Introduction	261
5.2. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo	264
5.3. An international approach	275
5.4. Religious, citizenship, anti-racist education: state of the art	277
5.5. Education in the Balkans: time to move forward - innovative approaches	283
5.6. Conclusions	288

### CHAPTER VI – YOUTH AND THE FUTURE OF BALKANS

6.1. The new battles of the peace born generation	291
6.2. Results and analysis of the survey: youth, Balkans and the world	296



6.3. Youth, Europe and Euro-scepticism	304
6.4. Cultural cosmopolitanism and supranational identities in post-Yugoslav space	306
6.5. Towards a transnational civic culture and practice of peace	310
CHAPTER VII – CONCLUSIONS	
Modest contributions to reconciliation in post-conflict societies	313
REFERENCES	337
ANNEXES	
Annex A - Youth, Balkans and the World - Survey 2014-2015 Global Results	347
Annex B – List of interviews under this dissertation.	367
Annex C - Interviews from book “Por Uma Vida Normal”	370
Annex D – Tables	373
Annex E – Maps	375
Annex F - Films	387

## **ACRONYMS**

BAA Brussels April Agreement between Serbia and Kosovo

BBC British Broadcasting Corporation

BCHR Belgrade Center for Human Rights

BiH Bosnia and Herzegovina

BIRN Balkan Investigative Reporting Network

CDU Christian Democratic Union of Germany

CNN Cable News Network

CoE Council of Europe

CSCE Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

CSO Civil Society Organizations

CSU Christian Social Union, Bavaria, Germany

DPA Dayton Peace Accords (or Dayton Peace Agreement)

EBRD European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EC European Commission

ECHR European Court of Human Rights

EIGE European institute for Gender Equality

EMU Education for Mutual Understanding

EP European Parliament

EU European Union

EUFOR European Union Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina

EULEX EU Rule of Law Mission

FBiH Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

FDI Foreign Direct Investment

FIFA – Federation International of Football Association

FYROM Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

GDP Gross Domestic Product

HDZ Croatian Democratic Union

HNS Croatian People Party

HRT Croatian Television

HSLs Croatian Social Liberal Party

HSP Croatian Party of Right

HRW Human Rights Watch

HVO Croatian Army

ICJ International Court of Justice

ICTY International Criminal Tribunal of the Former Yugoslavia

IDP Internally Displaced Persons  
ILO International Labour Organization  
IMF International Monetary Fund  
ISCTE – IUL – University Institute of Lisbon  
ITP Integrative Theory of Peace  
JCE Joint Criminal Enterprises  
JNA Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija (Yugoslav National Army)  
JUL Yugoslavia United Left  
KCF Kosovo Curriculum Framework  
KDP Kosovo Democratic Party  
KFOR NATO Force in Kosovo  
KLA Kosovo Liberation Army  
LCY Yugoslav Communist League  
LIBE European Parliament Committee on Civil liberties, Justice and Home Affairs  
LGBT Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual  
LGBTQ Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual Queer  
MFA Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
MICT Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals  
MP Members of Parliament  
MSF Médecins Sans Frontier (Doctors Without Border)  
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization  
NCFM New Composed Folk Music  
NDC Nansen Dialogue Center  
NDS New Democratic Party  
NGO Non-governmental Organization  
NSK New Slovenian Art  
ODIHR Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
OHR Office of the High Representative  
OSCE Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
OTPOR – Resistance Youth Movement in Serbia  
PO Participant Observation  
PTSD Post Traumatic Stress Disorder  
REKOM Regional commission for the establishment of facts about war crimes  
RRPP Regional Research  
RS Republika Srpska

RTK Radio Television Kosovo  
RTS Radio Television Serbia  
SAA Stabilization and Association Agreement  
SANU Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts  
SDA Party of Democratic Action in BIH  
SDP Social Democratic Party  
SDS Serbian Democratic Party in BIH  
SEE South Eastern Europe  
SFOR Stabilisation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina  
SFRY Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia  
SLS Serb Liberal Party  
SNS Progressive Party of Serbia  
SNSD Alliance of Independent Social Democrats  
SPO Serbian Renewal Movement  
SPS Socialist party of Serbia  
SRS Serbian Radical Party  
TACSO Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organizations  
TDF Territorial Defense Forces  
UÇK (Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës), Albanian word for KLA  
UÇPMB Liberation Army of Preševo, Medveđa and Bujanovac  
UK United Kingdom  
UN United Nations  
UNDP United Nations Development Programme  
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund  
UMCOR United Methodist Committee on Relief  
UNMIK UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo  
UNSC United Nations Security Council  
URS United Regions of Serbia  
USAID United States Agency for International Development  
USSR Union of Socialist Soviet Republics  
WB World Bank  
YPA Yugoslav Popular Army, English for JNA Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija  
YUTEL Yugoslavia Television.

## INTRODUCTION

Does a doctoral thesis always imply the need to bring light, distinct roads of knowledge, something new to science? Hopefully, yes. In every circumstance, context and situation? Very likely. Would that not depend on the perspective, on the chosen approach, on the existing state-of-the-art about the field under research, namely in the community where the researcher comes from? Probably.

First of all, as the author, I would like to set out the personal historical context to the subject of this research. For the past twenty years, ever since 1996, I have been engaged in “observation” in the region of the former Yugoslavia, primarily as a journalist. A type of observation one might define as participant while observer according to the formulation advocated by Gould<sup>1</sup>.

In 2002, I completed my Master’s Degree dissertation on national identities and ethnic conflict: the contribution of the media and intellectual elites in the formation of the new Balkan nationalisms reflecting on the (im)possibility of interethnic reconciliation.

That work was not submitted for publication as it remains the author's intention to deepen the research, develop it and reach further to focus on the analysis of trends, identify the conditions necessary to overcoming hate speech and ensuring the different ethnicities are able to get along peacefully in countries defined by their multi-ethnic character. However, throughout this, taking into account, as Albrecht Schnabel puts it, that academic investigations will rarely “result in an improvement of the situation for those being studied” (Smyth, 2001: 193). Nevertheless, trained in Journalism, Sociology and Political Science, I believe I can still bring – and it is certainly the sole richness of this work - an interdisciplinary perspective to this study that may prove important to a better understanding of this rather complex reality.

However, even though the odds are slim that the research results may directly or indirectly influence more “effective and just policies on the part of those who can make a difference” in the reconstruction of devastated societies, retaining this as a goal “is extremely important” (2001: 193).

In the first chapter, I explain the essential purpose of the present research developed as the doctoral dissertation for the Political Science and International Relations Program at ISCTE-IUL, which I joined back in 2011-2012. The main research question and its context are set out, as well as the object of this research, before providing the theoretical view regarding the problems dominating the empirical research and the respective methodological approach.

---

<sup>1</sup> Gould, Roles, (1958). “Sociological field observations”, *Social Forces*, 36, pp. 217-223.

Having put forward the main research objectives and explaining the options for the fieldwork developed, the options taken in the literature review will become clearer to the reader alongside the core structures constituting the theoretical framework: the theories of nationalism and nation-building, as well as the increasingly important fields of peace studies and education for peace.

### **i. Central research question**

Just which conditions require fulfilling in order to achieve reconciliation in the Former Yugoslav republics or post-Yugoslav space? This forms not only the central research question but also the thread guiding this research towards the contributions it may eventually and hopefully raise. Is interethnic reconciliation really possible in the former Yugoslavia? What are the perspectives of university students regarding this issue? And to what extent does the fact that the so-called international community perceives, in a categorical manner, the conflicts in the Balkans - and also in other parts of the world - as ethnic conflicts contribute towards exacerbating differences between local communities? This may often serve to hide the true reasons for those conflicts: power struggles, the particular interests of the individuals leading the nations and the international context and its impact on the local and regional levels? As Susan Woodward puts it (1995: 3), the “conventional wisdom, which emerged rapidly after war broke up in 1991, is that the war resulted from peculiarly Balkan hatreds or Serbian aggression”. Markovic (Turan, 2002: 99), perceives the conflict as a civil war, something that most Sarajevans would be far from accepting, instead calling it aggression, and states: “It’s not true that the whole Serbian nation are war criminals—you can’t blame the whole nation for the people who made this war,” adding that “there were very, very brave people in Belgrade who were against this war. This simplification is very painful to me; I don’t like this primitive view that Serbs are Indians, the Muslims are cowboys. It’s a very complicated situation”.

In fact, despite all aggressions, the Yugoslav conflict is inseparable from international change and interdependence, and it is not confined to the Balkans but is part of a more widespread phenomenon of political disintegration” of governmental authority and the “breakdown of the political and civil order” (Woodward, 1995: 15).

There is no proven scientific link between any idea of inexorability of conflict and wars and ethnic differences or even rivalries. In countries such as the USA or the UK, ethnic differences are valued for enhancing the quality of life through variety and creative tensions, even though ethnic conflicts do also clearly arise, such as the events in Baltimore in 2015 and in Dallas in 2016. It also remains true that “tensions along ethnic, racial, or historical fault

lines can lead to civil violence, but to explain the Yugoslav crisis as a result of ethnic hatred is to turn the story upside down and begin at its end” (1995: 18).

This thesis aims to contribute to the debate around reconciliation in post-conflict societies through arguing that whenever societies attain certain social, political and economic conditions, reconciliation is not only possible but indeed probable; and, simultaneously, refuting the inevitability of ethnic wars when understood as a consequence of alleged idiosyncratic qualities or characteristics or some innate identity of the communities involved.

This research also takes into account the perspectives of university students in the cases studied as well as prospects of European integration as a common goal to the Former Yugoslav republics. The role of international actors is unquestionably important as a fundamental motor of peace and development in the region and without ever overlooking their mistakes and failures as well as their responsibility in the collapse of the country once called... Yugoslavia.

With Slovenia an EU member state since 2005 and Croatia since 2013, all the other countries emerging from Yugoslavia now eagerly seek European integration, which is the main political goal of the respective governments, from the accession of Serbia, whose application for membership has been accepted, to Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia, whose accession processes are at more incipient stages. However, the dragging on of these processes over time and the international economic crisis since 2008 brought about the development of far-right, populist and leftist critiques of European integration. Something new happened. Critical voices starring a generation that is “not ex-Yugoslav but post, who strictly speaking did not live in the former socialist federation and although sometimes idealize this disappeared state, accept as normal the republics which succeeded” it. Because this is generation was not mobilized for war, it “is also post-nationalist. Thus, the argument tells little of European integration as a means to overcome conflicts between Balkan countries, having the contacts with the other republics back to being natural” (Dérens, 2012: 30).

How to overcome hate speech in post-conflict societies? This represents an important and complementary question that runs in parallel to the central research question.

This thesis correspondingly follows the OSCE<sup>2</sup> definition for hate speech as the “expression of hatred against a certain group. It is used to insult a person on the account of that person’s race, ethnic, religious or other group to which he/she belongs. Such speech generally seeks to condemn or dehumanize the individual or the group or to express anger, hatred, violence or contempt towards them. It brings the message of inferiority of the

---

<sup>2</sup> The OSCE is the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

members to the concerned group and condemns, humiliates and is abundant in hatred”<sup>3</sup>.

In similar definitions, the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers”<sup>4</sup> defined “hate speech” as follows: “All forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin.” This means that the concept of “hate speech” encompasses situations such as “incitement of racial hatred or in other words, hatred directed against persons or groups of persons on the grounds of belonging to a race; - incitement to hatred on religious grounds, to which may be equated incitement to hatred on the basis of a distinction between believers and non-believers; - incitement to other forms of hatred based on intolerance “expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism”. Homophobic speech also “falls into what can be considered as a category of hate speech”<sup>5</sup>.

## **ii. Conceptualization of research**

From what is known about some object or domain of knowledge, which the theoretical considerations stem from, the researcher “deduces the hypothesis that must be then subjected to empirical scrutiny. Embedded within the hypothesis will be concepts that will need to be translated into researchable entities” (Bryman, 2001: 8)<sup>6</sup>, with this also requiring specification as to research data can be “collected in relation to the concepts that make up the hypothesis”. In a research as the current aimed to be, the empirical scrutiny can be provided through case comparisons, survey results and the researcher’s own knowledge and experience about the object of study. Therefore, cases will be analysed through countries comparisons and variables considered, namely – as working hypothesis – the influential role of the education system and hate speech through media and intellectual elites in fostering and reproducing nationalism and its wide range of stereotyping resources.

Should the findings resulting from the data collected somehow confirm or reject the theoretical approach developed, one then proceeds to revise the theory, culminating in a process of deduction, which constitutes a widespread practice in the relationship between the

---

<sup>3</sup> Mihailova, Elena, Bacovska, Jana and Shekerdijev, Tome (2013), “Freedom of expression and hate speech”, OSCE, Skopje, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Recommendation 97(20) of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers. Available from [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/hrpolicy/other\\_committees/dh-lgbt\\_docs/CM\\_Rec\(97\)20\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/hrpolicy/other_committees/dh-lgbt_docs/CM_Rec(97)20_en.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Weber, Anne, “Manual of Hate Speech”, 2009. Council of Europe Publishing, France, p.3. Available from: [http://coe.int/t/dghl/cooperation/media/Meetings/Hate\\_Speech\\_Background\\_Paper.pdf](http://coe.int/t/dghl/cooperation/media/Meetings/Hate_Speech_Background_Paper.pdf). Accessed in 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Bryman, Alan, *Social Research Methods*, Oxford University Press, 2001.



theory and the actual social research. Nevertheless, this author would not propose this as always forming some rather linear process as our views on any domain of study may change following the review of the theory and as well as from the collection of new data or simply because of the occurrence of this or that event related to the domain of study contributing to changing our knowledge and ideas about it. Moreover, as Bryman puts it, “new theoretical ideas or findings may be published by others before the researcher has generated his or her findings” (Bryman, 2001: 10). This may easily happen whenever a thesis approaches social changes and political processes ongoing in contemporary societies as is indeed the case with the research leading to the current dissertation. It is this author’s deep conviction that the process of researching does not simply get dictated by theoretical inputs or concerns; there may be motivations related to pressing social problems, and the research may also approach a topic deriving from a long lasting parallel professional experience as is the case here.

This study analyses a specific problem and an object of study: the necessary conditions for reconciliation among peoples and for overcoming hate speech in post-conflict societies. Where? In the former Yugoslavia and, in particular, focusing on the territories of the three largest once republics: Serbia (plus the newly independent – unilaterally declared – state of Kosovo, currently embracing a process of international recognition, which, at the time of writing, has yet to be granted by five European Union countries as well as by Serbia itself), Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also have a general hypothesis: the achievement of a set of political, social and economic transformations will nurture the conditions necessary to overcoming hate speech, paving the way for a tolerant and peaceful coexistence among the peoples of the former Yugoslavia. Hopefully, the evaluation of the social research developed here brings about its “reliability, replicability and validity” (Bryman, 2001: 29).

Moreover, this study aims to understand the nationalist political discourses, particularly those produced by intellectual elites and media, as sources of ethnic conflict, understanding how education - the educational systems of those countries and the entities studied – can help to overcome or serve to reinforce conflict, and whether such systems have or have not been playing an important role in reconciliation between the various nations and peoples of the region in the wake of the wars, as well as what can be done to leverage that role<sup>7</sup>. Following Elisabeth King and her research in Rwanda, with whom the author spoke in late May 2015 at New York University, this thesis adopts “a nuanced understanding of education” (King, 2013: 4). In the cases studied, this research will strive to acknowledge education across its potential for playing a dual role in conflict and post-conflict environments: a positive and also a negative face through recognizing the “harmful effects of inequitable distribution of schooling, cultural repression through schooling and

---

<sup>7</sup> Heid Leganger-Krogstad approaches the relationship between pluralistic education, religion and citizenship in Jackson (2003).

propagandistic textbooks that promote intolerance” (King, 2013: 5). This thesis will furthermore take into account the historical facts and their contexts. On the one hand, this thesis perceives the national conflicts in the former Yugoslavia as Brown and Ainley describe them: “as hangovers from an earlier era, actually preserved by communism”. These authors draw a distinction: whereas in the West ethnic divisions were “healed by the need for different groups to cooperate in the political process, in the East, similar divisions were simply covered over by the bandage provided by authoritarian communist rule – take away the bandage and the sores re-emerged, unhealed and festering” (Brown, 2005: 191)<sup>8</sup>. On the other hand, this thesis agrees with the vision of those maintaining that the conflicts in the 1990s in the Balkans region “grew and infected Western alliances because those making policy and shaping public opinion toward Yugoslavia misunderstood the nature and origins of the conflict from the beginning” (Brown, in Bromberger, 2005: 191).

More than twenty years after the so-called international community achieved a peace agreement for Bosnia, seventeen after the armed conflict ended with NATO intervention in Kosovo, “a modus vivendi must be found, which combines independence for the constituent republics of the former Yugoslavia, with a large degree of autonomy for minorities in these newly independent states” (Daalder, 1996: 67). The NATO intervention in 1999 against Milošević's Yugoslavia, the independence of the former Yugoslav republic of Montenegro and the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo in February 2008, prove to be major events that, as we shall see, question the validity of Daalder's statement even if only partially.

### **iii. Delimiting the object of study**

One of the most important challenges to research approaching objects of such complex realities stems from delimiting the object itself; that is to say, setting down limits to what one is in fact studying.

To do research on all the former Yugoslav countries would involve fieldwork on a hardly imaginable scale compounded by the lack of means to set up a research team in the region. Thus, the process of delimitation was an imperative and the fieldwork undertaken in three major countries emerging from Yugoslavia: Serbia (and Kosovo), Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina. These are the largest, most populous and the countries facing the most pressing and complex ethnic issues. Nevertheless, within this complex mosaic that was once a single country, a country's reality can hardly be analyzed and studied without taking into account the

---

<sup>8</sup> Brown, Chris and Ainley, Kirsten, *Understanding International Relations*, Third Edition, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2005.

reality of its neighbours. In fact, delimiting the field of study becomes of enormous difficulty in such a diverse and imbricated reality. Until the early 1990s, Yugoslavia was a federal republic consisting of six republics (Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Slovenia) and two autonomous provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina). All these territories, more than twenty years after the beginning of the former country's disintegration, still face ethnic and national problems although with varying degrees of complexity as well as different levels of capacity to overcome them.

To what extent will Montenegro remain immune to the aspirations of the Albanian minority in Macedonia<sup>9</sup>? What are the cohabitation prospects between the Slavic majority and an Albanian minority that is growing steadily but consistently, and that may envy the *de facto* independence, achieved by their “brothers”, right next door in Kosovo? After the unilateral declaration of independence proclaimed by the Serbian province with an Albanian majority in 2008, Kosovo has already received recognition as an independent country by most states worldwide (but not by Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Romania and Slovakia in the EU) and there is increasing pressure on Belgrade and the Serb community resident north of the river Ibar in Mitrovica to reach an agreement on the final status of Kosovo. To what extent will this allow Serbia to live in stability and ensure effective governance within the premises of the EU accession process?

As the former radical nationalist party, now the Progressive SNS (Srpska Napredna Stranka) consolidates its power (48.25% in the 24th March 2016 parliamentary elections, with Tomislav Niolic<sup>10</sup> as President since 2012 and Aleksandar Vučić as Prime-Minister and the most powerful politician in the country), the European integration process is ongoing as well as talks with Kosovo, sponsored firstly by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Catherine Ashton and afterwards, by her successor, Federica Mogherini.

What kind of influence will the case of Kosovo (and Crimea incidentally) play in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the existence of three constituent nations and two entities (the Federation<sup>11</sup> and the Serb Republic) in addition to a rather complex political and administrative system, makes the dream of an unitary state seem little more than a mirage, a goal rejected by those – the Serb entity - who do not hold the dominant position, demographically speaking?

---

<sup>9</sup>Officially called FYROM, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, due to a historical name dispute with Greece.

<sup>10</sup> Former SRS (Serbian Radical Party, founded by Vojislav Seselji, detained and on trial at the International Crimes Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, ICTY, at The Hague) leader Tomislav Nikolic managed to defeat former Serb president Boris Tadić (with the Democratic Party, DS, fading from the Serbian political landscape with less than 6% in the March 2014 parliamentary elections).

<sup>11</sup> Also known as the Muslim-Croat Federation.

And what about the living conditions of the Serb minority in Croatia and the respect for the rule of law by the Zagreb authorities towards that minority, a point that was slowing down its process of European Union integration, something deeply desired and understood as a national priority by all the Balkan countries emerging from the defunct Yugoslavia?

We could, definitely, add some complex cases to the ones here studied: Slovenia has already been part of a united Europe for quite some time – it was the first country to break away from the Yugoslav federation - but has still not avoided a long border dispute with Croatia, beyond other unresolved issues regarding the way both countries treat their ethnic Roma citizens; there still remains the issue of the Hungarian minority in the northern Serbian province of Vojvodina. And in the south, besides Kosovo, there are also the aspirations of the Muslim population in the Sandzak region and in the Preševo Valley<sup>12</sup>.

To sum up, one would say that the tensions or the potential tensions in such complex and unfinished nation-building processes, are easily identifiable throughout the vast lands of a country once called... Yugoslavia.

The present research, as previously stated, focuses on three countries (Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina), or four, if one considers Kosovo a *de facto* independent country.

#### **iv. Methodological issues related to the research context**

Methodological options are not neutral as methods of social research “are closely tied to different visions of how social reality should be studied” (Bryman, 2001: 4). The ways social scientists “envision the connection between different viewpoints about the nature of social reality”, drive us to the conclusion that methods are more than simply neutral tools. On the other hand, they should not be misunderstood for the merely intellectual convictions, inclinations or values of the researcher.

We have learnt from Émile Durkheim that values represent a form of preconception, and that, at least, we should suspend them whenever conducting research. However, formulating any theoretical framework without taking into account their own values proves extremely difficult for researchers as they encounter the social research process after having already made the initial choice of subject or area of study, formulated the central research question, the methodological options, the research design as well as the techniques applied in data collection.

The intrusion of researcher values also emerges in implementing, analysing and interpreting the data and as well as the conclusions of the social research. Therefore,

---

<sup>12</sup> Available from <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbia-ethnic-albanians-seek-presevo-valley-region>. Published on 03.08.2009. Accessed on 28.12.2014.

researchers must correspondingly find a way to “acknowledge that research cannot be value free but to ensure that there is no untrammelled incursion of values in the research process and to be self-reflective and so exhibit reflexivity about the part played by such factors” (Bryman, 2001, p. 22). An ethically concerned approach to the object of research is, thus, fundamental to analysis and research without, or with only a minimum, being carried out according to one's own values.

#### **v. Target-group and the combined methodology**

After identifying the central research question, the general hypothesis and the main objectives of the field work, this dissertation then focuses part of its research on a specific, target-group population, as aforementioned: university students who were born either in the former Yugoslavia just as that country fell apart or born in countries that were taking their first steps in their sovereign existence in order to ascertain how much past events still affect them, how they relate with minority ethnic “communities”, with the “other”, within and outside the territory in which they live.

Departing from the importance given to this target-group in studies such as Brown (2016), in which Suanne Gibson acknowledges “students as a core” and a “time for change in the higher education discourse of ‘widening participation’ and ‘inclusion’”, as well as Smith (2010) and “the influence of education on conflict and peace building”, methodologically and deductively I believe in the urgency of assessing the situation of young people in this crucial region for Europe, with urgent and complex problems demanding political solutions. In some of these countries, unemployment rates exceed 50% of their active youth population and emigration rates are increasingly rising, especially among the most well qualified young people.

Recent data produced by the Balkan Barometer<sup>13</sup> of the Regional Cooperation Council, in 2015, paint a “stark picture of a set of economies that have not been doing well and are not expected to do much better in the future” (cit. p.13). Nevertheless, there is a “widespread understanding that skills and their acquisition are the answer to securing employment, increasing job security, and improving welfare. This contrasts rather starkly with the mostly weak investments in education and in innovation, which is characteristic of most of the SEE region”. According to this same study, the unemployment rate was 17.3% in Croatia, 17.6% in Serbia, 27.5% in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 30% in Kosovo (cit. p.18). The picture becomes even more dramatic on the analysis of the unemployment rates of people aged between 15 and 24. Even if only available for period to 2012, the figures identify how

---

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.rcc.int/seeds/files/RCC\\_BalkanBarometer2015\\_PublicOpinion\\_FIN\\_forWeb.pdf](http://www.rcc.int/seeds/files/RCC_BalkanBarometer2015_PublicOpinion_FIN_forWeb.pdf). Accessed on 13.03.2016.

43% of young people in Croatia were unemployed, with 51.1% in Serbia, 60.2% in Kosovo and 62.8% in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ibid).

The George Soros Open Democracy published a report in March 2015 and, unsurprisingly, argues that “the causes of brain drain in the region are diverse and numerous”<sup>14</sup>. However, the 2014 International Monetary Fund (IMF) Working Paper<sup>15</sup>, claims that “the migration motives were unique in many respects for the Balkan countries, particularly related to the social and institutional instability surrounding the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. Although not all of the emigrants were in the labour force, the unique impetus behind emigration in the Balkan countries led to a major ‘brain drain’ effect” (measured as a percentage of skilled emigrants out of the total skilled workforce; and the percentage that left their home countries aged 22 or plus). According to the IMF paper, Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced brain drain rates of over 20%, Croatia of over 15% and Serbia of over 10%. As Matthew Collin puts it: “It was a brain drain of enormous, catastrophic proportions. These were the ‘brightest and the best, the young, the educated and the independent-minded” (Collin, 2004: 52).

This constitutes a dramatically stable trend since the wars of disintegration began in the early 1990s and impacting on the lack of responsiveness of these societies to the violations and atrocities committed on its behalf: “the groups in Serbian society most capable of political action - the urban and professional middle class, particularly in Belgrade, and university students - reacted to the sanctions by leaving the country. In the first year of the sanctions, hundreds of thousands were reported to have emigrated” (Woodward, 1995: 294). In addition, as happens in many Western countries, the official unemployment figures often hide the reality of precarious employment.

The rates and trends of unemployment in the region lead us to the conclusion that there is a great need to address the problem of job creation and youth employment. The unemployment rate in Serbia “increased to 19.2 percent in the first quarter of 2015 from 16.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2014”, having “averaged 19.45 percent from 2008 until 2015”<sup>16</sup>. In the newest EU member, Croatia, the unemployment rate “decreased to 15.90 percent in July from 16.10 percent in June of 2015”<sup>17</sup>. The rate remains much higher in

---

<sup>14</sup> Available from <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/bilsana-bibic/brain-drain-in-western-balkans>. Published on 17.03.2015, accessed on 27.08.2015.

<sup>15</sup> Available from <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2014/wp1416.pdf>. Accessed on 27.08.2015.

<sup>16</sup> Available from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/serbia/unemployment-rate>. Accessed on 28.08.2015.

<sup>17</sup> Available from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/croatia/unemployment-rate>. Accessed on 28.08.2015.

Kosovo, “35.30 percent in 2014 from 30 percent in 2013”<sup>18</sup> and still even worse in Bosnia Herzegovina, 43 percent<sup>19</sup>.

This research, through a survey unfolded in the project’s methodological section<sup>20</sup>, focuses on university students (born after 1991 when the former Yugoslavia started to disintegrate) in Serbia (including Kosovo), Bosnia Herzegovina and Croatia, in order to assess their perceptions about the situation in which they live, their aspirations, goals, likes, dislikes and ideas, especially about the country they belong to and about their neighbouring countries and 'communities'<sup>21</sup>.

This type of combined methodological approach – the survey, on the quantitative side and the interviews, observation notes and documental research, on the qualitative side - does not seek to erase or even reduce the space and profile of attributed to qualitative analysis in the social sciences and specifically in International Relations. As Bryman says, one should not exaggerate the differences that do nevertheless exist between quantitative and qualitative research, because “the connections between epistemology and ontology, on the one hand, and research methods, on the other, are not deterministic; qualitative research sometimes exhibits features normally associated with a natural science model; quantitative research aims on occasions to engage with an interpretivist stance” (Bryman, 2001: 440). It is therefore quite natural that “a quantitative research approach can be employed for the analysis of the qualitative studies and qualitative research approach can be employed to examine the rhetoric of quantitative researchers” (2001: 440).

In conclusion, this research follows the line adopted by those qualitative researchers that employ some degree of quantification in their work. Certainly, one must bear in mind that this multi-strategy research does not constitute any sort of panacea, and whereas such approaches may help us to better understand a phenomenon than simply applying a single method, and thus improving confidence in our findings, the strategy also displays “similar constraints and considerations as research relying on a single method or research strategy” (Bryman, 2001: 456). The observations made during fieldwork, interviews and document research therefore play a leading role regarding the methodology of this research. However, this form of multiple approach, combined in terms of methods and techniques, seeks to deepen knowledge about the phenomena and to reach beyond the study produced empirical data in order to answer the central research question. To sum up, the author agrees that the

---

<sup>18</sup> Available from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/kosovo/unemployment-rate>. Accessed on 28.08.2015.

<sup>19</sup> Available from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/bosnia-and-herzegovina/unemployment-rate>. Accessed on 28.08.2015.

<sup>20</sup> Based on a survey carried out among university students from Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Croatia through contacts previously established by the author with scholars and researchers from those countries.

<sup>21</sup> Ethnic groups.

practice of social research should not be considered as if “in a bubble, hermetically sealed off from the social sciences and the various intellectual allegiances that their practitioners hold” (Bryman, 2001: 4).

## **vi. Structure of the dissertation**

The theoretical and methodological approaches are set out in the first chapter of this research, emphasizing the case-oriented comparative method and the techniques that the research deploys. In the second chapter, the revision of the literature takes us through not only the state of the art in the theories of nationalism and historical sociology but also through the most current trends in the new humanitarianism and peace studies as well as gender and feminist studies as the role of women in post-conflict reconciliation processes has been overwhelmingly underestimated, something this research also aims to revert.

From the third to the sixth chapters, this research reflects over the main historical facts and processes that led the former Yugoslavia to disintegrate as well as the present events and trends and European integration processes in each of the cases studied. The research pays attention to specific, but here understood as crucial, dimensions to the current situation in Western Balkan societies: the judiciary and rule of law, cooperation with the international war crimes tribunal, minorities and human rights, the media and hate speech, the steps taken to foster or prevent reconciliation, the Church and the armies.

Education in the former Yugoslavia, including the international attempts to harmonize education in Bosnia, access to education by refugees and IDPs, school as a space of tolerance and education for citizenship regardless of religious and ethnic backgrounds; and, last but not least, the proposal for a shared History curricula, make up the core content of chapter five. The sixth chapter, Youth and the Future of the Balkans, sets out detailed analysis of the results of the survey completed by university students throughout the countries studied; Serbia and Kosovo, Croatia and Bosnia: from Pristina to Belgrade, from Zagreb to Sarajevo, from Banja Luka to Mostar<sup>22</sup>. Before the conclusions, in the ninth chapter, the author attempts to answer the central research question, validating the working hypothesis and drafting the conditions necessary to reconciliation in post-conflict societies.

---

22 Contacts established with professors Dragan Zivojinovic (personally met in May 2013) and Pedrag Simic, both from the Faculty of Political Science in Belgrade University (Serbia), Dragan Djukanovic, Institute for International Politics and Economics (Serbia), Valon Murati (Human Rights Centre of Pristina University, Kosovo), Fatmir Curri (Kosovo School for European Integration), Ognjen Radovic from Banja Luka College of Communications (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Lejla Turcilo and Sead Turcalo from the Faculty of Political Science in Sarajevo University (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Sanja Tisma from the Institute for International Relations (Zagreb), Iva Nenadic-Litre (University of Zagreb) between July 2013 and May 2014 via e-mail. In May and June 2015, emails with the survey attached were sent to every available email address in all every public and private university in Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo.



## CHAPTER I – THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

### 1.1. - Primacy of the qualitative approach and the combined methods strategy

Field research entails ongoing analysis. As António Firmino da Costa<sup>23</sup> states (1986: 144), “the very nature of the intensive field method implies that, as the gathering and processing of information is integrated through the triggering of action research, the researcher is constantly conducting the classification and interpretation of data. (...) The multiplicity of the social dimensions upon which the researcher collects information and the length of field work both enable and impose this partial overlap of collection, recording and analysis of empirical material.”

One of the most fascinating aspects in social science research reflects the personal touch that the researcher can introduce into the concepts under study, a result of her or his own learning process and socialization. This constitutes a “constructed” way of doing research. The author must, therefore, clarify the methodological principles guiding the implementation of the respective research project.

The commanding role of theory is a fundamental epistemological principle in the investigation of any given social environment. The empirical process, throughout all its phases and procedures, consists of a theoretical-ideological set transformed by this scientific practice; hence, the theoretical and ideological references may influence the development of a sociological problem. Thus, the theoretical formulation sets the foundation for the empirical research approach: the definition of the empirical object of study, the main features of the field research, the fieldwork itself, and the working hypotheses under verification. In short, the praxis that provides for the “specialized production of knowledge” (Almeida, 1976:19). According to Creswell (2009: 19), “qualitative approaches allow room to be innovative and to work more within researcher-designed frameworks”.

On the other hand, this author does not ignore the influence of the very same empirical process on the theoretical field. With the results and conclusions that this provides, empirical work seeks to enrich and hopefully transform the theory. Science in a broader sense, and the social sciences in particular, should always be seen in light of their incomplete nature, without any absolute, definitive or irrefutable truths. Reality can be approached in a wide variety of forms with the same problem correspondingly potentially giving rise to

---

<sup>23</sup> Dissertation author’s own translation.

different and even divergent conclusions. Social science, as the author conceives it, is, in itself, provisional and anti-dogmatic, in which nothing is absolute or eternal.

In line with Thomas (2005: 363), when he states that “political science’s quest for a common vocabulary and set of standards cannot be found in statistical inference” and that if political science “is to have a unified methodology, that methodology has qualitative foundations”, this research understands that the qualitative approach would be limited were it not followed up by analysis of the data gathered from the survey responded to by university students from across the case-studied countries, aided with data collected from other surveys and studies. This means an empirical testing of the theory all along the course of the process. Nevertheless, one still sustains the primacy of the qualitative as, while quantitative tools may be useful, “forming concepts and building theories rely upon qualitative judgments”.

Participant Observation (PO), as well as open and semi-open interviews and documental research feature among the techniques used, combining this fundamental dimension of empirical work with the formulation of a survey with closed questions (multiple choice), distributed among students at various universities in the three constituent republics of the former Yugoslavia studied, plus Kosovo in its limbo of “hollow independence” (Kushi, 2015), seven years after its unilateral declaration<sup>24</sup>. PO may often be viewed as a simple research technique in the social sciences even when, in reality, this could best be characterized as a combination of methods and techniques: direct social interaction, observation, formal and informal interviews, document analysis, etcetera. The current research deploys PO for its complementary perspective and its combination of investigative techniques as each of them fulfil a specific function while competing for an overall objective.

Paul Pennings, Hans Keman and Jan Kleinnijenhuis, in *Doing Research in Political Science*, argue that “the comparative approach and its methodological application must be conducted by means of theory-driven research questions. This is to say: a research question must be formulated as a point of departure of comparative investigation”. Otherwise, the comparison might merely be a recording instrument and “scientific activities always imply the quest for explanations, which are not only empirically based and yield systematic results, but also lead to results which are plausible” (2006: 6).

## **1.2. Comparative method cases-oriented in International Relations**

Following Pennings (2006: 28), one can say “the main advantage of the comparative approach in political and social science is to verify and to ‘test’ theories by controlling contextual variation”. Understanding political science as a discipline that aims to describe and analyse the functioning of political institutions, organizations and agents, one “must

---

<sup>24</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2008.

necessarily include the comparative approach, if only by virtue of its explanatory intent” (2006: 50). To deepen our knowledge about other countries and their political systems implies, therefore, “that we promote an understanding of how to do comparative political analysis” (ibid).

The methodological focus, regarding the realities observed, encapsulates the comparative cases-oriented method with the interpretation of these cases based on the theoretical framework underlying the research and never ignoring the criteria of comparability between the cases chosen.

This combined methodological approach, aiming to establish a fruitful dialogue between ideas and evidence, following Ragin (1987), also helps in overcoming the inherent limitations to the case study approach, which, in turn, amounts to an indispensable step given the considerable limitations<sup>25</sup> had we only chosen a purely quantitative methodological option. Thomas (2005: 855) argues that the scientific methodology requires a permanent “creation and refinement of concepts, the use of empirical evidence not only to confirm but also to develop and exploit theories and overcome the causal complexity”.

A different approach could be, as said, assuming exclusively qualitative or quantitative methods. Or, if one should base the research in a single-case study. The deepness of the analysis would succumb to the need of constantly interact with other realities; that is to say, one cannot analyze the events in Bosnia in the 1990s, without taking into account the evolution of the political, social and economic situation in Serbia and Croatia.

### **1.3. Criteria for case studies**

John Gerring (2007: 231) accepts that “case study researchers use diverse methods to select their cases, a matter that has elicited considerable comment and no little consternation”. This research follows the option of taking into account four cases (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo) in the former Yugoslavia region, which would turn into three were Kosovo not analyzed as an independent country, therefore, as an independent unit. Pennings et al. (2006: 8) recalls that “the comparative approach generally uses the term ‘cases’ to refer to the combination of the level of measurement employed (e.g. individuals, parties, or government) and the units of variation or the variables employed (e.g. electoral attitudes, party programmes, or government policies)”. However, such a formulation, the same authors do admit, brings about the problem, also observed by authors such as Ragin and Lijphart, of “seeing cases as an empirical entity”, fixed temporally and spatially, “and as a theoretical construct or convention”, meaning “theoretical properties from which the

---

<sup>25</sup> Case studies understood, following Gerring (2004: 341), as the “intensive study of a single unit, with the aim to generalize across a larger set of units”.

researcher derives the units of observation, i.e. cases” (2006: 8). Time and space thus enter into the research design just as much as the number of cases involved. In conclusion, “the researcher must – on the basis of the research question – go through a number of steps in order to develop the proper research design” (Pennings et. al, 2006: 45).

'Cases' in the current research are understood as the countries under study and “defined as empirical entities in relation to the research question asked” (2006: 9). There is a common identity in time (the temporal dimension of the research, from 1988 to 2015) and place (the wider space of the former Yugoslavia), and they are furthermore interconnected by, and imbricated with, the research question. Following Pennings et al. (2006: 9), in the current comparative research, “the term ‘cases’ is reserved for the units of observation that are compared, be it voters in different countries or regions, parties in various political systems, or welfare states across nations”.

The dissertation author here assumes that understanding 'cases' as 'countries' is certainly not an original methodological and conceptual approach. In fact, as Pennings et.al. argue, as cases are very often “confounded with countries in the comparative approach to political and social sciences. This does not surprise us, since most comparative political research focuses on macroscopic phenomena, which are more often than not defined at the national level. Cross-sectional analysis is therefore often considered to mean the same as cross-national” (2006: 39-40). Under this research, our reflections and interpretations about the cases under study, will evolve into this dual approach: both cross-sectional (comparing systems and structures that refer to a single territorial space) and cross-national (comparing countries). Acknowledging the spatial dimension as the dominant dimension of comparison, the “method of difference will be the guiding principle of interpretation” (2006: 39-40).

Might three-to-four cases in such a research project prove too many? Do not they correspond to the former Yugoslav republics, exempting Slovenia, Montenegro and Macedonia? The author understands that the chosen cases, due to their political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions, and consequent durability of their problems and interrelations, represent the “universe of discourse” (2006: 10) being analyzed. As Pennings argues, these are all the cases that are the most “relevant regarding the research question under review” (2006: 20). Politically, demographically, economically and even culturally, Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia were the most significant republics in the former Yugoslavia. However, one must not forget what Gerring tells us about the matter of the relevance of any case: “to be a case of something broader than itself, the chosen case must be similar (in some respects) to a larger population. Otherwise—if it is purely idiosyncratic (unique)—it is uninformative about anything lying outside the borders of the case itself.” (Gerring, 2007: 252-253). And the latter was also a reason to the choice that was made: this were the cases, due to their mixed-ethnic composition as well, that appear to be more relevant when in regard

with the overall situation of the country that once existed; that is to say, we would be looking to rather more specific situations if the chosen cases were Slovenia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Moreover, due to more similar dimensions, it tends to be more fruitful to compare variables such as the independence of media, rule of law, segregation in the educational system, the role of religion and civil society in countries such as Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia plus Kosovo, than doing it with much smaller units or territories.

In the comparative method, we analyze both the differences and the similarities between cases. Francis Castles, quoted in Keman (1993: 37), warns how “the more circumstances the selected cases have in common, the easier it is to locate the variables that do differ and which may thus be considered as the first candidates for investigation as causal or explanatory variables. A most different approach involves... a comparison on the basis of dissimilarity in as many respects as possible in the hope that after all the differing circumstances have been discounted as explanations, there will remain one alone in which all the instances agree”.

Despite the fact that the current research adopts a combined qualitative-quantitative approach, “the problem of data availability and its comparability should not be underestimated” as we agree that it is important not only to bear in mind a “proper relation between the research question and research design”, but also to “employ the correct methodology, the proper data, and the adequate statistical tools” (Pennings et al., 2006: 10). Indeed, some concerns must still be regarded in seeking to circumvent eventual obstacles in the research, as formulated by Pennings (2006: 44): “Which are the comparable cases?” In other words, one must attempt to reach that constituting an appropriate ‘universe of discourse’ in relation to the core research question.

Bennett (2006: 473) advocates for case study methods encompassing “comparative advantages in developing internally valid and context-sensitive measures of concepts, heuristically identifying new variables through within-case analysis of deviant or other cases, providing a potential check on spuriousness and endogeneity through within-case analysis, and testing and elaborating theories of path dependency and other types of complexity”.

On the other hand, there is a frequent criticism of qualitative studies based on the “degrees-of-freedom” (ibid). Moreover, “consequences of poor case selection and overgeneralization can be more devastating in case studies than in statistical analyses” (2006: 473). To sum up, case studies display both advantages and also limitations and contain as much potential for success as for failure.

The methodological option of this research opted for a combined qualitative-quantitative strategy and a comparative cases-oriented methodological approach with its pertinence echoed in the words of Bennett and Elman (2006: 473): “Because the relative

advantages of case studies are different from and complementary to those of statistical and formal methods, one of the newest and most exciting trends in methodology is the increasing focus on combining methods from the different traditions in the same study or research program”. Laying down the methodological options, aware of both their limitations and their virtues, we correspondingly focus in the next section of this chapter on the specific role of the researcher.

#### **1.4. The role of the researcher and complementary roles in PO**

Goald (1958) proposed a typology classifying Participant Observation (PO) that takes the role of the researcher in the very act of observation as its starting point:

a) Full Participant - The observers maintain their identity and purposes completely unknown. They assume behaviours appropriate to the group members they are researching about. In becoming part of the group, they become the group, their life. This type of approach to the object of study may sometimes be necessary due to the very nature of the object (for example, whenever approaching hermetic groups, poorly receptive to those who do not belong to them with only “membership” overcoming this situation). Nevertheless, in the author's opinion, this raises some ethical issues as those investigated remain unaware that they are being studied. Patricia and Peter Adler (1994) emphasize precisely those ethical problems interlinked with cases of invasion of privacy that such observations might involve.

b) Participating as an observer – Here, we adopt an approach to the object very similar to the previous example, but with one significant difference: the researcher, as such, is not unknown to the members of the study group. There is an awareness of the two statutes, with the intentions and objectives of the researcher well defined and accepted by the people who are the object of study. Of course, this type of PO may include some restrictions on access to information but this is the price to pay to prevent violations of ethical principles that underlie such activities, whether engaged in as a social scientist or... a journalist.

c) Observing as a participant - Researchers in this role are known and recognized as such and their activities presented to those under observation. This role is commonly deployed in studies involving formal interviews, surveys, etcetera. This differs from the previous type in the approach made to the object of study. This constitutes a more distant than familiar approach regarding the critical researcher involvement with the object.

d) Complete Observer - In this role, the researcher attains proximity to the scene of action but does not undergo any interaction with the study group. By observing people in such ways that you do not need to contact them either directly or formally, the observer draws on them as informants without their knowledge. This often happens in public places, when, for

example, in the middle of a crowd and we listen to conversations, moans and aspirations. We watch, observe, but we have no intention of interacting with the object of study.

The author of this research chose to adopt the roles of Participant Observer and Complete Observer.

Prior researcher participation in PO contexts may bring about benefits to the process of researching but nevertheless also raises a number of methodological and epistemological issues. However, the author here follows the line of Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) who state that any social investigation is a form of participant observation because studying the social without being part of it is simply unthinkable.

Whilst prior knowledge of the object of study may bring some initial advantages, this might also generate problems regarding scientific objectivity with the researcher needing a supplementary effort to achieve a reasonable balance between distance and closeness to the object of study. Firmino da Costa, following Bourdieu, argues that “neither objectivity is easier granted nor secured if you ignore how the frames of representations and systems of classifications of respondents do not usually coincide with those of the investigator, nor will the latter ever should he/she not even be aware of the problems that these imbalances pose to collecting and analysing information” (1986: 146).

### **1.5. Researching in divided societies**

To better understand and relate political and social processes in divided societies, a constant focus on relating theory and method must be taken into account. When the researcher goes out to do fieldwork in divided societies, a whole range of values and principles require consideration. And those values and principles are the guidelines underlying this research.

People’s lives do matter and so do their moments of vulnerability as so often people are encountered – by researchers, by journalists, by NGOs, by politicians – under great emotional pressure and despair, suffering from huge losses, lacking the capacity to rationalize about the moment and situation they are then going through. Researchers, in particular, must be aware of this and act accordingly when approaching people in such conditions, prioritizing ethics over any kind of scoop to their research or story. During research into a conflict or post-conflict area, in a divided society, the researcher ought to be more attentive to signals given by interviewees than under normal circumstances. Bezener (Leydesdorff et al., 1999: 34-36) identified thirteen “signals of trauma” and “particular forms of expression” given by interviewees when narrating traumatic stories of their lives “even if it is an experience with which he/she has come to terms”.

The researcher must be able to detect signals, verbal and on-verbal, in order to better internalize the meanings of the messages of interviewees, bearing in mind the emotional and

potentially traumatic events they have gone through. This very likely increases the accuracy of our findings and that is, therefore, the approach to be developed in and throughout this research.

Moreover, this research attempts to give voice to the voiceless even when they “speak” through silence. A moment of silence from a survivor of Srebrenica, or Krajina, or Kosovo may be much more revealing than a clear political speech from a pulpit in a hotel conference room.

In the next section, attentions focus on the particular situation of the author of this research: a journalist-researcher with a long experience in the region of former Yugoslavia, covering political, social, sports, cultural, and military events, for the Portuguese public radio (Antena1) and television (RTP) stations.

### **1.6. Ethical challenges to a journalist-researcher**

The emotional dimensions to oral histories prove simply unquestionable with this emotionality naturally stronger in conflict or post-conflict contexts. Researchers must be aware of this and follow Field (Leydesdorff et al., 1999: 61) when arguing that “interviewing in a culture of violence requires a flexible set of research strategies that are appropriate to the specific political, cultural and community circumstances encountered. The interviewer also needs to be acutely sensitive to the emotional, transference and power dynamics of the interviewer/interviewee relationship. It is also important to be attuned to the complex ways in which interviewees construct memories and myths in order to cope with their emotional experiences of the past and present”.

Any journalist-researcher, as interviewing constitutes a cornerstone of his/her professional routines, is morally obliged to be even more attentive to the situation of interviewees at the moment of the interview, and more sensitive than if he or she were a non-journalist. Due to the professional code, the journalist is ethically prepared and professionally empowered to realize that, as stated by Field (Leydesdorff et. al, 1999: 61), “in the context of a culture of violence, the expressed and unexpressed feelings of interviewees (and interviewer) are persistently ‘present’ in different, sometimes disruptive, manifestations. The use of nostalgia, exaggerations and metaphors in remembering the past constitute emotionally sustaining myths that support a sense of self and identity in the present”.

Gaining access to interviewees is also a task journalists are commonly much more used to doing than, in most cases, non-journalist researchers. Negotiating access may also be part of her or his routines, which can prove crucial in conflict zones and/or divided societies. As an experienced professional journalist knows, “in most research settings, gaining access is not simply a question of gaining acceptance from one or two gatekeepers”. S/he must deal



with individuals, institutions, their formal and informal procedures and so commonly having their values and ethical principles challenged as well as facing walls built out of a lack of transparency and attempts at bribery. *Time is money* we have heard for so long and on so many occasions but ethical procedures must not be set aside even in order to facilitate access.

### **1.7. Interviews: open and semi-structured**

Each researcher inevitably performs a different interview, according to his/her sensitivity, culture and particular knowledge of the subject in question and, what is more important, according to the spatial and temporal context, social belonging, and, in addition, the needs raised by the research itself. Basically, an interview is a specialized variant of a conversation. The words used in conversation are apparently spontaneous but imply and exhibit the ability to activate a socially recognized role and, on the other hand, address a wide range of strategies, movements and conversational tricks (used both on daily and more informal occasions as well as in more structured situations) to persuade, defend one's position, realign, etcetera. Goffman (1982) speaks of “territories of the self” to frame the language, spatial and social territories that are established in interpersonal interactions.

There are factors linked either to the interviewer or the interviewee that may influence the results of the interview, and these must be taken into account. In the case of respondents, those interviewed by the researcher, there may be crucial factors of different dimensions: cultural (language used, religious and political beliefs), affective (respondent perceptions of the interviewer and the interview subject), motivational (attempting to convey a favorable image or as to what is conventionally deemed normal, positive or somehow ensures prestige). Regarding interviewers, their physical appearance (this may influence initial contacts and the interview quality), social class, age, cultural frame of reference, moral codes, political and religious convictions, language used and the expertise to conduct the interview are equally all factors to be taken into account.

Free, open, and unstructured interviews represent an attempt to understand the complex behaviours of members of a society without imposing any a priori categorization that may limit the fieldwork. In-depth exploratory interviews may be an extremely valuable tool to the researcher as was indeed the case in the current research in and about the Balkans.

Semi-structured interviews assume the existence of a grid of themes or issues to address but the order in which the questions are asked may be freely determined. This is an interview type commonly applied in this research, interviewing people with key positions in the object under study and with access to information that is otherwise not normally accessible and therefore important facilitators to deepen our knowledge about the research object. The semi-structured interview allows “subsequent questions to be asked that were not

foreseen in the interview script. Subsequent questions will depend on the answers of the subject that are the starting point for an interview with a person” (Pennings et al., 2006: 59). One must not however take for granted and assume everything the interviewee says or tries to transmit is scientifically valid. In that sense, following Costa, the author bears in mind that these statements are products of “the system of representation of the local social context and of the position occupied in that system by the individuals in question” (Costa, 1986: 139)<sup>26</sup>. In accordance with Pennings et al. (2006: 59), when arguing that “questionnaires and interviews are at the heart of journalism”, and the credibility, validity and, above all, the “reliability of answers obtained during an interview relies on an exchange between the interviewer and the respondent”.

In this research, the author also incorporates the results of informal conversations held with people who are the object of study, as well as materials gathered through his professional activities as a journalist, with a declared vast journalistic experience on the topic (Balkans) now the object of this academic study.

Anyone who gives an interview inherently accepts that a journalist or a researcher asks him or her questions which the interviewer considers of importance to understanding certain facts, phenomena or events, in which the respondent or interviewee was either a protagonist or a witness. The researcher's mission when doing an interview is to ask questions and seek out answers. Hence, the interview is perceived by some authors as the very essence of journalism.

John W. Creswell<sup>27</sup> is a professor of Educational Psychology who teaches courses and writes about qualitative methodology and mixed methods research, having authored more than ten books, many of which focus on research design, qualitative research, and mixed methods research. In one of them, *Research Design, Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed methods Approaches*, he acknowledges that as much as interviewing in qualitative research “is increasingly being seen as a moral inquiry”, interviewers do need to have the capacity to predict impact of their work; “as well as enhancing scientific knowledge, how a sensitive interview interaction may be stressful for the participants, whether participants have a say in how their statements are interpreted, how critically the interviewees might be questioned, and what the consequences of the interview for the interviewees and the groups to which they belong might be” (Creswell, 2009: 90-91).

To sum up, the interviewer must treat the interviewee with respect, cordiality, with neither antipathy nor sleaze, and avoiding any kind of confrontation. However, this remains different to showing reverence or acting with passivity regarding possible contradictions or

---

<sup>26</sup> In this dissertation, any originally Portuguese quotations were translated into English by the author.

<sup>27</sup> Sage publications, London, Los Angeles, Singapore, New Delhi.

suspected untruths issued by the respondent. The interviewer should question but must also give enough time so that the interviewee can fully answer.

Taking this into account, shaping the way and how often the interviewer interrupts the reasoning or the line of thought of the interviewee always prove crucial aspects.

If, in any given situation, the dialogue with the interviewee becomes impossible, the interviewer, should terminate the interview rather than get lost in arguments and/or somehow allow the conversation to enter a mode lacking in either good manners or civility.

Preparation is a key factor to conducting any interview. The interviewer must be informed about the interviewee (source) and/or the subject or object of study under discussion, which, in this author's opinion, includes thinking in advance of questions that the respondent has yet to respond to. The interviewer requires effectiveness in the questions s/he asks in order to get accurate and concise answers, hence it is highly inadvisable to ask more than one question at a time.

The interviewer, when conducting a semi-structured interview, should not inflexibly follow his script. Often an unexpected response may completely change the set of already questions. This means the interviewer really listens to the answers given and the statements produced. S/he must, above all, be capable of reasoning and understanding that an interview is nonetheless still a dialogue!

The interview should be considered light in terms of its duration (the time must be managed rationally) even while varying greatly depending on the subject, the interviewer's script, the interviewer and the interviewee characteristics, the context prevailing, and the equipment used (recorded, in person or on the phone). The interview should be held in a place (whenever possible) that makes the interviewee feel comfortable, therefore less intimidated by the situation: being questioned always produces some kind of constraint in addition to the presence of the interviewer and equipment such as a camera and a microphone.

As mentioned above, the interviewer must refrain from interviewing people who are not in possession of their mental faculties or who may be, even momentarily, in a particularly vulnerable state. If there is no other valid and purposive option other than interviewing persons in such conditions, the interviewer should be capable of reinforcing his/her ethical concerns when addressing subjects under such terms.

### **1.8. Document and archive research**

Documental research not only ensures a better historical view of the phenomena in question but also works as a tool to help the researcher overcome some of the gaps arising from the inevitable failures happening during the process of observation, in which the occurrence of certain factors, events or important situations is not always possible when we are able to be

there. Journalistic and literary material and photographic documents, as well as music CDs and film DVDs are presented in the Annex F, sorted by type of document.

The libraries, documentation centres and museums used to build this corpus of documents are also identified there. Creswell (2009: 180) “identifies public documents, such as minutes of meetings or newspapers, and private documents, such as journals, diaries, or letters”. Audio-visual material, such as films, tapes, photographs also enrich the present research as part of the aforementioned corpus of documents, which can “be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher-an unobtrusive source of information” (2009: 180).

A substantial proportion of the current research was constructed based on the researcher’s own vast archive and collection of books (about two hundred), magazines, journals and writings as well as audio and video documents about the Balkans as a region, the former Yugoslavia in particular, and nationalism. Nevertheless, research done at the London School of Economics Library of Political and Economic Sciences in 2011, and at Columbia University in 2015 (in particular at Butler Library, School of International and Public Affairs and Barnard College, as well as at New York Public Library), were all instrumental to this research. Professional and private visits to museums such as the Museum of Yugoslav History in Belgrade in 2009 and 2013; the Belgrade City Museum in 2007; the Museum of Broken Relations in Zagreb in 2013<sup>28</sup>; the Srebrenica Exhibition at “Gallery 11-07-95” in Sarajevo in 2014; the Srebrenica Memorial in Srebrenica, the Jewish Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Muzej Sarajevo, Svrzo House, all in 2013; and the War Photo Exhibition in Mostar in 2014, were also of immense help to a better understanding of the object of research.

### **1.9. Survey: guidelines and objectives**

Pennings (2006: 59) argues that, “the term survey is used to denote a standard list of questions that will be posed to a great number of individuals. Usually not the population of all individuals, but a sample from it”.

Under this research, a survey is being conducted since October 2012 with university students born after 1991 in Serbia (and Kosovo), Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina, which will enable the author to acknowledge their perceptions, aspirations, ideas about the country they belong to and about neighbouring countries and communities. But also about symbols, the educational system of their countries and degree of nationalism involved in it, the media, the

---

<sup>28</sup> The author wrote in his notebook, after visiting this rather original place: In the museum, there is a bicycle because “it is always good to have transportation when leaving a relationship”. Maps, knives, brand-new erotic lingerie, and the confession that the relationship could have lasted longer had she ever used it. And handcuffs. For many Croats, Yugoslavia was a prison. Independence was the cry of freedom and the last twenty years a time of transition. Now, ‘Balkans never again,’ some say. But for others, ‘Croatia will never have been as much in the Balkans’ as it will be from the moment it becomes a member of an EU in multidimensional crisis”.

political class and their future perspectives and current concerns. This kind of methodological approach, understood as an effort to legitimize empirically the ongoing research, does not imply a loss of importance of qualitative analysis in social sciences and international relations' researches. Taking this into account, the fieldwork, namely interviews with 'privileged' sources and documental research, will play, as said before, a significant role. This multiple and combined methodological approach, in techniques and methods to be used, aims at developing the knowledge of the researcher about the subject – and subjects – of the research, in order to be able to give a legitimate and empirically tested answer to the main question in this investigation.

It was the author's purpose to listen and consider the perceptions of students born in 1991 or after, when Tito's Yugoslavia began to disintegrate. The survey wishes to acknowledge the university students' perceptions about Yugoslavia, the independence of the new-born country where they live or belong, the quality of media and political class, the level of nationalism in each of the countries being studied.

We also consider their reaction to a proposal the current research will be focusing on the creation of a common and consensual History curricula, namely in political history, in the former Yugoslavia region. However, we cannot take all this into account without placing the respondents in the world and our current context; therefore, the survey also includes questions to acknowledge their perceptions on issues such as the political situation, European integration, employment, emigration and immigration. Moreover, this also takes into account some of the most representative symbols (sports, culture, arts) to these populations in order to understand if and to what extent those symbols cut across borders or whether they instead 'dress' national and patriotic motivations.

### 1.10. Representative and purposive samples

Achieving a representative sample of the universe of university students in the cities mentioned stretched far beyond the resources available to the author with the initial objectives in this respect also not achieved<sup>29</sup>. Nevertheless, over 270 responses does certainly return some interesting indications out of which we may both infer trends and test some hypotheses.

Paul Olivier (Jupp, 2006)<sup>30</sup>, in *The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods*, argues in favour of this “form of non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research. Some types of research design need a decision about the individual participants who would be most likely to contribute appropriate data, both in terms of relevance and depth”.

This research thus assumes that the sample of university students from the countries studied (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo) is non-representative and it amounts to common sense, even in the academy, to consider these non-probabilistic samples as less credible, thus, less desirable. Nevertheless, as Olivier argues, “a researcher may not be able to obtain a random or stratified sample, or it may be too expensive”, and, therefore, “the validity of non-probability samples can be increased by trying to approximate random selection, and by eliminating as many sources of bias as possible”. Alternatively, it may be the case that a researcher wants to include a certain group in the sample even if not representative of the actual proportions in the population. Olivier sets out an example: “A researcher is interested in the attitudes of members of different religions towards the death penalty. In Iowa, a random sample might miss Muslims (because there are not many in that state). To be sure of their inclusion, a researcher could set a quota of 3% Muslim for the sample”. This may mean that the researcher will not be able to generalize the conclusions to the overall population “but the quota will guarantee that the views of Muslims are represented in the survey”. Olivier defines the purposive sample as a “non-representative subset of some larger population, and constructed to serve a very specific need or purpose. A researcher may have a specific group in mind, such as high-level business executives. Furthermore, it may not be possible to specify the population -- they may not all be known, and might incur difficulties. The researcher will attempt to zero in on the target group, interviewing whomever is available”. The researcher concentrates the sample “on people with particular characteristics who will better be able to assist with the relevant research”, as is the case of

---

<sup>29</sup> The initial goal involved around 50 valid responses from each of the cities involved: Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Mostar, Belgrade, Pristina, Zagreb.

<sup>30</sup> <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9780857020116>. Accessed on 13.03.2016.

the university students that were reachable to respond to the survey.

Purposive samples may also be of the snowball kind, “so named because one picks up the sample along the way, analogous to a snowball accumulating snow. A snowball sample is achieved by asking a participant to suggest someone else who might be willing or appropriate for the study. Snowball samples are particularly useful in hard-to-track populations”. In the current research, the sample that could be defined, following Olivier, might also be termed a convenience sample, as it was “a matter of taking what you can get”.

The author of this dissertation is fully aware about the limitations of this approach “with regard to generalization”, and due to its lack of popular representation, one shall not attempt to make allegedly valid inferences “about the larger group from which they are drawn. Validity can be increased by approximating random selection as much as possible, and making every attempt to avoid introducing bias into sample selection”. Another advantage deriving from this kind of sample is the scope for stage building blocks, as Olivier names them: “Qualitative research usually involves a number of different phases, with each phase building progressively onwards from the original. This being the case, purposive sampling is useful to a researcher because they can use the variety of methods available to build and increase their research data”.

On the negative side, one can also point out some disadvantages to purposive samples: “The main disadvantage of purposive sampling is the high probability of researcher bias, as each sample is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher in question, who generally is trying to prove a specific point”.

Moreover, once the work is done and the researcher publishes it or is about to defend it publicly, due to the non-probability nature of purposive sampling, this may hinder the researcher in mounting a solid defence. A critic may argue that if different selections had been made during the purposive sampling, a different result could have been achieved, which is an important point and, hence, why, from the very beginnings of this text, the author states that the results given by the university student survey represent no more than useful indications, rather than valid inferences or empirical evidence to produce dogmatic and definitive statements about this or that reality.

Nevertheless, the subset of purposive sampling adopted here would be what Olivier classifies as Homogeneous Sampling<sup>31</sup>, which “focuses on candidates who share similar traits or specific characteristics. For example, participants in Homogenous Sampling would be similar in terms of ages, cultures, jobs or life experiences”, as is the case with these university students, born in or after 1991 in the former Yugoslavia. The idea behind this form of sampling “is to focus on this precise similarity and how it relates to the topic being

---

<sup>31</sup> <http://dissertation.laerd.com/purposivesampling.php#types><http://dissertation.laerd.com/purposive-sampling.php#types>. Accessed in 14.03.2016.

researched”.

In the next chapter of this dissertation, the author reviews extensively and, hopefully, comprehensively, the literature in which the theoretical framework of this project is grounded: theories of nationalism - in its various types and currents - and peace studies as well as feminist studies, alongside a critical reading of the literature on failed states, besides the way nationalism in the Balkans has impacted on youth and through their most common forms of socialization – culture, cinema, sports – and the current debates on nationalism, nationalism in a globalized world and, most important, the current scholar debates about the Balkans.



## **CHAPTER II - SPANNING THE STATE OF THE ART**

### **2.1. Historic Sociology and al Theories of Nationalism**

Nationalism, as an ideological movement, proves only a relatively recent phenomenon, dating back a little over two hundred years with its roots tracing back to the late Middle Ages in France, England, Spain, Portugal, Scotland and Sweden, for example, the “old nations, continuous”, in the terminology of Seton-Watson (1977), in existence well before 1789, the date of the French Revolution, and as opposed to the late “Project nations”, founded following the awakening of nationalist movements.

There are a multitude of forms of nationalism in political theory as David Miller argues; “just as there are many varieties of nationalism in practical politics. (...) We can perhaps characterize nationalism as having three core elements”. Firstly, the idea that “nations are real: that there is something that differentiates people who belong to one nation from those who belong to its neighbours”. Secondly, “membership in a nation has practical implications: it confers rights and imposes obligations”, for instance in order to preserve that community as such. Thirdly, belonging to a nation, nationhood, is something “politically significant” and relevant, thus, nationalists strive to establish and consolidate political institutions “that will allow the nation to be self-determining — to decide on its own future course, free from outside coercion”. Therefore, such a nation needs political boundaries “drawn in a way that respects the national identities” (Leydesdorff, 1999: 529).

Although the construction of a state in most cases shuts down a national issue, the identification with, but also the rejection of, a state under construction, the truth remains that “the establishment of institutions incorporated in the state is not a cultural identification warranty of a population with the state, or acceptance of the 'national myth' of the dominant ethnic group” (Smith, 1999: 33). On the other hand, from the perspective of Smith, modernist approaches tend not to attribute due importance to the social and cultural contexts instead perceived as simple variations of some general nationalist modernization. In other words, these currents underestimate the specificities associated with each nationalist process. Within this perspective, nationalism would seek to solve the problem of dissociation between society and the state by emotionally appealing to the idea of community and cultural solidarity and shared ethnic and historical origins. The primordialist-modernist debate thereby constitutes an important theoretical debate between these two trends of nationalism and structuring a very significant proportion of the literature on nationalism and secession.

Having personally contacted authors such as Anthony D. Smith and Donald Horowitz at the London School of Economics, Dominique Jacquin-Berdal, in her book portraying nationalism and ethnicity in the Horn of Africa region, beyond exploring the causes of

secession, instead studies just what secession reveals about the nature of nationalism and the nation. Questioning whether “the nation is organic or voluntary? A modern construction or invention?”, this author states that these contradictory views are also reflected in the academic literature on nationalism (Jacquin-Berdal, 2002: 10).

The modernist approach to nationalism emerges as critical to this organic conception of the nation and places the phenomenon of Genesis in the ideas that emerged with the Enlightenment and the American and French Revolutions, which establish the nation as the unique structural unit of modern politics. Taking Carlton Hayes<sup>32</sup> and Hans Kohn<sup>33</sup> as precursors based upon their understanding of nationalism as resulting from a dialectical relationship with the modern state and identifying how the emergence of nationalism in the West was preceded by the formation of states, a “political process instigated by the need of the bourgeoisie to have a centralized market defined by a territory” (ibidem). In other words, the designing of a more territorial and civic nationalism, as opposed to a more ethnically based nationalism that eventually emerged in Germany and in Eastern Europe in general.

Lately, authors such the Ukrainian scholar Taras Kuzio have produced critical readings about Kohn’s conceptualization of ethnic and civic nationalism, deeming such a division “idealized and (that) does not match up to historical or theoretical scrutiny. Pure civic or ethnic states exist only in theoretical terms. All civic states, whether in the West or the East, are based on ethno-cultural core(s). Each nationalism and nation contains aspects and dimensions deriving from both of the types of nationalism elaborated by Kohn (‘organic, ethnic’ and ‘voluntary, civic’)” (Kuzio, 2002: 20). This critical approach recalls how, in a line this dissertation author adheres to, “the tradition of depicting Western nationalism and nation-states as inherently superior to those in the East has a long tradition in Western political thought and is deep-rooted among academics, policy-makers and journalists” (Kuzio, 2002: 21). As Kuzio shows, this arises among scholars such as Ignatieff (1993), to whom civic nationalism is “a community of equal, rights-bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of patriotic practices and values’. He contrasts this with ethnic nationalism where

---

<sup>32</sup> Carlton Hayes was an American Columbia University historian and diplomat, appointed by Franklin Roosevelt as Ambassador to Spain in March 1942, but also an educator, devout Catholic and academic. A student of European history, he was a leading and pioneering specialist on the study of nationalism. Elected as president of the American Historical Association against the opposition of liberals and the more explicit anti-Catholic bias that defined the academic community of his era. [http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154591?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154591?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents). Accessed on 30.03.2015.

<sup>33</sup> Hans Kohn was a Jewish American (born in Prague) philosopher and historian. Made a prisoner of war during World War I, he was held in Russia for five years. After the war he lived in Paris and London working for Zionist organizations before moving to Palestine in the 1920s but continuing to frequently teaching in the U.S., in New York’s City College, the New School for Social Research and the Harvard Summer School. His published writings extensively focus on nationalism, Pan-Slavism, Germany and Judaism, as well as related topics. He died in 1971 in Philadelphia. Hans Kohn was a prominent leader of Brit Shalom, which promoted a bi-national state in Palestine. <http://findingaids.cjh.org/?pID=121445>. Accessed on 30.03.2015.

‘an individual’s deepest attachments are inherited, not chosen’ (Kuzio, 2002: 23). Kuzio concludes this critical reading of Kohn’s framework to nationalism by stating that the “evolution from ethnic to civic states has therefore little to do with geography and far more to do with the positive influence of international institutions, domestic democratic consolidation and civic institution building. Western states have a long historical record as ethnic states, a factor which makes their evolution more similar, not different, to states in the East” (Kuzio, 2002: 36).

Without rejecting – on the contrary - this critical reading by Kuzio, one should, nevertheless, also take into account Anna Stolz (2009: 257) for whom “civic nationhood is meant to describe a political identity built around shared citizenship in a liberal-democratic state”, irrespective of any unity around a shared language or culture, but rather requiring “a disposition on the part of citizens to uphold their political institutions, and to accept the liberal principles on which they are based. Membership is open to anyone who shares these values. In a civic nation, the protection or promotion of one national culture over others is not a goal of the state”. And this may happen just as much in the West as in the East of Europe. The point is simply that while most Western democracies are some centuries old, most of the Eastern democracies are no more than twenty-five years old.

Both Hayes and Kohn agree on considering nationalism as a modern and European creation, emerging out of the foundations of what became known as the modernist paradigm in theories of nationalism. In the early 1950s, and with evident premonitory capacity, Karl Deutsch<sup>34</sup> argued that cultures and communities originate and maintain communication, and the efficient communication networks are those which enable members of a community to share a sense of belonging, of association. The contributions made by Deutsch led to the publication of an important body of literature, known as state building that itself constituted another school in the theories of nationalism, which perceives nations as constructed by political elites with the media as a suitable means for mobilizing the masses.

One of the leading figures in the theories of nationalism, Ernest Gellner, establishes the emergence of nationalism “in the revolutionary socio-economic changes that have occurred with industrialization” (Jacquin-Berdal, 2002: 13). Modernist theories dominated this area of thought in IR through to the 1970s when the primordialists resurfaced, albeit reformulating important conceptions, including perennialism. Perennialist primordialism is a more classical approach to ethnicity and nationalism maintaining that individuals belong by

---

<sup>34</sup>Karl Wolfgang Deutsch (1912–1992) was a Czech social and political scientist, whose work greatly focused on war and peace, communication and nationalism, innovating in bringing quantitative models into the social sciences field and becoming one of the best-known social scientists of the 20th century. He taught at numerous universities, including Yale, MIT and Harvard. <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1979/5/23/the-best-political-scientist-in-the/?page=single>. Accessed on 30.03.2015.

nature to certain ethnic communities, such as their family belonging. They thus embody ethnicity just as much as they have their senses of hearing, sight, taste and smell.

Nationalism, regarded as a sort of feeling, may well precede the eighteenth century, but as an ideology forms part of this historic moment. With perennialist authors divided between those who define ethnicity in biological terms and those who define it culturally, Smith, alongside Walter Connor<sup>35</sup>, rejects the biological concepts and perceives modernity in what might be considered as an approach to modernist theses, as the catalyst transforming ethnic communities into pre-existing nations. We may thus consider this more of an ethno-nationalist than actually primordialist approach. Connor (1972), also following the ethnic nationalism perspective, puts forward a diagnosis of what he deems the academy's failure on the study of nationalism for having failed to predict the resurgence of nationalism in the 1970s. These two authors emphasize the emotional strength of nationalism, introducing the notion of ethnicity to, in the opinion of Jacquin-Berdal (2002: 18), reconcile the modernist understanding of nationalism (as a political consciousness), with a primordialist design (in a cultural sense). Within this framework, the author concludes by stating: "a nation is an ethnic group that was aroused" (2002: 22). Could this, for instance, be applied to the Kosovar Albanians? I would, for the time being, assume this as a logically credible statement as well as applicable to the reality of the entire former Yugoslavia in general and Kosovo in particular in an issue we shall return to.

Ernest Gellner argues that nationalism invents nations where they do not exist. From his perspective, the culture of individuals becomes their identity, which then infuses all of their respective patterns of conduct, "the classification of men by 'culture' is, of course, the classification by 'nationality'" (Gellner, 1964: 157). According to Gellner, "modern loyalties are centred in political units whose borders are defined by language and by an educational system." Both Benedict Anderson and Gellner consider the standardization of common languages and the development of literacy as products of the contemporary era and fundamental tools to the development of nationalism.

Besides the lessons and thoughts of what we might describe as classical theorists within the broad spectrum of the theories of nationalism, the current research also benefits from the contribution made by the Historic Sociology, especially by Anthony Giddens (1985) and his important reflections on the state monopoly of the sources of violence and the components of totalitarian regimes. This is furthermore supplemented by Charles Tilly (2003), who develops an interesting argument on the mutations of violence as a political

---

<sup>35</sup> Professor of Political Science, Sociology, and International Relations at Boston University and Fellow at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University. <http://www.bu.edu/polisci/people/faculty/connor/>. Accessed on 30.03.2015.

weapon; and by the analysis of Immanuel Wallerstein (1984) and Michael Mann (1986) on the historical dynamics of the rising of state, and its relationship with war and capitalism, “sources of social power” as expressed by Mann (1986: 2), as well as the future of the state in an era of globalized economic relations. As fundamental authors in the field of nationalism theories, Anderson’s “imagined communities”, Smith’s “ethnonationalism”, Billig’s “banal nationalism”; nationalism as a product of modernity and economic industrialization in Gellner’s perspective, all make crucial contributions throughout the reflections underpinning this research.

To give some examples of the way through which theories are here mobilized to sustain the working hypothesis, one can acknowledge that the identities forged about Bosnia or Kosovo cannot be properly understood without taking into account Anderson’s thoughts about imagined communities as well as dimensions considered important throughout this dissertation, such as the role of cinema, music and sports in fostering nationalism or contributing to reconciliation in post-conflict societies, are far more better understood if one bears in mind the contributions of Billig to understand what he described as banal nationalism<sup>36</sup>.

Despite the increasing importance of supra-national institutions, economic interdependence and the ever growing speed of information flows, we nevertheless still live in an international system composed of sovereign states that allows for change only at the strictest and most necessary level of survival as such and correspondingly excluding the existence of other entities (for example, the Basque Country and Palestine are not recognized as sovereign states, therefore unable to attain UN membership; with Kosovo still not recognized by dozens of countries, including five EU countries, in a clear obstacle in its process towards sovereign membership). Moreover, overpoweringly, the ethnic dominant group in each state is that which represents the state in UN general assemblies. In the European Parliament, MPs come mostly from the dominant ethnic group of their countries, which, in turn, reflects the composition of national parliaments. In Strasbourg, among the 785 members from the 28 EU countries, representing somewhat over 500 million citizens, only nine are non-whites! This is 1.1% of the overall European Parliament population even while non-whites are estimated to account for at least 5% of the total EU population.<sup>37</sup> In an article published in 2014<sup>38</sup>, Michael Privot and Martin Demirovski, advocacy experts at the European Network Against Racism (ENAR), recall how “minority communities have so far been absent from parties’ elections

---

<sup>36</sup>This research understands nationalism as an ideology that expresses itself by appealing to the ethnic origins of the nation; an identity forged by the inclusion/exclusion dialectic assumed as an exacerbated ideological support and the mechanism of last resort for integrating those who are either affiliated or militant.

<sup>37</sup><http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/feb/14/race.eu>. Accessed on 29-08-2012.

<sup>38</sup>Euobserver.com. Published in 27.01.2014. Accessed on 29.03.2015. “The EU vote and Europe’s overlooked minorities”.

tactics and voting lists, although they form a large cluster of the European population. There are approximately 60 million ethnic and religion minorities in the EU, making up about 12 percent of the total European population”. The article concludes with the obvious identification of how “there is a huge discrepancy between the number of minority politicians represented in the European Parliament and the proportion of the European population belonging to ethnic minority communities”.

The work of Anthony D. Smith (1986, [1999]) has been fundamentally focused on theoretical reflections on ethno-national issues and their role in contemporary societies. For Smith, nationalism encompasses “a chameleonic capacity of transmutation, according to communities groups and individuals’ different perceptions and needs” (Smith 1999: 11). Gellner and Hobsbawm (Smith 1999: 31) emphasize nation as a cultural construction, “nations and nationalism are essentially 19th and 20th (centuries) phenomena, linked to a particular period of modernity, gradually coming to an end in the West”. A crucial figure in the modernist approach, Gellner states that “the classification of men by culture is, therefore, a classification by nationality” (Gellner 1964: 157), placing the emergence of nationalism in the “socio-economic revolutionary transformations that came about with industrialization” (Jacquin-Berdal 2002: 13). A nation correspondingly becomes “an ethnic group that has been awakened” (Jacquin-Berdal 2002: 22).

Gellner’s *Nations and Nationalism*, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger’s *Invention of Tradition*, and Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, are fundamental masterpieces in the modern theories of nationalism and were all published in the 1980s<sup>39</sup>. However, that was also the time when other important works to the study of nationalism emerged, in particular Anthony Giddens, with *The Nation-State and Violence* (1985) and Michael Mann, with *The Social Sources of Power* (1986). Their contributions feature over the course of the current dissertation as their works were instrumental to laying the foundation for nationalism studies.

Dividing some of the main theorists of nationalism in a sort of cartography of the classical different approaches, one could say that the primordialist approach has its origins Darwin’s evolutionary theories later substantially elaborated by John Tooby and Leda

---

<sup>39</sup> Further on in this dissertation, we focus our attention on the work of Marija Grujic (2009), who worked on the relationship between women, turbo-folk music and nationalism in post-Yugoslav states, in particular in Serbia, and who proposes a “revision of Anderson’s imagined community; through which he links the notion of national belonging to the spread of literacy and print culture which flows from the top down in a society” (2009: 249). According to Grujic, nationalism “should be studied as a particular genre of visual or verbal representation which can be found in many various contexts, rather than some assumed endemic cultural specificity of a particularly wild or exotic surrounding. An ethno-national community is always mediated through a system of signs and symbols that are employed in justification of the particular social organization which keeps individuals together”.

Cosmides<sup>40</sup>. Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection as a mechanism of evolutionary change of organisms is used to produce descriptions of human societies' development and particularly from a mentally and physically sort of evolution. The modernist interpretation of nationalism would include people such as: Carlton Hayes, Émile Durkheim, Max Weber and Talcott Parsons, among others<sup>41</sup>.

When the time came, in late 19<sup>th</sup> century, to assist to a growing influence of understandings of the nation and nationalism in greater accordance with civic values (non-xenophobic, liberal in the sense of praising freedom, tolerance and equality, respect for individual rights), Ernest Renan and John Stuart Mill<sup>42</sup> were seen as liberal nationalists, by claiming that liberal democratic polities need national identity in order to function properly.

We should also mention authors such as Barry Posen (Jacquin-Berdal 2002: 39), for whom nationalism cannot be regarded as disconnected from military competition (as it happened in the Balkans between Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks), placing its emergence alongside the introduction of vast armies that came about with the French Revolution; and Charles Tilly (1983), who argues that the ascension of modern nation-states provides an answer to and a justification to the need of establishing modern armies. As Jacquin-Berdal details (2002: 41), “the role played by war on the dissemination of national identity among individuals, that up until then, had just a mere vague understanding of the meaning and implications of their national belongings [note of the author: as it happened to many Yugoslavs in the early stages of the collapse of their country], cannot be underestimated”. She reassures as regards the importance of the role played by international organizations, transnational actors, expat or emigrant communities; roles that we define as rather relevant to the current research, aiming at a full understanding of the political nation and state building projects in the new countries arising out of the old Yugoslavia. Later in this chapter, from 2.12. to 2.14., the dissertation focuses on current scholarly debates around both nationalism and the Balkans. In the next section, the research focuses on the traditional division between ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism.

## 2.2. Ethnic and Civic Nationalism

Nation-states, “borders with containers of power”, as Giddens terms them (1985: 120), acquired some civic nationalism (as a political belief that defines a common citizenship). Individuals therefore gain rights and duties within a given territorial context,

---

<sup>40</sup> Motyl, Alexander, ed. (2001: 268), *Encyclopedia of Nationalism*. San Diego: Academic Press, p. 268.

<sup>41</sup> Motyl, Alexander, ed. (2001: 508-509), *Encyclopedia of Nationalism*. San Diego: Academic Press.

<sup>42</sup> Kymlicka, Will (1995: 34). *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

which constitutes citizenship in contemporary societies. However, the expression of nationality is not found in bureaucratic and impersonal relationships of the individual vis-à-vis the state that represents the people, or to which people belong, but rather in the memories, legacies, symbols, myths and popular vernacular, “forming a community of history and destiny, whose intellectuals seek to authenticate” (Smith, 1999:85).

According to this line of reasoning, the nation interweaves civic and ethnic components, thus endowing enhanced citizenship. However, when talking about the contemporary character of civic nationalism, we should not think that this is a completely innocuous term or, even worse, harmless. Even in models of civic nations, the nationalism of the dominant ethnic group may prove racist, xenophobic and aggressive, as proven in recent years with the political rise of populist and/or far-right parties and their leaders, for example Jean Marie and Marine Le Pen in France alongside others in countries including Austria, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Poland.

Regarding the recent crisis of mostly Syrian refugees fleeing war and destruction and coming to Europe, Czech President Milos Zeman said Europe “is facing an organized invasion and not a spontaneous movement of refugees”<sup>43</sup>, asking why these people did not stay in their own countries and take up arms “fighting for the freedom of their countries against Islamic State”. Denmark cut the financial support to those granted asylum by 45% in addition to the decision to confiscate personal objects and assets valued at more than thirteen thousand Euros. Jaroslaw Kaczynski in Poland warned of the “dangerous diseases that had not been seen in Europe for many years” and now being detected “in the bodies of those people”. Hungarian Prime-Minister Viktor Orban declared it dangerous that the refugees come because “we cannot guarantee that we accept them”. Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico said “we don’t want Muslims” and was a leading backer of the quota system put into place by EU after the agreement with Turkey signed on the 17-18th March 2016 summit in Brussels, allowing Greece to send back all new refugee arrivals to Turkey.

Nationalism can be destructive, as has so often proven the case, but it can also be constructive through building a national identity and the political actions stemming from a collective identification. We should not limit ourselves to simplistic and biased attitudes looking at nationalism as simple and reductionist expressions of ethnic hatreds, expansionism, militarism, aggression, separatism and exaggerated patriotism.

Wimmer (2004: 85), professor of Political and Cultural Change, and Director at the Center for Development Research of the University of Bonn, acknowledges that “since the fall of the Wall, ethno-nationalist conflicts have outweighed all other forms of political confrontation” and he starts his journey through ethno-wars from Europe to Asia and Africa

---

<sup>43</sup> From the Portuguese newspaper “I”, 16.03.2016, pags. 24-25.



precisely with “the intransigence of ethno-nationalist politics”, that, in his view, “has led to catastrophe in Bosnia”. He is also rather critical of the idea of nationalism as a product of globalization, even as an aggressive reaction to threats to the existing borders and sovereignties: “one wonders, however, how earlier waves of ethnic conflict may be explained if ‘globalisation’ represents, (...) a new world historical epoch of declining nation-states and ethno-cultural fragmentation” (idem). Would ethnically diverse societies be more likely to turn into violence than more homogeneous ones? Wimmer argues that there is no valid and proven link “between heterogeneity and violence”, that is to say, “there is no clear causal pattern” (2004: 86). Furthermore, he points out that “a country like Switzerland is the former Yugoslavia’s equal in every way in linguistic and cultural diversity, and has yet managed to avoid a pervasive politicisation of ethnicity” (idem).

In conjunction with Wimmer, the author of this dissertation does not embrace theories that tend to explain ethnic violence in this or that society (be it in the Balkans, in Africa, or elsewhere) as a feature of those societies, a “culture of violence” or a “violent character”. On the contrary, insisting on this kind of approach to explain violence may mean we are “merely reproducing the mutual stereotyping between factions at war” (2004: 86). This author argues that, “when the state apparatus is weak and no strong civil society has yet developed, this shift will lead to a politicisation of ethnic difference and to an ethnicisation of political conflicts” (Wimmer, 2004: 87).

Brubaker (2004), in *Ethnicity Without Groups*, warns us to the danger arising out of uncritically assuming “ethnic” nationalism as an almost exclusive benchmark of Eastern European countries whilst branding the West with a benevolent “civic” nationalism. In fact, “the triumphalist -or, at best, complacent- account of Western civic nationalism is too obviously problematic for this view to be seriously entertained. The unexpected (and partly nationalist) resistance to the Maastricht treaty, the longstanding violent conflicts in northern Ireland and the Basque country, the intensifying ethno-political conflict in Belgium, and the electoral successes of xenophobic parties in many countries -all these have made it impossible to hold such an uncritical view of the essentially ‘civic’ quality of West European nationalism” (2004: 134). Brubaker also argues that this distinction is even more common on an ideological basis than on any spatial or geographic grounds; that is, the distinction between states or national movements, is frequently made on an us-against-them basis, “to distinguish one’s own good, legitimate civic nationalism from the illegitimate ethnic nationalism found elsewhere” (2004: 134).

The author of this dissertation would agree with the need to adopt a critical reading of the distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism as if the latter might provide some sort of panacea to solve the problems caused by the former. Assuming the unavailability of distinctions, Brubaker concludes that the “the civic-ethnic distinction is overburdened; it is

expected to do too much work” (2004: 146). The American sociologist proposes a different distinction, “between state-framed and counter-state understandings of nationhood” as one way out. Although acknowledging the pertinence of the concerns and proposals laid down by Brubaker, dissertation’s author will now focus on the distinction between “banal”, following Michael Billig, and militant nationalism.

### **2.3. Banal Nationalism and Militant Nationalism**

Daily or even leisure time routines also contribute towards identifying the spirit of the nation. Michael Billig terms these “banal nationalism”: the flags, the anthems, language expressions (“our country”, “our land”), religious and sports celebrations with an evident nationalism tone, easily understood by the kind of speech used (“the team of all of us” as the Portuguese football national team commonly gets referred to by media), special days celebrating victories or symbolic moments of special importance. For instance, June 28th to the Serbs (Kosovo Polje battle); 5th August to the Croats (return to control in Knin, after Operation Storm against the Serbs; the day is now celebrated as Day of Victory, National Thanksgiving and Croat Defenders); in Bosnia, the national day of 25th November is contested by the Serb entity<sup>44</sup>. On that day, in 1943, in Mkrnjic Grad, BiH became a constitutive republic of Yugoslavia.

In a crisis context, banal nationalism, as Billig furthermore explains, can turn into “hot nationalism” (hereafter referred to as ‘militant’ nationalism): a call to war, secessionist fights (all the Balkan belligerents have done so), rejections of the foreigner, the neighbour, a powerful political tool to turn public eyes away from internal problems and crises. Nationalist exacerbation has been deployed in diverse periods and contexts by leaders such as Thatcher (Falklands), Bush (Gulf), Salazar (wars in Africa). Billig then adds “we must distance from ourselves and from all that we routinely accept as obvious or natural” (1995: 15). Those notions, so solidly banal, are nothing but “nationalist ideological constructions”; “invented permanencies historically created in modernity, but felt as ever existing” (1995: 29).

One here agrees with Sinisa Malesevic who maintains “the advance of modernity does not, and will not in the future, entail a decline of nationalism”. It may indeed turn out the other way around: “we witness its dominance over other ideologies, or its integration into them through banal nationalism” (Malesevic, 2007: 18). In a book he co-authored about the seminal work of Ernest Gellner, Malesevic explains, alongside Michael Billig, that “banal” nationalism “does not mean benign. The internalisation of the myths of the nation is

---

<sup>44</sup> Jukic, Elvira, “Serb Chief Denounces Bosnian National Day”, *Balkan Insight*, 24-11-2011. <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/dodik-calls-on-denial-of-bosnian-national-day>. Accessed on 16-06-2012.

absolutely central to the mobilisation of the mass machinery of war, which the modern state has developed to an unprecedented scale. The events of 9/11 were a trigger which allowed the banal nationalism of the everyday life of Americans to be mobilised into a war in which thousands are being killed” (2007: 18). Those who opposed the war were considered to be on the wrong side of the road, unpatriotic, and beyond the scope of social integration.

From another perspective, Anderson (1991) defines national communities as “imagined communities”. “Imagined” because a wide range of people, many of whom, even in the smallest of nations, will never actually get to know each other, carry in their consciousness the image of a community with a common language and territory. The central thesis of Anderson, in line with Karl Deutsch, encapsulates how communications and the media facilitated the emergence of nations as imagined communities, because only real contacts, face-to-face, may keep communities alive. According to this author, nationalism does not represent the awakening of the nation to some pre-existing self-awareness but rather the invention of nations where they formerly did not exist.

In times of crises, losses or profound social change, there are political leaders who emerge as true experts in inculcating nationalist sentiments among their citizens. In Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milošević<sup>45</sup>, on his way to becoming an expert in handling the masses, linked the past atrocities committed by the Ottomans and Croats against Serbs in ancient wars with the promise of a Greater Serbia, or a stronger Serbia within a Yugoslavia, which he always said he wanted to preserve. The strategy of Franjo Tuđman<sup>46</sup> for the secession and independence of Croatia was also manipulative of the national consciousness of the population. Alija Izetbegović<sup>47</sup> took the same approach with the dream of achieving a Muslim Bosnia.

Another conceptual legacy of great importance derives from the prevalence of what Smith calls the “peripheral” ethnic groups, as either they have developed or they have been forced to develop relations of subordination to a dominant ethnicity. We might here be referring to Serbs in Croatia, Albanians throughout Serbia (and in most of Kosovo), Croats in Bosnia, among others.

This dissertation’s author believes that examples of nationalism such as the Basque and even the Catalan, Irish and Corsican, prevailing among wide groups of population in industrialized and developed societies, amount to a plausible argument for refuting Smith on this matter given the importance he attaches to the perhaps overvalued economic dimension in the context of “peripheral” ethno-national challenges. However, it nonetheless remains true that this was exactly the argument deployed by Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo: Serb

---

<sup>45</sup> Former Serb and Yugoslav president. Passed away on 11.03.2006.

<sup>46</sup> Former and first president of independent Croatia. Passed away on 10.12.1999.

<sup>47</sup> Former and first president of independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. Passed away on 19.10.2003.

nationalism was fostered in the late 1980s against the autonomous province status decreed by the constitutional amendments promoted by Tito in 1974 fostering and leveraging Serb dissatisfaction with their living conditions and disparities in access to jobs, especially in the public sector. Albanian nationalism, in turn, got fuelled by the substantial reduction in these autonomous powers on the initiative of Slobodan Milošević in 1989.

Malešević (2006: 228), in his *Identity as Ideology: Understanding Ethnicity and Nationalism*, stresses the importance of nationalist narratives in our contemporary world: “regardless of substantive difference between various political orders and state elites, no serious political authority can afford to ignore identity. Any claim to legitimacy which is not in some way grounded in the dominant operative ideology of modernity – nationalism – is likely to fail”. Indeed, there is enough common sense, as well as mounting empirical evidence, to prevent us from concluding that contemporary nationalism proves basically only banal, inoffensive and non-violent.

The author of this dissertation, despite bearing in mind the tremendous importance of contributions made by some of the greatest theorists of nationalism, acknowledges what one may describe as premature optimism in Ernest Gellner perceiving nationalism and ethnic bonds as factors with waning influence or when Anthony D. Smith envisages them as some sort of safe passage to a free society; or even when Billig focuses almost solely on the banal expressions of nationalism.

#### **2.4. Nationalism and Economic Development**

To authors such as Marx or Hobsbawm, nationalism has always been interlinked with economic development stages, the *sine qua non* condition of the birth of nations, while stage and territorial market to guarantee trade, investment, labour, and capital. The opinion of Anthony Smith (1999: 23) proves very different: “The scale, budgets, technology, personnel and the scope of economic organizations have increased over the last decades, but it does not follow that the nature, scale and operations of political units, let alone cultural, must suffer equivalent changes. They belong to different domains and each has its own processes and specific trends in this field”. There is, in fact, not much in common between increasing technological scale and economic success on the one hand, and the growth of ethnic nationalism in the cultural and political fields, on the other.

However, nationalism often emerges and does so still today in advanced industrial, economically modernized societies. Smith (1999:37) mentions the case of Catalan nationalism in Spain and in France itself, from the objections to the European defence community already present in the early 1950s to the antipathy felt by many French towards immigrants, especially Muslims (with the increasing power of mobilization and political

influence of the FN – the National Front of Marine Le Pen, who successfully transformed an extreme-right wing party, previously run by her father Jean-Marie Le Pen, into a populist-right wing-nationalistic party which is, for the time being, one of the biggest political parties in France). In the spatial area of this research, this author would stress that, as already briefly described previously in this dissertation, within the context of post-Tito but still federal and socialist Yugoslavia, the secessionist impulses were triggered by the economically stronger republics, as well as more westernized, such as Slovenia and Croatia.

Would we not consider the prosperous and powerful United States of America a nationalist country? Anthony Smith believes that the U.S. makes up what he calls “continental nationalism”. A notion of a kind of singular, specific common destiny is completely rooted in American society, which encourages citizens “to feel their common historical mission as bearers of freedom and democracy. This shared patriotism, this messianic belief in America, this almost religious sense of a common destiny, seems to act, in peace times, independently from the economic and political vicissitudes of the country and does not seem to fade with the growing prosperity and mass consumption” (Smith, 1999: 38,39).

Michael Billig (1995: 6) contests that nationalism systematically refers to the periphery of the developed world: “being systematically restricted to small sizes and exotic colours, nationalism is identified as a problem; is ‘there’, on the outskirts, not ‘here’ in the centre. The separatists, the fascists and the guerrillas are a nationalism problem. The ideological habits, by which nations are reproduced as nations, are not called to the discussion. A national flag flying outside a government building in the United States does not attract attention”. This is far from being understood as a problem. And this furthermore constitutes the reason Billig introduces “banal nationalism as a theme to address the ideological habits that allow the reproduction of established Western nations. (...) One point must be emphasized: banal does not mean benign” (ibidem).

Smith moderates the importance attributed to the economic factor, as postulated by the “modernist” trends. From his perspective, nations and modern nationalism, are based on pre-existing ethnic backgrounds and their capacity for political mobilization. He does not however mean that capitalism and industrialization or, if one prefers, globalization, are therefore absent in generating tensions and conflicts of an ethno-national character. But considering them as the main factor means ignoring the primacy of politics and the social, cultural and historical dimensions inevitably and appropriately associated with the recent ethnic nationalism. In this way, Smith does not seek to propose that economic factors somehow play a minor role in the genesis and development of ethnic neo-nationalism; they are still attributed an important role even if only as catalysts.

Economic trends and economic crises, in fact, often explain “why ethnic nationalism

arises at any given time” (Smith, 1999: 63). The historian Mark Mazower argues that “the dismantling of tariffs in protected state industries as well as the exposure to global competition meant the triumph of neo-liberal forces. The traditional Balkan nation-state is no longer challenged by the old empires; it is not even challenged by the rivalry and hostility of neighbours; its main threat comes now from the international economy” (Mazower, 2000: 141, 142).

Nevertheless, to some extent, there is also a Western misconception of the collapse of Yugoslavia, which interrelates this with, as Woodward puts it, a “stylized view of communist regimes as centralistic, repressive dictatorships. The fact that the collapse had more to do with the transition of a particular constitutional order, its social and economic rights, and a society much transformed over forty years to another type of political order and its procedural and civil rights, was beyond common knowledge about these regimes” (Woodward, 1995: 13).

More than generated by ancient hatreds and on the edge of nationalistic rhetoric, the conflict in the former Yugoslavia resulted from “the politics of transforming a socialist society to a market economy and democracy. A critical element of this failure was economic decline, caused largely by a program intended to resolve a foreign debt crisis”, which, after a decade of austerity measures and falling standards of living, “corroded the social fabric and the right and securities that individuals and families had come to rely on” (1995: 15). This was, in fact, the beginning of the dismantling of the Yugoslavia founded and sustained under Tito: “normal political conflicts over economic resources between central and regional governments and over the economic and political reforms of the debt-repayment package became constitutional conflicts and then a crisis of the state itself among politicians who were unwilling to compromise”. The fighting by the leaderships of the republics, whether over assuring or enhancing their political jurisdictions and property rights over economic resources within their republics, led the federal state into a deadlock, incapable of regulating and resolving conflicts “over economic rights and the political powers of subordinate governments” (1995: 16).

## **2.5. Politicization of Culture and the Purification of the Community**

Smith (1999) identifies two key stages in the construction of nationalism as a legitimizing ideology of (and legitimized by) national identity. This simultaneous process of re-appropriating the historical legacy and corresponding vernacular mobilization arises when small groups of intellectuals realize the lack of knowledge about the ethnic community’s past as compared with the myths, traditions and memories known and shared by members of other communities.

The first phase thus spans the historical re-appropriation, with the group trying to

organize a coherent ethno-history of the community, a task to which linguists, historians and writers usually devote themselves. This activity gradually gives way to the mobilisation of all the 'intelligentsia', from professors to journalists and political leaders, due to the importance of the values, symbols, languages, traditions and myths of the community, many of which remain in a niche among the traditional and more restricted groups of the population and therein taken as living memories of ethnic authenticity.

Following Smith, this represents the starting point for the next process: vernacular mobilization. Language is the most striking symbol of an ethno-history, thus “evokes a sense of intimate expression among its speakers, (...) remains a vital realm of vernacular mobilization and authentication” (Smith, 1999: 58), setting down boundaries between speakers and non-speakers, “we” and “them”. We might note the importance of the Serbian linguist Vuk Karadžić, who completed the adaptation of the Cyrillic alphabet for the modern Serbian language in the 1810s<sup>48</sup> or the role of Croatian President Franjo Tuđman and the linguistic changes he introduced by government decree in the mid 1990s, after the 1991-1995 war, in order to distinguish between and also reinforce the differences between the components of the same language, Serbo-Croatian, often recovering words for long fallen in disuse from everyday life, within the framework of establishing a distinctive Croatian Language<sup>49</sup>.

This vernacular mobilization affects every area of community cultural life, from music to dance, ballet and painting, theatre and cinema, national ownership of landscapes, historical monuments and museums and “the construction of a national mythology and political symbolism”. Smith states that “the visual arts and music had a special importance in the crystallization of an authentic national imagery” (Smith, 1999: 58). The community's culture and purification of politics thus become national regeneration processes within a context of political struggle. Symbols, events, heroes and monuments of the past often serve for the revival of objects, therefore gaining new political strength. The past is politicized in the present, with the transformation of its symbols and meanings for what Smith (1999) calls “retrospective nationalism”.

Popular culture has also been often the target of these attempts to “purify” the community, which involve dropping incorporated “foreign” habits, whether in vocabulary, dress, diet or in the lifestyle generally and engaging in a “reappropriation of features typical for a renewal of indigenous culture” (Smith, 1999: 60). However, one must note, despite the validity of Smith's reasoning, the globalization of the financial economy and the changes in

---

<sup>48</sup> *Burn This House: The Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia*, (eds), Jasminka Udovicki, James Ridgeway, Duke University Press, 2000, pp.23-24.

<sup>49</sup> *At War with Words*, Mirjana N. Dedaić, Daniel N. Nelson (Eds.), Mouton De Gruyter, Berlin, New York, 2003, p.13.

terms of new information technologies (the Internet) have made it even more difficult for any given community to “abandon” what is foreign, closing itself in on its own culture as a way of reclaiming foundational values and customs and thereby politicizing culture and purifying the community.

It turns out that the “We” issue necessarily involves the “Other”. According to Smith (1999: 60), “to purify the community requires a hardening of attitudes towards foreign elements and ethnic minorities in their midst”. Whilst, in the beginnings of such processes, minorities and foreigners are tolerated as commercial intermediaries, they then become, economically but also culturally, remarkable rivals, or worse, “erosive agents of moral fibre and the nation's biological purity”. This leads to the classification of ethnic minorities, who may have long lived side by side “as if it was an imminent danger to their lives and the nation's character, to be removed whenever possible”. At this point, communities may feel the desire to create a “morally homogeneous community worthy of their heroic ancestors and regenerated through this politicized vernacular culture, led to the purification of its citizens and the strict exclusion, or the destruction of everything that was abroad” (ibid.). This is, in short, a movement almost always present in all nationalist processes: vernacular mobilization, cultural politicization and community purification. The nationalistic processes in the countries of former Yugoslavia, are hard evidence rendering validity to this type of argument.

According to Kulyk (2011: 628), “the language that people speak normally serves as criteria defining the language of the group, that academics understand not only as an analytical category, but also as social collectives whose members have real meanings of solidarity intra-group and extra-group distance.” To the author (2011: 630), the “language of identity should be seen as a stronger determinant in terms of cleavage than the practice of the language.”

The author of this dissertation, participated in the 2012 conference on Nationalism at the LSE - London School of Economics, in London, and interviewed the American sociologist Rogers Brubaker. Aligning language and religion with ethnicity and nationalism, he told this author that, “language and religion simultaneously unite and divide. But are powerfully changed through political and social processes”, in considering how language has been chronically infused with politics. And, as Brubaker stated in this interview with the author, “the nationalist leaders (in the Balkans) attempted to redefine religion by politicizing it.” Brubaker denies the religious character of the Balkan conflicts, highlighting the politicization of religion, symbols and language in nationalist conflicts “in the Balkans and in Northern Ireland.”<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> Interview with the author, recorded at the London School of Economics on 28.02.2012.



This does not substantially differ from the line followed by Jackson (2004: 162), when researching on education, stating that all schools (British, in this case) should promote social justice, “including religious tolerance, knowledge about religions, developing the skills of students in terms of critical and independent thinking and the dialogue and interaction between young people from different religious backgrounds.” The role of education is discussed in detail in chapter seven. In the next section of the current chapter, this dissertation moves on to focusing on the links between intellectual elites and nationalism.

## 2.6. Intellectual Elites and Nationalism

The “Synthetic Yugoslav Culture of the Interwar period” is analyzed by Andrew B. Wachtel (Djojic, 2003: 241) to whom intellectuals such as Ivan Mestrovic and Ivo Andric voiced out the dream of a Yugoslav culture and stated that would mean some “kind of ‘absolute ideal’, more universal than national, confessional, or political... capable of enveloping, pacifying and synthesizing all that was best in Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian cultures”.

What are intellectuals? Who are they? Writers? Teachers? Academics? Journalists? Economists? Artists? In the book *Le Siècle des intellectuels*, the French author Michael Winock (2000)<sup>51</sup> applies the designation to those who work in the domains of knowledge and thought and use their reputation and prominence to intervene in the public sphere.

The complexity of today's society has contributed to blurring or diluting the role of intellectuals defined in classical terms, great thinkers with generalist interventions in the public sphere such as Raymond Aron or Jean-Paul Sartre, opening up spaces to those who somehow specialize in this or that area. Nowadays, intellectuals may still class as gurus, influencing public opinion, and particularly when they have impact in the media, such as Bourdieu or Castells or Slavoy Zizek.

In his *The Year of Dreaming Dangerously*, published in 2012, in the midst of the so-called Arab Spring, Zizek recalled that the then recent homophobic attacks which had been happening in post-communist states should be the object of reflection: “should give us pause for thought. In early 2011, thousands took part in a gay parade in Istanbul without violence or disturbance; in gay parades that took place at the same time in Serbia and Croatia (Belgrade and Split), the police were unable to protect the participants, who were ferociously attacked by thousands of violent Christian fundamentalists. These kinds of fundamentalists, not those in Turkey, stand for the true threat to the European legacy; so in relation to the EU basically blocking Turkey’s entry into the Union, the obvious question arises: what about applying the same rules to Eastern Europe?” The Slovene philosopher also questions the weirdness of the

---

<sup>51</sup> Michel Winock, *O Século dos Intelectuais*, Terramar, 2000.

“fact that the main force behind the anti-gay movement in Croatia is the Catholic Church, well known for numerous paedophile scandals involving priests and young boys” (Žižek, 2012: 38).

However, Žižek, as the case with a few other pop-philosophers<sup>52</sup>, or fashion philosophers, despite their worldwide popularity, remain far from influencing the masses; even while they may mobilize the attention of more specific market niches. The same happens with writers. Sarajevo-born and raised writer Dževad Karahasan, in *Sarajevo – Exodus of a City*, concludes literature is “doubtlessly responsible for politics, and to that extent one has to inquire about the responsibility and guilt of literature for some political forms, acts and effects” (Karahasan, 2012: 90). The writer goes further, in assuming that responsibility: “I come from a destroyed country. Bad literature, or misuse of the literary craft, is responsible for that” (2012: 91).

The Bosnian writer struggles against a type of literature indifferent to what happens or may happen outside literature in the real world of people. As Karahasan states: “Doctors, bakers, carpenters, telephone operators, miners, policemen and students – all of them are obliged to respect the basic rules of their respective crafts, and to preserve their integrity. For nobody normal would consider living in an experimental house or wearing an ironic suit (...). Only a writer has no obligations to his craft, and has no reason to preserve its integrity and logic, to respect obligations that his craft assigns to him” (2012: 93-94). To Karahasan (2012: 95), “the indifference of people prepared to do anything (...) started with an art whose practitioners decided to liberate it, and thus discovered the daring beauty of the totally senseless game. (...) In the name of the beauty of outrageousness, that art completely abdicated its ethical responsibility and integrity, which are the unavoidable obligations of every craft”. Since the people in “this literature are Serbs, Croats, Communists, Royalists, or something similar, in the first place, and only after that, in the second or third place, are they people with personal traits” (2012: 98), “whatever happens to a person happens because he is a Serb or a Communist, and not because he is the way he is” (2012: 99).

It is the dissertation author’s conviction that secularized intellectual elites have always laid down the rules of play, in the forefront of nationalist processes, especially with regard to several cases of ethnic nationalism that emerged in recent decades. Examples could range from Québec in Canada (where middle management professionals, from journalists to doctors, from lawyers to engineers and teachers, starred, in the early 1960s, in the so-called silent revolution, fighting for equal rights for the French language in every single aspect of public life in Québec) to Scotland in the U.K. (intellectuals, middle management and small business owners have been fighting for independence for more than forty years; a referendum

---

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2016/07/leader-iraq-war-and-its-aftermath>. Published on 19.10.2015; accessed on 07.07.2016.

was called in 2014 asking “Should Scotland be an independent country”, but the majority about 55% of the voters said “No”<sup>53</sup>, and even in the Spanish province of Catalonia (where Catalan intellectuals have held enormous influence ever since the literary renaissance, throughout the resistance to Franco and into contemporary times).

Nationalism touches every single aspect of political and non-political life, and as did very much happened in the former Yugoslav republics and its autonomous provinces. Following Woodward, when stating that “nationalism reaches into the non-political aspects of contemporary life, cultural identities, historical memories, alternative social networks, and organizations that are already present in society, such as the churches that had established a *modus vivendi* with the communist regimes”, this thesis would argue that in the former Yugoslavia nationalism eventually included a substantially diverse spectrum of opponents to the communist regime, from “genuine opposition, those politically excluded from the previous regime, to opportunists regardless of their substantive policy positions” (Woodward, 1995: 124-125). Nevertheless, the role of intellectuals is unquestionable. Would-be Croatian president after the wars of the 1990s, Franjo Tudjman had been sent to prison during Tito’s regime for advocating nationalist ideas in newspapers; the non-violent movement for the emancipation and independence of Kosovo was led by a poet, Ibrahim Rugova; Alija Izetbegovic, the ‘father’ of Bosnian Muslim independence authored, in the early 1980s, the Islamic Declaration; Dobrica Cosic, the renowned poet, was the mentor of the Memorandum that, in the mid-1980s, allegedly fuelled Serbian nationalists and helped Slobodan Milošević to rally the masses around his political objectives.

The role of the intellectuals is to be discussed in detail later in this text, in the cases studied, in trying to ascertain whether there is any permanency in that influential role and whether or not intellectuals can also work the other way around, that is to say, downgrading the nationalist tone and working towards more inclusive, respectful of the differences and reconciled societies.

## **2.7. Media and Nationalism: Communication, Manipulation, Action**

“Serbia is a prison, locked both from inside and outside, internally living under an authoritarian regime, a dictatorship; from the outside, with isolation and sanctions. Nevertheless, we try to do our work, as people who believe in a democratic journalism, professional, following European standards, if we can say so. It’s always hard times for those who think this way. But of course we will not give up and will keep believing in these

---

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/scottish-independence-referendum/about>. Accessed on 17.03.2016.

principles. Because there is no other way”, Serb renowned journalist (and author’s influential reference) Stevan Nikšić said in Belgrade, back in 2000 (Alexandre, 2002: 170).

Modern politics are “largely mediated politics, experienced by the great majority of citizens at one remove, through their print and broadcast media of choice. Any study of democracy in contemporary conditions is therefore also a study of how the media report and interpret political events and issues” (McNair, 2000: 1).

We live in a globalized world, impregnated with media networks and information flows, although states, meaning countries and governments in power, remain critical actors and stick to increasingly professional structures of propaganda and control: “the fabrication and diffusion of messages that distort facts and induce misinformation for the purpose of advancing government interests” (Castells, 2009: 264).

It is true that the actual level of governmental control of the media and communication networks broadly speaking can “vary according to the legal and social environment in which a given state operates”. One may also add that the economic capacity of the state also plays a crucial role: an autocratic regime, with a doubtful record on the rule of law, a lack of transparency in public institutions, an absence of regulatory boards, may, after all, be less controlling or weaker and more inefficient in controlling, due to a lack of qualified human and technological resources, than some model of a developed democracy in a well off country. Of course, a poor country may also apply an oversized proportion of its limited resources to the goal of controlling these communication networks.

Various studies and numerous surveys mentioned by Castells convey how “a majority of citizens in the world do not trust their governments or their parliaments, and an even larger group of citizens despise politicians and political parties, and think that their government does not represent the will of the people”. And, furthermore, this is not happening solely in developing countries and regions but in advanced democracies as well, where “public trust in government and political institutions has substantially decreased in the past three decades”<sup>54</sup>. What are the causes? Castells argues that “dissatisfaction with specific policies, and with the state of the economy and society at large, are important factors in accounting for citizen disaffection. Yet, survey data find that perception of corruption is the most significant predictor of political distrust” (ibid.).

Trust in public institutions improves transparency in public life and directly relates to the functioning of the media, and its editorial independence, especially regarding the political and economic elites. That has not been the case in the Balkans since the wars of disintegration of Yugoslavia. Or even before them, in fact. The media in Tito’s Yugoslavia was – “in tune

---

<sup>54</sup> Castells refers to surveys, such as the World Economic Forum’s Voice of the People Survey (2008), the Eurobarometer (2007), the Asian Barometer (2008), the Latinobarometro (2007), Accenture (2006), Transparency International (2007), among others.

with what came to be known as ‘the Leninist theory of the press’ – conceived primarily as propaganda and educational institutions, and not as public forums where different opinions could be openly confronted”, as Sabina Mihelj tells us in her article “The Media and the Symbolic Geographies of Europe: The Case of Yugoslavia” (Uricchio, 2008: 165).

David Turton (1997: 1), bearing in mind the Balkan wars of the 1990s, helps us understand three key points in the use of ethnicity by political leaders with the aim of the mobilization and manipulation of public opinion: “the use of electronic medium (radio, but especially TV), the territorial imperative of ethnic nationalism and the predisposition of the nationalist leaders to sacrifice the lives of their fellow citizens in order to expand or consolidate the maintenance of power”.

The intentionality of actions conveyed by a certain message may decisively influence the effects produced by communication. In April 1987, when the then President of the Serbian Communist Party, Slobodan Milošević, went to Kosovo to hear complaints from Serbs, and is introduced to someone, a common Serb who had been beaten by police moments before, he declared, “no one will ever beat a Serb”. Since this statement was then repeatedly broadcast by state television and the *Politika* newspaper in Belgrade, the effect could only be the national exaltation of Serbs and the nurturing of fear among Kosovo Albanians: “on the level of oratory and rhetoric, Milošević identified his leadership with the will of the Serbian people. He found allies in the chief editor of *Politika*, Živorad Minović, and on official television”. (Udovicki, 2000: 88). Newspaper *Politika* held an outstanding status in Serbian society; founded in 1904, older than the country itself as well as the oldest newspaper in the country, “a paper the public identified with the country’s best liberal traditions” (Udovicki, 2000: 89).

Slobodan Milošević met with Serbian citizens – at that point with their constitutional autonomous rights yet to be revoked - in Kosovo Polje, precisely where six hundred years before the Serbs had been defeated by the Ottoman Empire, a military defeat transformed into a spiritual and mythical victory to the point of exhaustion. The meeting was held in a building with the capacity for a few hundred but fifteen thousand turned out to listen to Milošević (Dragnich, 1995: 41), so those who could not be among the pre-selected Serbs stayed outside demonstrating. In the meeting, the atmosphere was heading only in one direction, which we may easily grasp from some of the excerpts published by the Communist party organ, *Borba*, and quoted in Dragnich's book: “Serbian man: 'I know why Germany was divided after the war, but why was Serbia divided?' Serbian man: 'We do not need guarantees... heads will fall, because it is impossible to endure and to permit the beating of our children and women' Serbian woman: 'Either there will be some order in Kosovo, or by God we will take up arms again if need be' Serbian woman: From the establishment of the Pristina University there has been a process of ethnic depuration of Kosovo and a process of cultural purity'; Serbian man: 'How is it that according to the 1974 Constitution, Serbo-

Croatian is also an official language in Kosovo while in the Constitution of the province it is not obligatory?” (Dragnich, 1995: 41, 42).

Moreover, in view of the upheavals that were being heard from across the street, Milošević ended with the alleged purpose of calming tempers; the old man who had been beaten by police (then mostly of Albanian origins) was then presented to him and he pronounced the soon-to-be famous declaration, “no one ever will beat a Serb”, even if Milošević was not informed that the protesters had initially launched a shower of stones onto the police officers.

The Kosovo Polje events and the then famous statement of Milošević may be framed in the criteria defined by Bitti and Zani (1993: 237) for producing media relayed effects: “to have in mind the audience's attitude, its characteristics, the specific situation in which the communication occurs; the particular type of content and form of the message itself”.

The role of the media, and the present media landscape, is discussed in detail below for the country-cases studied. In the next section of the current chapter, this dissertation moves to the analysis of cinema and arts in the (re)production of nationalism and their role (or absence of) in reconciling societies.

## 2.8. Cinema, Arts and Nationalism

*“War is cinema and cinema is war” Virilio (1989:29)*

*“If that film that Yugoslavia forgot to make had been made, maybe the country would have never broken up.”* (From the documentary *Orchestra - Pjer Žalica*, about the Plavi Orkestar, a famous Yugoslav pop band from the 1980s).

Cinema serving as propaganda, with obvious nationalist objectives, is neither geographically exclusive to the Balkans nor temporally a phenomenon from the late twentieth century. Since its earliest days, cinema was deployed as a powerful tool for propaganda, and some of the best examples of propagandistic films also rank among the best films made in the history of cinema itself. The American D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), the Russian Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), the German Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1935) are worthwhile remembering as symbols of the best cinema serving as the best propaganda<sup>55</sup>.

Films about the aftermath of conflicts are something newer: *Aftermath: The*

---

<sup>55</sup> A useful reference is *Theorising national cinema*, Valentina Vitali, Paul Willemen (eds.), British Film Institute, 2006.

*Remnants of War*<sup>56</sup> is a 2001 Canadian documentary film directed by Daniel Sekulich self-defined as revealing an unspoken truth about wars: they never end. A film about the legacy of war, based on the eponymous book by Donovan Webster, it is a documentary filmed on the locations of four major conflicts: Sarajevo in Bosnia, Verdun in France (First World War), Stalingrad in Russia and Vietnam. The film incorporates interviews with people involved in clearing landmines and other unexploded munitions, others who identify corpses or provide aid to victims of chemical weapons. A common example of a genre – if we may have the freedom to classify it as genre -, post-war cinema, which has also produced some masterpieces, such as *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1979), directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder with Hanna Schygulla; Akira Kurosawa's *I Live In Fear* (1955), set in the wake of the Hiroshima nuclear attack; *Hiroshima, Mon Amour* by Alan Renais, with its script by Margerite Duras; *Europa* (1991) from Lars Von Trier, just to mention some of the most emblematic.

After the Second World War, the few films produced in Yugoslavia in the following years were mostly about the partisan resistance and using abundantly rural landscapes, a way of showing the purity of the nation, becoming central “to the articulation of a national identity for the new state. The Slovenian production *Na svoji zemlji [On Their Own Ground]* (Stiglic', 1948), the Croatian feature *Zivjeće ovaj narod [This People Must Live]* (Popovic', 1947), and, most significantly, the Serb film *Slavica* (Afrić, 1947) all use recognizable and beautiful rural landscapes to ground their patriotic narratives of partisan national resistance” (Galt, 2006: 163). Neo-realism was the trend in European cinema, especially the Italian<sup>57</sup>, and “post-war Yugoslav films have a lot in common textually with neo-realism” (2006: 164). As we find in the film *On their Own Ground*, by France Stiglic from Slovenia (1948), “the partisans, when captured remove their shoes in order to die with the feeling of their own land beneath their feet” (Galt, 2006: 165).

The Yugoslavia wars of disintegration and the aftermath of the civil conflicts in the 1990s have also “produced” an interesting filmography, which is not surprising since Yugoslavia was a country with a very rich cinematic tradition from the 1950s onwards with big budget films, making it possible for stars such as Richard Burton to play “Tito himself in *The Battle of Sutjeska (Sutjeska, Stipe Delić, 1973)*, or *The Battle of Neretva (Bitka na Neretvi, Veljko Blajić, 1969)*, in which Orson Welles played a Chetnik leader, and Yul Brynner the lead partisan soldier role” (Jelaca, 2014: 34).

---

<sup>56</sup> [http://www.nfb.ca/film/aftermath\\_the\\_remnants\\_of\\_war](http://www.nfb.ca/film/aftermath_the_remnants_of_war). Accessed on 19.03.2016.

<sup>57</sup> From Galt (2006: 168) “Both Italian and Yugoslav postwar national identities were constructed cinematically through landscape discourses, and both national cinemas constantly return to this moment. The partisan drama has been a recurring feature of Yugoslav film, from the heroic films of the late 1940s and early 1950s, to some more critical examinations of the war in the mid-to-late 1950s”.

In Belgrade there was a huge place called Cinecittá, the City of Cinema, which is now the Avala Studios, originally built by the Communists right after the Second World War: “the whole idea was to create a Hollywood of the East”<sup>58</sup>, the Serbian film director Mila Turajilic told this author. The place became known as Avala Studio with almost half of all Yugoslav films made there. Films about reconstruction, young people in workers brigades, and partisan films about the fight against German occupation during the war: “At one point, it was the second largest studio in Europe, now there are still 110 people employed there, but they don’t make a film for twenty years. It is a very sad place nowadays, like a ghost town, but when you walk around, you can feel how special it was in the past, specially in the 1960s, with the co-productions with the Western countries cinema industries”.

The 1948 split between Tito and Stalin meant that Yugoslavia was much more under the influence of New York than of Moscow. As Ramet and Crnkovic (2003: 159) put it, in a country like old Yugoslavia, “American popular culture was a strong force in setting the norms of various aspects of everyday life, including things such as bodily beauty, desirable objects (cars, houses, clothes, furniture), or romantic affairs”. When the British actor Richard Burton played the role of Josip Broz Tito in the Yugoslav film *Neretva*, he and his wife, American actress Elizabeth Taylor, visited Yugoslav president Tito in his residence on the island of Brioni”.

Nevertheless, despite this American cultural influence on domestic audiences, there was also some space (just as far as censorship allowed) for a movement such as the Yugoslav Black Wave, with films that did not portray Tito or life under Yugoslav socialism in a very pleasant way,<sup>59</sup> in the late 1960s and early 1970s, deepening artistic freedom while dealing on screen with the dark sides of society and Tito’s policies.

Dušan Makavejev was considered to be the leader of the Black Wave filmmakers<sup>60</sup>. He directed a highly successful political satire *WR: Mysteries of the Organism* (1971), which was banned. After fleeing the country, Makavejev would be invited by Francis Ford Coppola to direct *Apocalypse Now*, which he refused (the world could thank him), making *Sweet Movie* in 1988 in Canada, the Netherlands and France.

In Croatia, the most notorious film interrelated with this essentially Serb movement

---

<sup>58</sup> Interview with the author, 23.10.2011, in Lisbon, where the filmmaker presented her *Cinema Komunisto*.

<sup>59</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yugoslav\\_Black\\_Wave](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yugoslav_Black_Wave). Accessed on 19.03.2016. See also, for further readings, Daniel J. Goulding, *Liberated Cinema: The Yugoslav Experience, 1945-2002*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

<sup>60</sup> The term Black Wave was, in fact, coined in 1969 by journalist Vladimir Jovičić, insisting on the position of the traditional communist party line, in an article “The Black Wave in Our Cinema”, prompting the Party to attack the movement and its leading figures.



was *Lisice* (*Handcuffs*, 1969, by Krsto Papić), considered as the first fiction about the secrets of the breakup between Josip Broz Tito and Joseph Stalin in 1948<sup>61</sup>.

Heightened political repression eventually played a decisive role in the Black Wave movement with some directors forced into exile. Others had to change jobs to make a living. Bosnian film director Bato Cengic, after directing two films in the early 1970s “that poked impish fun at the system, the delightfully sly *Life of Shock Workers* and *The Role of My Family in the World Revolution* (which features a cake in the shape of Stalin’s head that the family avidly devours), (he) wasn’t allowed to direct for ten years” (Turan, 2002: 95). Cengic turned his BMW, one of the first in Sarajevo, into a taxi. A question of survival, years prior to when this word would take on a greatly reinforced meaning.

But between the two margins – blockbusters sponsored by the government with Hollywood stars – and anti-regime films, there was also a broad and huge variety of cinema production, dealing with social themes from collective identity, to love and borders, and even women’s rights.

At that time, the most important film festival in Yugoslavia was held in the Croatian city of Pula. Tito would stay on some nearby island and “boats would shuttle key films out to him every night. ‘When the boat returned with the films, remembers Goran Markovic, director of the delightful *Tito and Me*, the projectionist would ‘tell us he laughed’ or ‘he stopped the projection.’ Very often the films he loved became favorites at the festival” (Turan, 2002: 95).

After the collapse of the country, the new sovereign states managed to rebuild their cinema industries and, due to the historical importance of cinema in Yugoslavia, all of them also pushed to make films that promoted national unity, which means, in this case, nationalism.

The Sarajevo film festival has become an important European festival mostly due to the city’s character of resistance throughout the war<sup>62</sup>. The shelling from the hills surrounding Sarajevo was so intense, especially in 1992 and 1993, coupled with the sniper shootings, that people could hardly find food and water. Therefore, those who had the courage to organize and those who had the courage to attend a film festival, became the main actors in the real life film of citizenship. “Many, many people, including myself, dreamed for nights and nights, we wished to see just once more another good movie”, says film director Bato Cengic (Turan, 2002: 97). Talking about wartime and Sarajevo under siege, the Bosnian film director says, “Hunger is not the worst thing that can happen to a person. As for death, I was ignoring it. If

---

<sup>61</sup> See *Liberated Cinema: The Yugoslav Experience, 1945-2001*, Daniel J. Goulding, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2002.

<sup>62</sup> The author attended the festival after the end of the conflict, in the years 1996 and 1997. In 2016, the festival hosted a worldwide cinema star: Robert de Niro.

grenades went off, I didn't turn around. I was superior compared to death. But what made me unhappy and sad was that I didn't have communication with the civilized world. That was the worst part" (Turan, 2002: 104). The critic Vladimir Staka says the atmosphere surrounding a sieged festival – like the city itself – in those days, was “crazy, something like a ‘Mad Max’ situation. People were shot and died on the way to the festival” (Turan, 2002: 105). Haris Pasovic, who was the Festival's first director in 1993, would recall that “the favorite question of journalists during my festival was ‘Why a film festival during the war?’ My answer was ‘Why the war during a film festival?’ It was the siege that was unusual, not the festival. It was like we didn't have a life before, like our natural state of mind and body was war” (ibid.).

Dana Rotbart, director and wife of *Perfect Circle* director Ademir Kenovic, was instrumental in getting the films since her Mexican passport allowed her to get out of the city and come back: “I took a plane to Paris and for a week or ten days called every possible person I knew or didn't know. It was totally non-professional, there were no contracts, I just was getting tapes, tapes, tapes.” (Turan, 2002: 105). She managed to get 170 films. The staff of almost eighty people, was paid in cigarettes from a tobacco factory and flour and cooking oil from a bakery. Tickets, which were given away, were getting sold on the black-market. It was a big success, with “crowds in front of the theatres on opening day (Turan, 2002: 106). On the second day, the shelling was rather intense, which makes many Sarajevans believe the Bosnian Serbs did this on purpose.

For the 1997 festival, less than two years after the end of the war, there were children's matinees of films like *The Lion King*, *The Little Princess*, and *Pocahontas*, “which started when director Purivatra realized that the four-year siege meant that a generation of children hadn't had the opportunity to see movies on a big screen. (...) To witness the power of the unadulterated enjoyment film can provide, to experience the resilience of children, is to believe Sarajevo's permanent renewal is possible after all” (Turan, 2002: 108).

Dijana Jelaca, a US-based scholar from Bosnia<sup>63</sup>, Adjunct Professor in the Department of Rhetoric, Communication and Theater at St. John's University, New York, in her doctoral thesis at the University of Massachusetts, published at the time of this writing, wrote about *The Genealogy of Dislocated Memory: Yugoslav Cinema after the Break*. It is a groundbreaking piece about cinema, collective memory, nationalism and a generation from a country that does not exist anymore, as well as an important reference and source of inspiration to the current dissertation.

It is a work, as the author admits, in the very first lines, “about a part of the world that I call ‘home’ even though that place no longer physically exists. I belong to that ‘lost

---

<sup>63</sup> “Ethnically a Bosnian Serb, born and raised in Croatia, I found the abrupt unravelling of my identity closely intertwined with the messy disappearance of my native country in inexplicably complicated ways. My experience of the Yugoslav wars was immediate and first-hand” (Jelaca, 2014: 43).

generation' of youth whose childhoods ended abruptly when Yugoslavia went up in flames". Jelaca researches about how films "re-create a cultural space (nowadays referred to as the 'Yugosphere') that tackles the question of not only what Yugoslavia was, but what in some ways it still is – and not just in the esoteric domain of memory" (Jelaca, 2014: v.).

Her generation, children in Tito's Yugoslavia, adults all of a sudden by the time the country was falling apart, was forced "to reconfigure our sense of collective belonging by letting go of our multicultural childhoods, and by abruptly coming of age through an imposition of ethno-national belonging that separated us from many of our friends who suddenly belonged to "other" groups" (Jelaca, 2014: v.).

This scholar analyzes the post-conflict cinema in the region of the former Yugoslavia, and the way cinema relates to national identity, history, politics, and memory; the way in which this "has become a pivotal outlet for the process of working through the trauma of recent violent history in the region". One major argument from her dissertation is that "certain trauma narratives represented through cinema have the potential of destabilizing the essentialist locating of trauma within singular (here predominantly ethno-national and heterosexual) identity, by offering a pathway towards affective attachments of empathy towards the Other instead".

When Yugoslavia collapsed, the cinema industry in the so-called "region", followed the path and the fate of the country itself, as Jelaca will conclude, "dispersing into nationally-based smaller cinema industries, but lately, also going back to the practice of increasing co-productions across the cinemas of the former country, thereby potentially bringing back the relevance of dubbing the films that come out of the region as 'Yugoslav' after all. It appears that Yugoslavia might have only existed on screen" (2014: 265). And now, through cinema, some kind of Yugoslavia post-Yugoslavia.

In a dissertation that encompasses a journey of memory through cinema and, more precisely, a collection of films, and "deeply invested in exploring the question of how cinema affects the spectator", Jelaca is committed to gathering evidence of "how does the Yugoslav post-conflict cinema put order in the visual chaos that is war experience, and moreover, how does it articulate and visually stabilize the key approaches to remembering and forgetting, fixing them into a potential of history?" (2014: 26). The scholar tries to address these questions through concepts that vary from nationality and ethnicity, to gender and sexuality, to age and class belonging.

The post-Yugoslav cinema, in the first years after the collapse of the country, "rests more on nationalist ideologies than on multiethnic co-existence", with rare space for "the celebration of difference, which was being sacrificed at the altar of reductive national and ethnic homogeneity" (Jelaca, 2014: 35), thus offering governments formed out of ethnic-dominant parties in each of the republics "a pathway to normativize ethnic intolerance and

hostility towards ethnic others” (Jelaca, 2014: 39).

It is rather normal and consensual that the cinema produced (or able to be produced) in wartime is very much affected, in its own content, by the war itself. As Jelaca recalls, “From *Pretty Village Pretty Flame* being filmed on location while the Bosnian war was being fought around them (and as they were being aided by the Bosnian Serb soldiers), to *St. George Shoots the Dragon* (Srđan Dragojević, 2009, Serbia) on the site where terrible war crimes that remain unmarked occurred in Omarska” (Jelaca, 2014: 33) (...), to Srđan Vuletić doing a film “about what film he would have made if he were not standing in the middle of a devastated city of Sarajevo under siege in his short *I Burnt Legs* (1993, Bosnia), the films’ very texture, shape and form are starkly influenced by the realities of their making – or, as is the case of Vuletić’s film, on the context of the impossibility of their making” (Jelaca, 2014: 33). The impossibility or the slow path to normal life.

One of the cinematic currents in post-Yugoslavia was precisely the so-called “cinema of normalization”, a turn towards post-war life (Pavičić, 2010) , which might include examples such as the already mentioned *Pretty Village Pretty Flame*, but also *Grbavica* (directed by Jasmila Žbanić, 2006) and *Snow* (Aida Begić, 2008) both from Bosnia. Furthermore, this does not mean that cinema made in the past ten or fifteen years does not deal with historic memory; on the contrary, even “films that do not seem to be addressing war and violence often are precisely about war and violence” (Jelaca, 2014: 53).

The author of this dissertation agrees with Jelaca’s argument that more subtle war films “often tells us more about how trauma operates” than when war and combats and destruction are “clearly spelled out, or visualized in front of us” (Jelaca, 2014: 53). And since there has been no war in Croatia since 1995, in Bosnia since 1996 and in Serbia and Kosovo since 1999, “an increasing number of films turned to the everyday, post-war, transitional reality in which violence is left behind but its after effects certainly are not. Films such as the aforementioned *Days and Hours*, *Snow* and *Grbavica*, or *Fine Dead Girls* (Dalibor Matanić, 2002, Croatia), *Parade* (Srđan Dragojević, 2011, Serbia), and many others turn to exploring post-war realities, as their protagonists negotiate how to integrate their lives back into a pretense of normality” (ibid.). Moreover, as Pavičić claims, in the new century, the steps towards increasing democracy both in Croatia and in Serbia, “the rhetorical strategies typical of the cinema of self-Balkanization had suddenly become counterproductive and unpopular” (Pavičić, 2010: 47).

Nevertheless war films continue to be produced and consumed, with Jelaca listing films such as “*Neprijatelj* (*The Enemy*, Dejan Zečević, 2011), or *Crnci* (*The Blacks*, Goran Dević and Zvonimir Jurić, 2009), in which “war is an immediate setting that triggers the themes of accountability, guilt and the coping with violence” (Jelaca, 2014: 55). These themes turn them into *crosscut films*, they are not only about war but about the effects of war.

Bearing in mind the fundamental contribution of Jelaca's work, we correspondingly encounter some crucial documents, specifically fiction films, from post-Yugoslav cinema that may help us realise how much cinema can play a role in dealing with trauma, coming into terms with the past and, in some cases, fostering reconciliation. One, therefore, analyzes some of the post-Yugoslav films, both through Jelaca's lens as a specialist but often through this author's own lens – in cases of those films this author was able to see – and placed within the context of the history of cinema in Yugoslavia, and, above all, taking into account their importance to the objectives of this dissertation, including Jelaca's reflections on films that “might be read against the dominant grain of public discourses about the Yugoslav wars, particularly those discourses that are nationalistically inclined”, films that have the potential “to form alternative kinds of memories, which I call dislocated memories: dislocated from their rootedness in singular ethnic, religious, gender, sexual, class or national identities” (Jelaca, 2014: 12).

*Days and Hours (Kod amidže Idriza, Pjer Žalica, 2004)* is a Bosnian film about grief and healing, post-traumatic memory and loss, “yet a film that mentions war only once, and instead of making a spectacle out of bloody injuries and dramatic effect, decides to linger on human faces in an everydayness that hinges on boredom, and on the prosaic routines and rituals as key ways to approach the question of coping with trauma after the war is over” (Jelaca, 2014: 3). This film is about war even if we do not see the war itself, but it remains there: in the traumatic memories of the protagonists.

The aforementioned *Pretty Village Pretty Flame (Lepa sela, lepo gore, Srđan Dragojević, 1996, Serbia)* is a film about Tito's Yugoslavia, the importance of the tunnels built all over the country, the eruption of bloodshed (the film starts, and ends by the way, with a scissor cutting a hand finger), the friendship between two boys – a Serb, Milan, and a Muslim, Halil – in Bosnia, in 1980. The two children at the entrance of the tunnel, with one of them saying there is an ogre sleeping inside, the devil himself, and “if he wakes up he will eat up the village and set the houses on fire”, in what could be, to our understanding, a metaphor for the violent nationalism that erupted in the country less than ten years later. The film was coldly received “in small private screenings” in Sarajevo when it was first shown, allegedly because “its share-the-blame philosophy attracted hostility rather than acclaim from a city that was the victim of a brutal siege and never had an aggressive thought” (ibid.). There's a rock'n'roll song in the film by Električni Orgazam (Electric Orgasm): “*All of Yugoslavia is Rock'n'Roll, while everything around us is going down the hole*”<sup>64</sup>. Flames, fighting, destruction and death: “*pretty villages are pretty when they burn; the ugly ones stay ugly,*

---

<sup>64</sup> From the band Električni Orgazam, from Serbia, one of the top rock'n'roll bands in the former Yugoslavia, with their song “Igra rokenrol cela Jugoslavija”.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpMAfJv7J2Y>. Accessed on 25.03.2016.

*even when they burn*”, says one of the characters to the young officer Milan. *“We set a village on fire and we don’t even know its name”* says one of the others from Milan’s group. Milan’s mother had been killed while at her home in another village, allegedly by Milan’s old time friend Halil’s detachment. In this film about the absurdity of war and its aftermath traumas, soon after (a group of) *chetniks* (Bosnian Serbs) are those under siege inside the tunnel, unlike what most frequently happened in reality, with Serbs putting others, especially Bosnian Muslims, under siege.

Self-victimization comes into play: *“Once again, history is repeating itself. Raging hordes of evil have risen against the entire Serbian people. Croatian criminals, foreign mercenaries, and fanatics of Allah’s Jihad, just as they did 50 years ago, they are attacking the poorly armed Serbian defenders who are heroically holding their own in this unfair battle...”*. The Tito regime’s political scars and the effects of a multinational Yugoslavia in which national issues could not – were not allowed to - be an issue get reflected in the middle of a dialogue between one of the soldiers (a confessed thief) and his Captain (a proud JNA official): *“Do you think, Mr. Captain, that one single house we set on fire, or they set on fire, was honestly earned? To hell it was! If it was honest, it wouldn’t be so easy to set them on fire. As long as Tito stuffed US dollars up your ass, you blathered about brotherhood and unity, and smiled at each other. And then the time came to settle the score! Fine, but why didn’t you do it earlier? Instead, you jacked off for 50 years, drove fancy cars, screwed the best girls, and now when you can’t get it up, now you want to be honourable. I shit on that honour of yours and your whole honourable screwed generation! Fuck all of you... honest suckers!”* This also conveys some sort of generational scream against the old regime. Tito is still well respected by the JNA official: *“I walked 350 kilometers on foot to Comrade Tito’s funeral. It was on the News. You find that funny? Well, it is funny. He was a smart bastard, Comrade Tito. He lied a lot... but we all loved him”*.

There is also a sense of reality in this film since it was filmed while the war was still raging and the film crew was, in fact, helped by Bosnian Serb soldiers. To some critics, that was the proof of the complicity between the director and the Bosnian Serb army – at that time perpetrating war crimes in that same territory, an implication of Serb nationalism that Srđan Dragojević has always denied. And, as Jelaca recalls, this film’s “treatment of war trauma is inexplicably influenced by the wartime reality that was the context of its making” (Jelaca, 2014: 66). Milan, the main character, lying in his hospital bed and constantly tormented by his memories of childhood, youth and war, Jelaca (2014: 70) reads as a “potentially non-nationalist, non-divisive text, precisely because its expression of deep memory is too uncontrollable to be framed within a nationalist mold (and this may very well explain its popularity across the ethnic lines whose conflict it depicts)”.

At the end of the film, a row of dead bodies, and at the end of it, we see the grownup Milan and Halil, both dead, lying next to each other. “Symbolically, they stand in for the death of the multicultural country in which they grew up together. And just above them, the ten year-old Milan and Halil are standing and observing the scene, before turning away and running out of the tunnel” (Jelaca, 2014: 81).

*Grbavica* is the name of one of the neighbourhoods most devastated in 1990s Sarajevo. It was on the frontline, dividing Bosnian government forces and the Serb forces deployed up the hill. This dissertation’s author used to go there very often in 1996 and 1997. N., a child carer before the war and as long as the madness of war allowed, used to live there. A Muslim woman then in her early forties, lived in an area controlled by the RS forces, and for two years could barely leave her small bedroom. Even after the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed, Grbavica remained for months as one of those places where foreigners were advised not to go, especially at night.

Bosnian director Jasmila Žbanić, filmed *Grbavica: The land of My Dreams*, ten years after the war ended, and the author of this text could “see” his friend N. in this or that moment of the narrative as the film proves an impressive portrait of the effects and traumas of the war. It won the main prize, the Golden Bear, at the Berlin Film Festival in 2006<sup>65</sup>, and, when on stage for her acceptance speech, Žbanić “criticized the Serbs for failing to arrest their remaining war criminals and extradite them to the Hague International Tribunal for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia” (Jelaca, 2014: 83). Consequently, the film was never officially shown in RS. On the other hand, she also criticizes the Bosnian government for not doing as much as it could, and indeed far from that, as regards helping the victims of war crimes and their families.

*Grbavica* is the story of Esma (actress Mirjana Karanovic) and her twelve year-old daughter Sara (a child of two years old when the war ended), played by Luna Mijovic, and the way the mother deals with a secret, or a lie, she had told the children. After all, Sara is not the daughter of a war hero, as she always had thought she was, but of one of the many Serb soldiers who raped Esma at a “rape camp”. Her mother lives with episodes of PTSD, traumatic memories of life events they have gone through, as do thousands of people in Sarajevo. According to a study by the Bosnian Ministry of Health, published in March 2012, “more than 60 percent of the Sarajevo population suffers from PTSD symptoms, while 73 percent have stress related problems”<sup>66</sup>.

Esma goes to meetings of an anonymous therapy group, but in fact “only on the days

---

<sup>65</sup> The Land of My Dreams (*Grbavica*, 2006) is a co-production between Bosnia–Herzegovina, Austria, Germany and Croatia.

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-still-living-with-consequences-of-war>. Published on 06 April 2012. Accessed on 21 March 2016.

when women are being given financial aid (through a humanitarian help program)” (Jelaca, 2014: 85). Žbanić shows these women in deep silence, which is revealing of the fact that “for many victims of trauma, speaking up often does not have the necessary therapeutic effect that is often uncritically assigned to it” (Jelaca, 2014: 86).

Thus, there are debates about the advantages of speaking out, or not doing so, after traumatic situations such as rape. In “Naming and Claiming: The integration of traumatic experience and the reconstruction of self in survivors’ stories of sexual abuse”, Susan D. Rose (Leydesdorff, 1999: 165), says that “speaking out is a political as well as a therapeutic act, and as such, is a claim to power. (...) While there are dangers involved in speaking out, there are also dangers in remaining mute. (...) In dialogue with others who can bear witness, survivors are redefining the experiences that once rendered them powerless”. Rose’s argument aligns with that of Jelaca (2014) and with the importance the film *Grbavica* gives to speaking out as a possible road to achieving accountability, which is also this author’s view. Rose argues that, “taking the story away from the abuser, and redefining the experience and oneself in relation to it, is an act of self-determination” (Leydesdorff, 1999: 176). In post-Yugoslav societies, everyday life is very much made up of confronting the past even if people are rather unwilling to it.

Aida Begić’s *Snow* (Snijeg, 2008) is a film about facing the truth as a crucial step to trying to attain reconciliation. This film is about the absence; not merely the physical absence, but the absence of knowing, the complete lack of information regarding the whereabouts of beloved ones. The events occur in an eastern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the scene of the worst war massacres, such as Srebrenica and Prijedor), in a village emptied of men during the war: they were all taken away and never came back. Loss can perpetuate divisions with this becoming even more likely with the absence, with the not knowing of what happened to our relatives. The film won the Critics Week Grand Prize at the Cannes Festival, among other awards and nominations<sup>67</sup>.

“When the war is over, the different ethnic groups will like each other again, but they will always hate gays” and “In the Balkans, it is easier to have a family member who is a murderer than a fag”. These are quotations that introduces us to Jelaca’s third chapter (2014: 112) and to the film *Go West*, 2005, the story of a gay couple – Milan, a Serb – and Kenan, a Muslim, trying to escape the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A profound critique of nationalism<sup>68</sup>, this is a story about prejudice and the covering up of one’s real identity from the outside world, when “Milan disguises Kenan into a woman and takes him to his Serbian village, introducing him as Milena”. It’s a powerful way of showing how narrow and

---

<sup>67</sup> [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1146295/awards?ref=tt\\_awd](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1146295/awards?ref=tt_awd). Accessed on 22.03.2016.

<sup>68</sup> See Moss, Kevin. “Queering Ethnicity in the First Gay Films from Ex-Yugoslavia.” *Feminist Media Studies* (2012) 12(3): 352-370.



reductive categorizations of identity can be, especially in wartime, as the conflict “brings about an obsessive awareness of people’s ethnic belonging as the only way in which their identity matters” (Jelaca, 2014: 132).

Dana Budisavljević<sup>69</sup> is a film director, editor, and producer in Zagreb. She filmed her own coming out as a lesbian woman at her own Sunday family meal. *Family Meals*, the film, also won several prizes. In an interview with the author of this dissertation, in Zagreb, at the entrance to the regionally renowned Museum of Broken Relations on 29 May 2013, Ms. Budisavljevic, daughter of highly educated and well-travelled parents, got surprised by their conservative reaction when they were told about Dana’s homosexuality and told this author that “that tells a lot about how society perceives” sexual orientation. “My mother would say: ‘Dana I would have understood you are a lesbian if you were ugly’. If my mother, who is highly educated, has this concept, that only ugly girls can be lesbian, or that is something which is not natural, or coming from the West, then what can I expect from the Croatian society in general?”. Eventually, all her family agreed to appear in the film and it was a big success. “It’s a film about how we always need acceptance from our family; we could be a bit happier if we could talk with our parents”. Budisavljevic, who advocates regional cooperation in culture between Croatia, BiH and Serbia, has always displayed a feminist approach in her cinema: “Women were hidden for so many centuries and now they are bursting with stories”.

*Take a Deep Breath* (2004), also from a Serb director, Dragan Marinković, was promoted as being the first LGBT feature film in Serbia. The love story of a female couple, “the leitmotif of breathing, referenced in the title, is perpetually invoked in the film as a metaphor for life itself, as when the lesbian couple engages in their first intimate contact” (Jelaca, 2014: 128). This film also reflects a confrontation of values between the modern and open-minded Western Europe and the backwardness in the Balkans, when we see Lana returning to Paris, “as she is frustrated with having to face too many hurdles towards expressing her queer desire in Belgrade” (Jelaca, 2014: 131).

Currently, LGBT rights are not only on the public and media agenda in the West, but also in countries such as Serbia, a candidate to EU membership, which makes the fulfilment of those human rights a highly politically motivated cause. It encompasses another tough reality in the former Yugoslavia space, the high levels of brain-drain: “Saša’s mother leaves Serbia, (...) the sexually ambiguous Bojan, leaves Serbia too, in pursuit of higher education in the West. Through all these stories, leaving Serbia – and by extension the Balkans – is seen

---

<sup>69</sup> Diana Budisavljevic graduated in film and televising editing from the Academy of Dramatic Arts at the University of Zagreb and made her breakthrough with “Straight A’s!”, a documentary about a Croatian woman who was trafficked to Amsterdam’s Red Light District at the age of nineteen. After her second documentary, *Family Meals*, she started working on a documentary ‘Diana’s list’, about the rescue of ten thousand Orthodox children from a Second World War labour camp led by an ultranationalist Croatian regime.

as the only way to indeed start breathing” (ibid.). Most of the author’s friends in Serbia have left the country as well.

The Jugonostalgija<sup>70</sup> constitutes nostalgia for multi-ethnic Yugoslavia and as was very efficiently shown in the documentary film *No Country of Our Time?* directed by Aleksandra Vedernjak, Josefin Bajer, and Daniela Mehler. It starts with the journey of a young woman from the ex-Yugoslavian diaspora to Berlin to acknowledge how people from the former Yugoslavia are dealing with issues of identity following the violent collapse of the old country, with questions of “remembrance and the memory of something that doesn’t exist anymore?” as one can read on the website promoting the film.

Jugonostalgija is reflected in the desire for travelling without borders through the former common space, “for shared experiences such as the Yugo-rock scene or common values such as solidarity and fraternity/sisterhood („bratstvo i jedinstvo”)”. Jelaca (2014: 147) approaches this issue as a trend in the Balkans cinema industry incorporating films such as *Nož* (*The Knife*, Miroslav Lekić, 1999, Serbia), *Zona Zamfirova* (Zdravko Šotra, 2002, Serbia), and *Sveti Georgije Ubiva Aždahu* (*St. George Shoots the Dragon*, Srđan Dragojević, 2009, Serbia).

Jelaca (2014: 150) reads these films as beyond a simple nostalgia for the past but rather more as if “the form of memory being articulated through post-Yugoslav heritage cinema does not have the past as its primary object of interest, but rather metaphorically stands in for the unresolved conflicts of the present (particularly those conflicts that have to do with the questions of pure, post-Yugoslav national or ethnic identities)”. She argues that under the banner of Jugonostalgija, which she considers reflective nostalgia, “longing is directed towards an impossibility – a country that vanished – as a means of refusing acceptance of omnipresent nationalisms that rose in its place. (...) Increasingly growing in popularity as disillusionment with the new post-breakup reality sets in, Yugo-nostalgia has informed an increasing number of cultural texts, films in particular” (Jelaca, 2014: 152-153).

On the other hand, this nostalgia for Yugoslavia goes against the tide of the rising ethno-nationalism in each of the republics, which in some way brings the past into the present, hopefully trying to change it. Svetlana Boym, a Harvard based artist and scientist, says that “Jugonostalgija is a nostalgia at war with more nationalist nostalgias”<sup>71</sup>. A longing for a home that no longer exists or that never existed, “which does not mean that the sentiment is not strong”.

To what extent the heritage of cinema and films such as *Tri karte za Holivud* (*Three Tickets to Hollywood*, Božidar Nikolić, 1993, Serbia) and *Underground* (Emir Kusturica,

---

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.see-id.org/en/documentary-film-no-country-of-our-time/>. Accessed on 22.03.2016.

<sup>71</sup> In film “No country of our time?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9W1QmXkpfjk>. Accessed on 25.03.2016.

1995, Serbia), on the one hand, potentially “undermine conservative efforts of those who insist on the ethnic purity of the newly founded nation states”; and, on the other hand, “dream of a pseudo-romanticized, multi-ethnic Yugoslavia” and thus countering “the proliferation of post-Yugoslav nationalisms”? (Jelaca, 2014: 153). The author of this dissertation shares this vision about the potential of these films but argues there is an excess of romanticism surrounding this Yugoslavia as if there had never been any problems, animosities and persecutions in the collapsed country.

*Tri karte za Holivud (Three Tickets to Hollywood)*, from Serb director Božidar Nikolić, depicts a small village in the countryside in Serbia in the 1960s but released during the wars in Bosnia and Croatia in 1993. This makes all the difference as Serbian troops were deeply engaged in those wars with Milošević already ruling the country and “nationalist rhetoric in the political discourse was not only prevalent but virtually the only form of political engagement available. In other words, there were few obvious alternatives to the omnipresence of hard-line Serbian nationalism being framed through nostalgic myth-making about the greatness of the nation, and the righteousness of its fight” (Jelaca, 2014: 154). Nevertheless, the film contains a multitude of opinions about Tito and the country with “critical comedic lens that exposes its many contradictions” (2014: 157). Tito is also the main theme in other films, including *Tito i ja (Tito and Me)*, Goran Marković, Serbia, 1992), *Tito po drugi put među Srbima (Tito Among the Serbs Again)*, Želimir Žilnik, Serbia, 1993), and *Maršal (Marshall)*, Vinko Brešan, Croatia, 2000). The interesting and fascinating point is that all these films are comedies and the “use of humor as a means of mediating representations of otherwise stark realities has a long tradition in Yugoslav cinematography” (2014: 160).

Slobodan Šijan’s *Ko to tamo peva (Who’s Singing Over There?)*, 1980) and *Maratonci trče počasni krug (The Marathon Family)*, 1982) and *Balkanski špijun (Balkan Spy)*, Dušan Kovačević and Božidar Nikolić, 1984) are cult films among the audiences of the former Yugoslavia. They are all comedies, all written and co-written by the playwright Dušan Kovačević (also the author of the screenplay for Kusturica’s *Underground*) and they are all packed with critiques of the socialist regime: “Kovačević’s opus as a playwright and screenwriter has been deeply imbued in the exploration of the workings of laughter as a subversive force with which problematic political and social realities might at least temporarily be destabilized” (2014: 161).

In Croatia, Jakov Sedlar’s film *Četverored (1999)*, at the time one of the most expensive of all Croatian film productions, did not get a very good reception from the critic and reflects “a form of collective euphoria about that newfound national freedom, articulated, among other things, in active attempts to re-write history. Here, the history that is being revised is that of WWII, when the official Croatian state sided with Nazis” during the *ustace*

regime of Ante Pavelic. Based on the eponymous novel by Ivan Aralica, the film's plot deals with the Bleiburg tragedy<sup>72</sup>.

In her truly successful attempts to maintain a balanced approach towards the most disruptive and controversial issues regarding the collapsed country, Jelaca recalls that part of "WWII history – both Croatia's Nazi collaboration, and the subsequent partisan retaliation against the collaborators – has often been suppressed in narratives about the foundation of multi-ethnic Yugoslavia". Sedlar's film was one of those revisionist films, considered by some scholars as "depicting the Croatian Nazi collaborators as sympathetic guys, and the communist partisans as a menacing threat to Croatia's national pride" (2014: 168). At the same time, this acted as a means of glorifying the present and new sovereignty of Croatia.

In Serbia, on the other hand, revisionist nationalism emerges in films such as *Nož* (*The Knife*, 1999), in which Miroslav Lekić, basing the story on a novel written by writer and later politician Vuk Draskovic – and published after Tito's death - portrays on screen the ethnic conflict in the former Yugoslavia during WWII. This involves the story of Alija, a Bosnian Muslim in the process of discovering that "he was actually born to a Serbian family, and that this whole family, together with the rest of the Serbian village, was burned alive in their church by the Muslims during WWII" (2014: 170). The film adapts the novel to include the conflicts of the early 1990s. The ambivalence persists until the end of the film, though he does decide to fight for the Serb forces in the war in Bosnia.

As regards Emir Kusturica, his work and the controversies raised about him, that would need space for an entire doctoral dissertation. Pavlos Hatzopoulos, for instance, in his book *The Balkans Beyond Nationalism and Identity* states that, "intellectuals from the Balkans have been very careful to maintain a critical attitude towards the global success of his films. The prevalent view has been that the films are appealing because they reinforce the old Balkan archetypes that have been established in the West" (2008: 175). These controversies are approached here as briefly as possible, as well as this author's positioning, at the end of this section in the dissertation's second chapter.

Kusturica's first two films *Do You Remember Dolly Bell?* (*Sjećaš li se Dolly Bell?*, 1981, Golden Lion in Venice) and *When Father Was Away on Business* (*Otac an službenom putu*, 1985, Palme d'Or in Cannes, an Oscar nomination for best foreign language film) quickly turned him into a nationally acclaimed and internationally praised filmmaker. Born in Sarajevo, in "multiethnic Sarajevo" as he insists on mentioning<sup>73</sup>, chose to move to

---

<sup>72</sup> Tolstoy, Nikolai (2000). "The Bleiburg Massacres". Southeastern Europe, 1918–1995. Croatian Heritage Foundation & Croatian Information Centre. ISBN 953-6525-05-4.

<sup>73</sup> The author interviewed Emir Kusturica in 1998 in Santa Maria da Feira, where he came with his rock band, Nele Karajlic and The No Smoking Orchestra. Unfortunately, that recording (the interview was done for the Portuguese public radio station Antena1) is not available.

Belgrade<sup>74</sup> when the civil war started in Bosnia. From an inspiration to all Yugoslavs, he soon became a traitor for the Bosnians: “probably nowhere in the world does the mention of a filmmaker’s name elicit such an immediate and strong response from so many people as Kusturica’s does” in Sarajevo (Turan, 2002: 99). Fuelling tensions still further was the fact that Emir, born and raised a Muslim, converted to Orthodox Christianity.

*Underground* (1995), released in the last year of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, made Kusturica a star in Europe and the world and won him his second Cannes Palme d’Or.

Authors such as Dina Iordanova accuse Kusturica of a “Riefenstahl syndrome”. She argues he “caters to Serbian nationalism and thus mimes the cinematic propaganda of the kind that Leni Riefenstahl delivered for Nazi Germany” (Jelaca, 2014: 190).

In a quite different approach, some critics of Kusturica’s critics (Gocić, 2001; Keene, 2001), see *Underground* as “distinctly anti-ideological as well as anti-nationalist, working towards deconstructing such narratives rather than reiterating them”. Keene, in fact, prefers to locate the film “within the cluster of discourses about the structure and formation of national memory” (2001: 242). Galt (2006: 132) acknowledges the parallel between past and present in the narrative of the war produced by the filmmaker linking 1941 (World War II) and the 1990s (the wars of the Yugoslav disintegration): “As a rationale for keeping Blacky and his family in the cellar, Marko tells them that World War II is still continuing; thus, when Blacky resurfaces in the 1990s, he interprets the Bosnian war as the same war that he last saw”. Both were wars of monsters (Hitler and Milošević; or Goebbels and Izetbegović; or Himmler and Karadžić; or Stalin and Tudjman) whether real or depicted as such. What is traumatic in this labyrinth, then, is the impossibility of finding any center, of naming and revealing the face of the monster” (Galt, 2006: 156). Probably, and this does represent the idea underlying Kusturica’s cinema, there was never just one single monster... or one side of the war to be fully blamed.

The idea of a doubled, even contradictory, relation to the past is common in post-Yugoslav cinema, “where nostalgia, national politics, and the difficulty of historical memory frequently form the narrative problematic” (Galt, 2006: 168). In the opinion of Kenneth Turan, “its blaming the country’s current problems on the policies of Marshal Tito instead of Serbian self-aggrandizement, were often interpreted as legitimizing the war. The more Kusturica thought, possibly naively, possibly with calculation, that he was refusing to take

---

<sup>74</sup> Others, like Ademir Kenovic (*The Perfect Circle*) “stayed to bear witness. He founded a group called Saga to document what was happening around him, ‘the absolutely different, horrible, outrageous, sometimes exquisite’ things he saw, to record ‘the energy for life that was so strong it had to be documented.’ One of his projects, *Street under Siege*, a daily two-minute short about the inhabitants of the same block, ran for close to six months on the BBC and elsewhere around the world” (Turan, 2002: 96).

sides, stepping outside of politics by distancing himself from the Muslim nationalist party that ruled Bosnia, the more his actions placed him in the Serb camp” (2002: 102). The fact that Kusturica shot *Underground* partly in Belgrade and with some Serbian financial aid did not help either.

According to Dijana Jelaca (2014: 192), critics of Kusturica, while trying to stick him with the label of Serbian nationalist or even a “puppet of Serbian nationalist propaganda, they failed to notice that its formal, stylistic and narrative absurdities and abundances point to a self-mocking of a kind, and represent a ridicule of those very viewers who would expect a single film to contain a legible, ‘realistic’ narrative of a history of violence as complicated as that of Yugoslavia and its demise”. And she directs us to Goran Gocić (2001: 33) who proposes that *Underground* does not draw any visible or obvious line between the good and the bad guys: “there are culprits and victims, but they are not nationally identified through a racist theory of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ nations” (Jelaca, 2014: 193).

Hedonist, excessive, kitsch and devilish, carnivalesque and overabundant, *Underground* is, in the view of this dissertation’s author, more autobiographical than one would suppose. One can fairly see Kusturica as an artist seeking out his troubled identity in an underground of madness and diversity, mirroring the disintegrating countries (both Yugoslavia - years before - and Bosnia at the time the film was shot, before 1995). This line is in complete agreeing with Jelaca when she argues that “more than imposing its own truths about the history of Yugoslavia and its breakup (as it has been accused of doing), the film is actively invested in mocking truths altogether, and turning them into the sites of their own, as well as the film’s, undoing time and again (one of the film’s many hints at mocking its own “truths” is expressed by Marko, who says to Natalija: “Art is a lie. We are all liars a little bit.”)” (2014: 195).

It is the understanding of the author of this dissertation that *Underground* is, above all, about the peculiarities of Kusturica-like cinema, a Jugosnostalgik film. As Galt writes: “the Yugoslavia that *Underground* proposes existed before the time of war forms a missing point of origin that constantly reiterates the problem of loss. The film is thus predicated on an impossible time, as well as an impossible space. There is no time at which Yugoslavia, or any of its various states, existed as a coherent and bounded space. Not only is there no Yugoslavia now, but there never was an uncontested Yugoslav identity. Thus, to be nostalgic for a point of ‘once upon a time there was a country’ is to set up a nostalgia for an impossibility” (2006: 130).

“I made a movie that was really the most sincere expression of how I felt about the past, that we were highly manipulated by politicians and the people who were leading us,” (Turan, 2002: 103), argues Kusturica. “I was doing all my best against propaganda and at the end I was accused of doing an Americanized version of Serbian propaganda. I felt in the

middle of an Orwellian tragic comedy, I almost didn't find my way out of the 'Underground' story that was parallel to the Underground film", he complained when announcing he was quitting filmmaking; which, in fact, never happened. He was publicly outspoken because his flat in Sarajevo had been confiscated by the government, as happened to many people who left the Bosnian capital: "In Sarajevo it's very profitable to scream slogans, to be against somebody who did not want to be involved so you can jump into his apartment and take all his belongings. Basically, in the name of creating a multi-ethnic Bosnia, they are looting our places" (ibid.).

In her dissertation, Jelaca also tells us about Serbia's younger generation of filmmakers "opposed to what Pavičić has called 'the cinema of normalization' in which the war is left behind and the movie camera is turned towards everyday life in transition in all its unremarkable ordinariness" (2014: 233). A New Serbian Film, to use Dimitrije Vojnov's nomenclature<sup>75</sup>, "a gruesome picture of society, with graphic violence being its most prominent marker" (2014: 234), such as Srđan Spasojević's *Serbian Film*<sup>76</sup>, Maja Miloš's *Klip (Clip, 2012)* and Mladen Đorđević's *The Life and Death of a Porno Gang. Turbo folk*<sup>77</sup> music, alcohol, drugs, violence, a permanent nihilism or youth "entirely pleasure-oriented and unconcerned with any form of ethical responsibility that might arise from their acts" (Jelaca, 2014: 235).

Jelaca concludes her groundbreaking doctoral dissertation, adapted and published in book form as *Dislocated Screen Memory, Narrating Trauma in Post-Yugoslav Cinema* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), by embracing what she considers to be powerful alternative scenarios, namely speaking about films that impose "a reversal of the normative nationalist" (2014: 261) stances. For instance, the Croat *Witnesses (Svjedoci, Vinko Brešan, 2003)*, as it tells the story of a Serb family which is the victim of a Croat family, all neighbours, bringing out "the tensions over whose death matters and whose does not" (ibid.).

Post-conflict issues and films as important sources of coming to terms with the past and, hopefully, as instruments of promoting reconciliation, are also the object of Croatia's Factum Documentary Film Project. Jelaca draws attention to "*Oluja nad Krajinom (The Storm over Krajina, Božidar Knežević, Croatia, 2001)*, a controversial documentary about Croatia's ethnic cleansing" of the Serbs in Krajina". Showing the film on Croatian state

---

<sup>75</sup> Vojnov, Dimitrije. "The Rise and Fall of Serbian Pop Cinema." KinoKultura (2009). <http://www.kinokultura.com/specials/8/vojnov.shtml>. Accessed on 23.03.2016.

<sup>76</sup> "Banned from several international film festivals for its graphic depictions of brutality against children in particular" (Jelaca, 2014: 234).

<sup>77</sup> Serbian and post-Yugoslav electronic pop music, a phenomenon that will be discussed in detail in the chapter about Music and Nationalism.

television HRT, represented “a key turning point for the collective process of coming to terms with crimes committed in the name of an entire nation” (Jelaca, 2014: 262)<sup>78</sup>.

In spite of the distinctiveness of each film, its individuality and personality, and no matter their commonalities as well, Jelaca understands and concludes, from the films analyzed in her research that, when approached as a collection, they represent “an archive of post-traumatic affect, they contribute to a better understanding of how trauma circulates culturally, and what it does when it is placed in the public domain of representation” (2014: 267).

## 2.9. Gender and Nationalism

Restricting our theoretical approach to Historic Sociology and theories of nationalism, as important and useful these fields may be to research in this field of International Relations, would bring about a risk of the reification of an abstraction – nationality – losing sight of the concrete facts which violence produces, stereotyping tribal and ethnic violence, which means that one would fail to provide the appropriate importance to other dimensions of violence: structural, gender, etcetera. Bearing this in mind, feminist trends and peace studies allow a more global as well as a less stereotyped approach. This also holds relevance in terms of understanding whether dimensions such as gender foster or, on the other hand, condition access and the kind of access that the researcher may achieve in a research context. Pureza (2000: 38) states that peace studies begin with “radical interrogations about the deep causes of conflicts and the amount of steps that must be taken to overcome them, including demands of social restructuring, domestically and internationally, in advance of a total absence of direct or indirect violence”.

For the past thirty years, roughly speaking, various scholars have been demonstrating that nation and nationalism should not be considered or understood “without understanding that gender and sexuality are integral to both” (Mayer, 2000: 3), because “power, control and hegemony exist not only in the relationships between nation and state but also in the relationships between gender and sexuality, and between nation and state and gender and sexuality” (ibid.). Gender and sexuality are influenced and marked by systems of power

---

<sup>78</sup> Jelaca mentions a few other “notable documentaries that explore post-Yugoslav realities from different perspectives are a collection of short films by several young filmmakers gathered under the title *After the War: Life Post-Yugoslavia*, and a couple of music documentaries that explore the questions of collective belonging channelled through pan-Yugoslav culture: *Sretno dijete (A Happy Child)*, Igor Mirković, Croatia, 2003) and *Orkestar (Orchestra)*, Pjer Žalica, Bosnia, 2011” (Jelaca, 2014: 262-263). *Cinema Komunisto* (Mila Turajlić, Serbia, 2010), *Yugoslavia: How Ideology Moved our Collective Body* (Marta Popivoda, Serbia, 2013). (...) “Bosnian filmmaker Danijela Majstorović has made two documentaries about feminist issues: *Kontrapunkt za nju (Counterpoint for Her)*, 2004) about the trafficking of women, and *Posao snova (Dream Job)*, 2007) about the influence of show business on the ambitions of young girls in the region” (Jelaca, 2014: 262-263).



“which reward and encourage some individuals and activities while punishing and suppressing others” (Rubin 1984: 309), which means, generally rewarding “heterosexual males and often punishing women and gays.” (Mayer, 2000: 4)

Nira Yuval-Davis (2003) relates gender, nation and nationalism, and points out how most theories of nationalism do not take into account gender issues, which, in fact, are present in every single form of nationalism. On the other hand, Yuval-Davis does not ignore that there are differences among women and, much too frequently, we encounter women from the dominant elites speaking on behalf of all women. This author calls for a transversal political strategy that enables dialogue between women in different social positions, leading to fertile soil for political action. Above all, Yuval-Davis aims to “explore alternative narratives to the hegemonic discourses of national ‘self-determination’ and to suggest a model of belonging that encompasses both identity and citizenship” (Ozkirimli, 2003: 127).

In accordance with what is one of the core approaches of this dissertation – acknowledging the extent of the impact of nationalist policies in the former Yugoslavia on gender and how much gender studies and gender equality based policies may help in fostering reconciliation in these post-conflict societies, such as the cases being studied: Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo, we come to realise in this chapter that “feminist scholarship’s identification of gender as a category of analysis has led to the exploration of the relationship among nation and gender/ sexuality” (Mayer, 2000: 5). Moreover, “feminist research has steadily revealed that men and women participate differently in the national project” (Mayer, 2000: 5); and because the nation “was produced as a heterosexual male construct its ‘ego’ is intimately connected to patriarchal hierarchies and norms”.

Linda Zerilli, writing about “Feminist Theory and the Canon of the Political Thought” (Leydersdoff, 1999: 106), tells us about the deep ambivalence that characterizes “the Feminist approaches to the canon of political theory”. This is because, while on the one hand, “canonical authors have mostly dismissed women as political beings in their own right, casting them instead as mere appendages to citizen man; on the other hand, if the citizen is a gendered category based on women’s exclusion, then it would appear that the canon is more or less bankrupt for the development of feminist political theory. On the other hand, the same Western canon is in important ways constitutive of our political vocabulary, a valuable resource for political thinking that we can hardly do without”.

However, in fact, despite the framework based on the canon of political theory, feminist research has evolved theoretically over the last forty years. In *The Handbook of the Sociology of Gender* (Chafetz, 2006), Cynthia Fabrizio Pelak, Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier discuss the history of feminism in their text, “Gender Movements”, and come to the conclusion that despite all the change, “scholarship on gender has focused on the maintenance of gender stratification and the resilience of gender inequality. Only recently have gender

scholars turned to exploring and theorizing the historicity of gender and processes of gender resistance, challenge, and change” (Chafetz, 2006: 147).

William E. Connolly (Leydesdorff, 1999: 833) directs us to Angela Butler’s study of “Gender Trouble” that, “drawing from Derrida and Foucault alike”, succeeded in exploring “links between performance, identity, and the politics of ontology. She pressed liberals and feminists to look again at how established theories unconsciously marginalize gays and lesbians”.

From the independent women’s movements of the first wave of feminism in the first decades of the twentieth century, when the fight was over the universal right to vote, the right to equal education, “basic legal reforms, inheritance and property rights, and employment opportunities for women” (Chafetz, 2006: 152); through to the second wave in the 1960s, when the mobilization was more around issues such as “reproductive rights, sexual and economic exploitation, and violence against women” (ibid.); to the 1980s and 1990s, when the new feminist movement applied scholarship which increasingly emphasized the importance of issues such as race, class, ethnicity and nationality in the definition of collective identities, feminism has evolved substantially.

Nowadays, especially in Western societies, feminist networks and organizations fight over gender pay gap, but also a broad range of issues, such as those listed by Miles (1996: 142): “health, housing, education, law reform, population, human rights, reproductive and genetic engineering, female sexual slavery and trafficking in women, violence against women, spirituality, peace and militarism, external debt, fundamentalism, environment, development, media, alternative technology, film, art and literature, publishing, and women's studies”.

From the camp of the radical feminist perspective, “to unravel the complex structure on which gender inequality rests requires”, a necessary and “fundamental transformation of all institutions in society”, as the means to achieve a new social order able to eliminate “the sex-class system and replaces it with new ways—based on women's difference—of defining and structuring experience” (Chafetz, 2006: 156). Through this radical perspective, that influenced all other currents and trends, women came to perceive “experiences previously thought of as personal and individual, such as sexual exploitation or employment discrimination, as social problems that are the result of gender inequality” (2006: 157).

To sum up the importance of feminist theories within the framework of this research, one may return to Pelak, Taylor and Whittier when they conclude that “most feminist movements are focused on challenging structurally based gender stratification and gender oppression at various levels and spheres of interaction” (2006: 170).

What is most relevant in this part of the dissertation emerges from the sheer importance of ethnicity and sexuality to gender inequalities and the relationships between

those inequalities and the production and prevalence of nationalist discourses as happened in the countries studied in the former Yugoslavia.

National narratives are feminized on most occasions out of the need to protect the purity of the nation, “women are figured as the biological and cultural reproducers of the nation and as “pure” and “modest,” and men defend the national image and protect the nation’s territory, women’s “purity” and “modesty,” and the “moral code” (Mayer, 2000: 10).

As seen in the subchapter related to intellectual elites and nationalism, as the national project is constructed by elites defining this in ways that best serve their own interests, “the same elites are also able to define who is central and who is marginal to the national project”. In the intersection of nation, gender and sexuality the nation is constructed to respect a “moral code” which is often based on masculinity and heterosexuality” (Mayer, 2000: 12). Even if this hetero-male moral construction code for nations has been challenged in the past few decades, by “groups of women and men, straight and gay”, and thus “gender identities have become more fluid”, the truth is that “the hegemony of one gender and one sexuality within the nation remains relatively unchanged all over the world” (Mayer, 2000: 13). We can assume that, in the future, and sooner rather than later, these challenges to heteronormativity will bear an impact on nations and the way national projects are constructed and consolidated.

Nevertheless, throughout the different chapters of *Gender Ironies of Nationalism, Sexing the Nation*, various examples drawn from different parts of the world, such as India, the Caribbean, the USA, Palestine and Israel demonstrate “the connection between masculinity and nationalism remains strong: men take the liberty to define the nation and the nation-building process, while women for the most part accept their obligation to reproduce the nation biologically and symbolically. Although some of these roles have begun to be challenged, we can still generalize that masculinity and femininity remain fixed categories when they interact with the nation” (2000: 16).

It is this dissertation author’s understanding that the wars in former Yugoslavia were not targeted specifically against women but that there was violence on a mass scale exercised specifically against women. In the former country, or in the post-Yugoslav states, where women are generally glamorized for their physical beauty, and besides their role of reproduction within the collective national(s) project(s), “violent personal acts like rape have acquired national significance”. Mass rapes in Bosnia, in Croatia, and in Kosovo were carried out as weapons of war, as intimidation alongside other attacks on both women and their families, but especially as an “invasion of the Other’s boundaries, the occupation of the Other’s symbolic space, property and territory: rape of women becomes an attack on the nation, figuring as a violation of national boundaries, a violation of national autonomy and national sovereignty” (Mayer, 2000: 18). In fact, rape as a weapon of war began to be considered a war crime after the wars in former Yugoslavia.

When the war ended in Bosnia and Herzegovina in late 1995, following over 200,000 deaths and millions of refugees and IDPs<sup>79</sup>, torture, sexual violence against around 50,000 Muslim girl and women according to calculations by the Coordinating Group of Women's Organizations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is to say, the Bosnian government, 20,000 according to the European Fact-Finding Team of EU, 60,000, according to the Geneva-based NGO Women's Advocacy while the UN Commission of Experts identified no more than 1,600 cases of rape and specialists under the auspices of the UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, talk about 12,000<sup>80</sup>. All this confusion around the numbers means there is no clear and definitive figure on one of the most typical atrocities in the Bosnian war: mass rape.

It is also true, as Inger Skjelsbæk argues in "Is Femininity Inherently Peaceful? The Construction of Femininity in the War", that manipulating figures over war sexual crimes and rapes in the former Yugoslavia, "became a powerful tool in political mobilization: in consequence, we will never know the truth" (2001: 54). Especially in the Bosnian conflict, rape took place everywhere: in private houses, public places, school yards turned into prisons, concentration camps, forced labour camps, rape camps. Following Skjelsbæk: "these events have put women's sufferings at the forefront in the coverage of the conflict, and major efforts are being made in investigating this specific kind of war weaponry: sexual violence" (ibid.).

In the same *Sexing the nation/desexing the body*, Julie Mostov writes about incorporating gender issues and studies when researching about nationalism: "national mythologies draw on traditional gender roles, and nationalist discourse is filled with images of the nation as mother, wife and maiden" (Mayer, 2000: 89). To Mostov, "the 'nation' naturalizes constructions of masculinity and femininity: women physically reproduce the nation, and men protect and avenge it. At the same time, this notion of nation collectivizes and neutralizes the sexuality of female (and, to some extent, male) members of the nation" (Mayer, 2000: 89).

Mostov explains gender and sexuality in the former Yugoslavia "and in the context of politics of national identity", which she designates as ethnocracy and practices of ethno-national leaders as reconfigurations of power relationships, "aiming to transform the social and political landscapes". (Mayer, 2000: 89). Those strategies were materialized through "exaggerating the differences between those on either side of the boundaries" and, on the other hand, celebrating "the common identity among those within, demonizing the ethnic or national Other and denying individual difference among their 'own'. (...) For ethnocratic

---

<sup>79</sup> IDP, Internal Displaced Persons. According to figures from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "there were around 100,400 IDPs in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) as of November 2014". A census was held in Bosnia in 2013, but the final results will only be available by the end of 2016. <http://www.internal-displacement.org/europe-the-caucasus-and-central-asia/bosnia-and-herzegovina/figures-analysis>. Accessed on 31.03.2016.

<sup>80</sup> Booth, Ken (2012: 73), *The Kosovo Tragedy: The Human Rights Dimensions*, Routledge.

strategies in the former Yugoslavia fuse eroticism of the nation with sexually repressive gender roles and patriarchal culture” (Mayer, 2000: 90)

Furthermore, and staying with Mostov, “the gendering of boundaries and spaces (landscapes, farmlands and battlefields) in the former Yugoslavia makes possible the use of the sexual imagery of courtship, seduction and violation. The nation is adored and adorned, made strong and bountiful or raped and defiled, its limbs torn apart, its womb invaded. (2000: 90) (...) Feminine spaces remain open to invasion—and this image of vulnerability is particularly inviting to ethnocrats or those engaged in crafting nationalist rhetoric and expanding national boundaries or in waging war on behalf of the nation. The vulnerability and seductiveness of women/borders (space/ nation) require the vigilance of protectors or border guards. Thus, just as the territory of the nation must be protected by male soldiers and national leaders, women’s bodies must be protected by fathers, husbands and the (national) state” (2000: 91). Each and every Bosnian community put this into practice – whether as vigilantes or protectors or border guards - in the early 1990s, and the same also happened with the Serbs in Croatia, or Croats in Croatia proper, as well as Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo, to reference only those of greatest significance to the current research project.

However, when defining policies, the hetero male dominated structures of power, allegedly in the interest of the community as a whole, but not seldomly with the intent of protecting their own interests, “the need to protect women inevitably comes to include, as well, the need to monitor women’s actions. (...) Women also remain vulnerable to invasion and defilement: as symbols of the nation and potential mothers, they could become objects of the ethnic/national Other’s desire and vessels for his offspring” (ibid.). The feminine remains regarded as passive while the masculine plays the active role: “the Motherland provides a receptive and vulnerable image in contrast to the active image of the Fatherland, which is the force behind government and military action—invasion, conquest and defense”. The nationalist discourse values the rape and violation of individual women and “the politics of national identity” identify those individual violations “primarily as a violation of the nation and an act against the collective men of the enemy nation” (2000: 92).

The reality in the Balkans throughout the wars in the 1990s, not only in Bosnia and Croatia, but also in the conflict in Kosovo in the late 1990s, rendered practical substance to that theorized by scholars such as Mostov, who recall that in nationalist discourses, the Other’s (the Serbs in the eye of Bosnians, the Croats in the eye of Serbs, the Serbs in the eye of Croats, Serbs and Albanians in each other’s’ eyes) “men are seen collectively as sexual aggressors, and ‘our’ women become the object of male temptation”. As this approach to sexuality is deeply “ethnocratized”, the “sexuality of individual women presents a potential threat to the nation, as ‘entry’ point for invasion” (2000: 92). As Mostov puts it, “the national space (Motherland) must be protected by new heroes, willing to join in the nation’s age-old

battle against the forces of evil. This romantic image of the national guardian revives the masculine roles of traditional patriarchal society” (2000: 93). Therefore, these new heroes are expected to be virile, brave, willing to face danger, as a test of manhood: “initiation into the world of real men comes with their readiness to demonstrate this bravery to comrades on the battlefield” (ibid.). As an example, Mostov provides an “officer of the JNA (Yugoslav/Serbian Army), in front of television cameras urging his soldiers to cross a minefield” and shouting “Let those who are men enough, come with us” (2000: 93).

And those who did go to the battlefields, are said to have left “their women, heterosexual eroticism and carnal love behind” (2000: 94). A feature story about “Croatian troops in Bosnia included these lines: ‘We are struck by a boy...17-year-old Juro Ivakovic, who instead of his first girlfriend hugs an 84 (automatic weapon), and instead of his first cigarette, lights up a Chetnick (Serbian) tank” (“U posjeti jednoj HVO brigadi,” *Zmaj od Bosne* November 3, 1994). As men are on the ground fighting to protect the Motherland, the “erotic appeal of the national imagery is directed primarily” at them. Women are supposed to be “supporting war efforts and national policies, guarding their own chastity during the struggle, and giving themselves to the heroes (husbands and fathers) when they return from war” (2000: 94, 95).

Television pictures constitute powerful propaganda tools. And so did they prove, as we reflected on in the subchapter related to media and nationalism, but we must also consider the impact that feminized war images can play on national audiences. As Mostov describes (2000: 95), “Mourning mothers, daughters, sisters and wives, widows dressed in black, victims of rape and torture, refugees packed into trucks with crying children, all are symbols of the national tragedy and reasons for national revenge”. In a different sense, but no less genderly-based, the popular press “used by various competing ethnocrats in the former Yugoslavia”, besides hailing “a glorious past, rich and tragic history”, also “paints pictures of sexually active soldiers enjoying the adoration and favors of young women” (2000: 95).

A Bosnian newspaper in Ljiljan, for example, carried the headline “Beautiful women liberate the most beautiful country,” adding the sense of pleasure of sharing “the company of blond, black, and red-haired, impeccably neat girls with discrete make-up, who clutch automatic rifles in their tender girls’ hands.” The anthropologist Ivan Colovic also accounts for “a 1993 cover of a Croatian Serb military magazine *The Army of the Krajina* captured this image with a picture of sexy female volunteers, dressed in revealing fatigues, clutching their rifles with red-polished nails” (Colovic 1996a: II), as quoted by Mostov’s article.

Dijana Jelaca (2014) analyses the gendered nurture of conflict regarding trauma, affects and memory. Following Stiglmeier (1994), she concludes that “the Yugoslav wars, particularly the bloody conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia, have often been viewed through a distinctly gendered prism in which women’s bodies appeared to serve the role of literal

battlefields, particularly in the heinous practices of mass rape” (2014: 57). This specialist on the post-Yugoslav cinema examines where and how women’s “stories are articulated or in turn erased by the films. Also of importance is how the materialization of the female experience of war might pose a challenge to the normative stereotyping about gender at times of crisis such as the one represented in the films” she analyses in her dissertation. (2014: 58). For instance, two Bosnian films made by women filmmakers, both dealing with the aftermath of the war, and mentioned in the previous subchapter: *Grbavica* (directed Jasmila Žbanić, 2006) and *Snow* (Snijeg, directed by Aida Begić, 2008). Jelaca considers them “two of the strongest films made about the postwar realities in the region to date, they both (...) insist on the materiality of the women’s experience of war not as a temporary device that punctures the narrative of the otherwise masculinist wartime reality, but as a sustained, central prism through which war is experienced to begin with” (2014: 59).

These films talk about the ways trauma affects and is articulated with gender and ethnicity, and point “to very significant processes by which gender in general (including but not limited to its two stereotypical extremes: the active, masculinist violence and the passive, feminine victimhood) is revealed, on the one hand, as a vector in the workings of nationalist ideology, but also, on the other hand, as a pivotal tool for critiquing that very ideology through an understanding of how gender interplays with traumatic affect in ways which might displace the dominance of ethno-centred frames of reference” (2014: 59).

More than twenty years, at the time of writing, have passed since the war ended in BiH. Fresh memories of those events are increasingly driven into something considered the past, History, analyzed according to each of the three national narratives which still correspond to the three positions on the battlefields; however, on the other hand, the trauma still persists and those events and the nationalist discourse (which reinforced the already existing pre-war gender inequalities) continue to play a role not only in the interethnic but also in the intra-ethnic relations; in social relations, above all. The break-up of Yugoslavia and the wars that followed were masculinist events in which women were the invisibility and powerlessness of women were fed by men.

However, there were – and there still are – prominent women voices in the former Yugoslavia and its successor states. Feminists such as those from the movement *Zene u Crnom*, Women in Black in Serbia, founded in October 1991, a feminist and antimilitarist peace organization, which demands “a permanent confrontation with the past”, through “accountability for war and war crimes, trying all those suspected of war crimes in the Hague tribunal. But also a confrontation with both the moral and political collective responsibility,

though street actions, appeals, petitions, campaigns”<sup>81</sup>. Also deserving of mention are intellectuals such as the aforementioned Slavenka Drakulic from Croatia, her fellow citizen Vesna Kesic (an anti-war activist, whose essay “A Response to Catharine MacKinnon’s article ‘Turning Rape into Pornography: Postmodern Genocide,’” drew worldwide attention<sup>82</sup>), and Svetlana Broz (the granddaughter of Tito)<sup>83</sup>.

Jelaca maintains that these feminists from the former Yugoslavia, “by their very existence, deny the rigidity of the traditional gender dichotomy that delegates women into invisibility and inactivity, as these women’s activism proves such a taxonomy unattainable in lived reality. Yet for the most part, the consensus on the gendered violence during the wars that marked the break-up of Yugoslavia has remained reductively rigid nevertheless, with women commonly being depicted as victims and passive victims only” (Jelaca, 2014: 63).

In the same line of thought, Rada Ivković has argued, the rise of nationalism in the former Yugoslavia walked hand by hand with an increase in misogyny, since “the gradual deterioration of the position of women in the last few years of socialism were a warning sign that precipitated the escalation of nationalism and the disintegration of Yugoslavia” (2000: 16)<sup>84</sup>.

The nature of marginalization has, however, changed. Jelaca understands that while in the films of socialist Yugoslavias, “women were usually represented as being oppressed by aggressive men”, in post-socialist films, “they are predominantly oppressed by the set of historical and political circumstances themselves” (2014: 64). However, this latter marginalization is, nevertheless, important and should in no way be set aside whenever analysing just how much the past can impact on the present, particularly in post-conflict societies.

Something similar happens in music. Marija Grujic (2009: ii), in her doctoral thesis, “Women, Nation and Turbo-Folk<sup>85</sup> in Post-Yugoslav Serbia”, analyses “the representation of women in the turbo-folk music scene in Serbia in the post-Yugoslav period by examining the signification of gender and nation in women singers’ performances”. This scholar explores “in what way the relationship between national identification and the representation of women has been constructed in turbo-folk performances”, examining the connections and “interconnection between sexuality and gender dynamics represented in turbo-folk

---

<sup>81</sup> [http://zeneucrnom.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=blogcategory&id=2&Itemid=4](http://zeneucrnom.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=2&Itemid=4). Accessed on 30.03.2016.

<sup>82</sup> <http://www.eurozine.com/authors/kesic.html>. Accessed on 30.03.2016.

<sup>83</sup> Interviewed by the author in Sarajevo on 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2013.

<sup>84</sup> Ivković, Rada (2000), “(Ne)predstavljivost ženskog u simboličkoj ekonomiji: žene, nacija i rat nakon 1989. godine.” In *Žene, slike, izmišljaji*, Edited by Branka Arsić. Beograd: Centar za ženske studije, 2000: 9-30 (quoted from Jelaca, 2014: 64).

<sup>85</sup> Turbo folk is a musical genre that originated in Serbia but also proves very popular in Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro. It mixes folk music from the Balkans with electronic techno-style rhythms.



performances, on the one hand, and models of community and nation, on the other hand”. This is to say, Grujic explores in what way turbo-folk is produced by and produces nationalism, through its performances, “and how representations of sexuality and gender dynamics are employed in the production of national homogeneity” (ibid.). Song lyrics, videos and public statements analyzed, plus observations and interviews, allowed the author to “argue that the connection between turbo-folk performances and nationalism derives from themes found within newly composed folk music (NCFM), the genre that preceded turbo-folk, and was launched in the sixties during the Yugoslav period” (ibid.). The social base on which NCFM was constructed involved the submission of individual values to the collective, to the imagined community, as originally identified by Benedict Anderson.

As is clear from that hitherto written in this thesis, in post-Yugoslav times, the notion of community, or even every notion of community, was replaced by “ethno-nation”. Grujic reveals and opens our spirit to understanding “how nationalism, ultimately, emerged and evolved as the turbo-folk genre convention, constructed through women’s performances of heteronormativity, or to put it differently, women’s heteronormed ‘stage identities’”. Grujic’s aim was not “to answer directly whether turbo-folk is inherently a sexist, nationalist and/or culturally oppressive popular product, as it is considered by many intellectuals, journalists and musicians” (2009: 248). She wanted, above all, “to trace the interrelatedness between popular music genre conventions and the social context within which they emerge, and the way in which gender representations are employed in the reinforcement of this relationship that plays a role not only in turbo-folk, but also in popular culture worldwide”. Moreover, we may owe to this line of thought and to authors such as Gruljic and Jelaca, by discussing “nationalism as a gender construct in popular culture”, the challenge set “to numerous attempts to define ex-Yugoslav nationalisms as in-born, long-term hatreds which initiated all other events that followed” (2009: 249).

By studying visual performances, particularly by women singers or lead vocalists known worldwide, Marija Grujic concludes that “regardless of the fact that some music genres might be considered ‘conservative,’ or ‘traditional’, such as country music in the USA or ‘sexist’ like hip-hop, the appearances of women singers within music scenes is usually seen as an empowering aspect of women’s visibility in public space” (2009: 250). Women’s performances in *turbo-folk* music in Serbia and in neighbouring countries, deriving from “NCFM and the promotion of the concept of community as a main value, reconstructed elements of ‘banal nationalism’ as a genre convention” (ibid.). One could, in the end, agree with Grujic, by accepting that her approach would “contribute to the unpacking and questioning of politically conformist systems of representation in popular music in various geopolitical contexts” (2009: 252).

Ethnocrats were very much focused on stories filled with an appealing combination: “motherhood, duty to the nation, romance and sex appeal”, such as the kind of age of darkness union between a turbo folk top singer (in the pimba style were this in Portugal), Ceca, and the most infamous criminal, Zeljko Raznatovic, aka...Arkan. Constantly in the press and with regular public appearances, they managed to create what Dragicevic-Šešić (1994) calls a “neofolk” attachment to “national values”<sup>86</sup>.

Serbian turbo folk (country/folk Serb music, with techno-electronic punch and lyrics mainly about love and love affairs) and the equivalent hard-rock from Croatia, both of which, argues Mostov (2000: 101), “include a good dose of nationalist rhetoric, romanticized lifestyles of the new rich (and new criminal underground), and soft pornography. Two pieces in an independent magazine (Vreme) in Serbia describe the lifestyles of the children of the new ruling class in Belgrade as characterized by disco clubs, drugs, fast cars, guns, expensive clothes, revealing outfits for women and flashy jewellery. Sex, according to the article, ‘is considered less a source of pleasure than a means of demonstrating power.’ ‘It’s a male world in which women are only a status symbol’ and are ‘happy with their subordinate role’”<sup>87</sup>.

Following Mostov, one could say that the nationalist discourse based on deep gender inequalities have left women in the former Yugoslavia, “disenchanted”. After the wars, inflation, high unemployment rates and the “breakdown of social services”, leaves them as the “targets of ethnopolitical politics and symbols of defeat”, and without trust in “new promises of national glory, or seduced by feelings of belonging” (2000: 102).

To overcome this situation, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia and Kosovo, should bear in mind what the strategy of the ethnocrats was in keeping with how they, according to Julie Mostov, drew “on the resources of national writers, poets and historians and the mass media to eroticize the nation”, then benefiting from “this mechanism of control”. To reverse this, these countries also need to overcome “the social, historical and political conditions which provide the more or less fertile ground for the distillation of national myths and messages. Yugoslav ethnocrats’ national program offers ecstasy through service and sacrifice, bonding in battle, and the chance of ‘belonging’ to the whole. It promises social identity and gender identity”, as well as a sense of “political protection and economic security”, concludes Mostov (Mayer, 2000: 103).

Alternative gender based policies should be set in place to revert the structural inequalities existing throughout the region that, due to historical, circumstances, help foster the nationalist discourses. These alternative policies should range from positive discrimination in access to public employment, and not confined to the low and medium

---

<sup>86</sup> Dragicevic-Šešić, M. (1994) *Neofolk kultura: publika i njene zvezde*, Sremski Karlovci: Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovica.

<sup>87</sup> Ristanic, B. and Z.Nikolic (1997) “Srpska zlatna mlade•,” Vreme (August 2): 14–17.

public office ranks; parity on company boards; with the same work getting the same salary: according to the European Commission, the gender pay-gap in Croatia<sup>88</sup>, the difference in average gross hourly wage between men and women across the economy, stands at around 7.4%, much lower than the EU average of 16.3%, taking into account Eurostat data from 2013. However, in the other former Yugoslavia countries under study, the situation is worse.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, data (from a 2011 report as the most recent figures available to the author), reveal how “women were paid 46% of what men earned”. Among the factors contributing to this situation, the study’s author includes “insufficient child care facilities, an education system which reinforces the traditional roles of men and women, gendered labour roles, and a lack of resources and information on employment or self-employment opportunities”.

It would not be honest to fully blame national governments for the current situation regarding gender policies. Taking the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite the complex and malfunctioning political structure of the country, the authorities have “passed a set of gender equality and labour laws which are in compliance with the international standards and public institutions have undertaken a series of measures to prohibit gender inequalities in the public and private spheres of life”<sup>89</sup>. The laws regulating the labour market and employment procedures are also in compliance with international standards, which corresponds with the fact that Bosnia aims to be a member of EU. The ILO 2011 report acknowledges “the government and public authorities take gender equality seriously, in terms of hiring procedures, issues related to discrimination in the workplace, parental obligations, and pension entitlements”. Thus, just what is the problem, given the inequalities outlined above? “There is clearly a gap between the legislation and its effective implementation”.

In Serbia<sup>90</sup>, the gender pay-gap comes in at around 11% and data from 2011<sup>91</sup>, before Croatia’s accession, indicates “the general participation rate of women in the Serbian labour market” was about 38.3%, which was much below the EU average (58.5%)”. Nevertheless, the rate of women “on boards lies at 16% and is therefore slightly higher than the EU-average (14%) but the rate of women in national government is very low with 11% (EU average 26%)”. The Global Gender Gap Report 2014<sup>92</sup>, presented at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, ranks Serbia 54th out of 142 countries, whereas Croatia ranks right after,

---

<sup>88</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/genderequality/files/gender\\_pay\\_gap/gpg\\_country\\_factsheet\\_hr\\_2015\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/genderequality/files/gender_pay_gap/gpg_country_factsheet_hr_2015_en.pdf). Accessed on 30.03.2016.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> [http://www.rppp-westernbalkans.net/en/News/Research-Results--Gender-Pay-Gap-in-the-Western-Balkan-Countries--Evidence-from-Serbia--Montenegro-and-Macedonia/mainColumnParagraphs/0/text\\_files/file0/Policy%20briefs\\_gender%20pay%20gap.pdf](http://www.rppp-westernbalkans.net/en/News/Research-Results--Gender-Pay-Gap-in-the-Western-Balkan-Countries--Evidence-from-Serbia--Montenegro-and-Macedonia/mainColumnParagraphs/0/text_files/file0/Policy%20briefs_gender%20pay%20gap.pdf).

<sup>91</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/epo\\_campaign/country\\_profile\\_serbia\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/epo_campaign/country_profile_serbia_en.pdf).

<sup>92</sup> [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR14/GGGR\\_CompleteReport\\_2014.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR14/GGGR_CompleteReport_2014.pdf). Accessed on 30.03.2016.

55<sup>th</sup>, and there is no data for Bosnia and Herzegovina (Portugal is in 39<sup>th</sup> position, the USA in 20<sup>th</sup>, Iceland ranks 1<sup>st</sup>; Nicaragua, in 6<sup>th</sup> position, ranks as the leading non-European country).

The situation in Kosovo<sup>93</sup>, according to 2014 data from the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, which operates under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office, reveals "the gender gap at the completed higher education level is 60%; the unemployment rate for women is 55.5% over 40.5% for men"; (...) "women take 33.3% of seats" in the Kosovo assembly.

The Gender Equality Index 2015<sup>94</sup>, measuring gender equality in the European Union 2005-2012, produced by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), reveals slight overall advances in the EU, with its director, Virginija Langbakk, explaining "the domains of time and power are particularly challenging. The unequal distribution of time between women and men when it comes to unpaid caring and domestic activities remains prevalent, as does men's over-representation in all areas of decision-making, despite marked improvements in the political sphere". The positive news comes from the pay-gap, with clear even while still marginal improvements "in the domains of work and money, reflecting the EU's focus on economic and labour market policy". To the EIGE, "understanding the factors that underlie persistent gender inequalities can facilitate more targeted policymaking, able to account for the differences within groups of women and men"<sup>95</sup>.

Therefore, it is this author's belief that other measures, such as stricter law enforcement and criminal punishment for domestic violence and sexist or discriminatory language in schoolbooks, but also across media content (both in the news and in entertainment), as well as in the advertising market would also make a positive contribution towards paving the way for gender equality, which represents a fundamental step in turning the page of nationalist discourses and promoting real and meaningful reconciliation in the region.

## **2.10. Youth, Music and Nationalism**

In *Geographies of Young People: the morally contested spaces of identity*, Stuart C. Aitken tells us that "what focuses the moral panics that surround the activities of children and youths are problematic social constructions of young people and the simultaneously disembodied and dis-embedded context of their lives." (Aitken, 2001: 25). Would these moral panics become perceived in more problematic ways in post-conflict contexts? That matter deserves a much more detailed reflection in a distinct field, which falls beyond the main focus of this

---

<sup>93</sup> [http://www.instat.gov.al/media/257404/gender\\_statistics\\_in\\_kosovo.pdf](http://www.instat.gov.al/media/257404/gender_statistics_in_kosovo.pdf). Accessed on 30.03.2016.

<sup>94</sup> <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/MH0215178ENN.pdf>. Accessed on 30.03.2016.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

dissertation, but it nevertheless is worthwhile remembering, following Jelaca (2014: 30), that in the former Yugoslavia, we are talking about a class of youth, so realistically portrayed in a film like *Children of Sarajevo* (Aida Begić, 2012, Bosnia), “who inherit[ed] a habitus haunted by phantom trauma, violence and injury, and who negotiate this phantom in the material conditions of everyday depravity”. In another impressive film, *Rane (The Wounds, 1998)*, Srđan Dragojević's follows young boys who grew up in the 1990s, in Milošević's Serbia. As Jelaca explains (2014: 206) “the teenagers' approach to life – namely, crime, violence, drugs and the beats of *turbo folk*<sup>96</sup>, fused into a hallucinatory daze – is inextricably tied to the context of their growing up in a culture in which youth is seen as merely a static prop for the larger ideological mechanisms that position a violent nation as the primary object of collective identification”. Becoming young criminals is part of the game, a ritual to young adulthood, “when tough-guy criminals and their turbo folk girlfriends were celebrated as exemplary performances of the ideal national coupling, which is nothing but a performance of nationalist ideology in the form of what here might be appropriately called ‘turbo-patriarchy’” (Jelaca, 2014: 207). The concept of post-memory is present as well, since: “a memory of this generation has not experienced the traumatic events of war in not first hand but rather passed on from the first generation of survivors.

Contemporarily, even while far from every single part of the planet is online or is web skilled, even if – not merely due to age, but also in terms of access to technological resources – not everyone is on social media, it nevertheless remains true that “globalization and technological advances have led to rapid recent changes in many people's lifestyles, and our self-identities are changing correspondingly in ever more complex ways”, as said by MacDonald, Hargreaves and Miell in *Musical Identities*, in which the authors theorize about the fundamentality of music (2002: 2).

Music, in our opinion, plays an important role in these changes and processes. Of course, we may question whether any musical identity exists and, presumably believing that there is, whether everyone shares that musical identity. Would that identity change according to age, place of birth and living, class, gender, religion, ethnicity, and so on? What about those who simply do not like music, do not listen to it or simply just claim to be tone deaf? Would a musical identity still also apply to them? Furthermore, would the music identity of a male Croat in his sixties differ enormously from a female Serb in her twenties?

The point here is that our mutating likes and dislikes, as well as our level of engagement with one genre or another, will “vary considerably in the self-identities of different individuals” and are defined “by social and cultural roles within music, and might be categorized in a number of different ways” (2002: 12). In the same aforementioned book, in

their text about “Youth identity and music”, Mark Tarrant, Adrian C. North and David J. Hargreaves state that, “young people’s musical behaviour is guided not only by individual identity needs, but also by group identity needs” (2002: 146).

In his “National Identity and Music”, Goran Folkestad (Macdonald, 2002: 151) argues that “music has always played an important part in forming the identities of individuals and of groups of people. And of defining others as belonging to other groups which are separate from one’s own”. Folkestad concludes by saying, which is the point to bear in mind as regards this dissertation, “the development of a musical identity is not only a matter of age, gender, musical taste and other preferences, but is also a result of the cultural, ethnic, religious and national contexts in which people live” (ibid.).

In her article “Shake, Rattle, and Self-Management, Rock Music and Politics in Socialist Yugoslavia, and after”, Sabrina Petra Ramet (2003: 173) asserts that, “Rock is also political insofar as it is part of a cultural or subcultural milieu which may exalt specific social values”. Be it rap or rock, popular American youth music plays an influentially impacting role worldwide. “Rock music in Yugoslavia started as a purely imitative celebration of the better-known Anglo-American rock bands, and rock music in the successor states of Yugoslavia continues to reflect rock trends worldwide” (2003: 174). However, this nevertheless still retains certain national or regional peculiarities.

1974 was the beginning of the golden age of Rock’n’Roll in Yugoslavia, a period that would endure until the collapse of the country in 1991. But the seeds to that *golden age* had been released years before, in the 1960s, by people such as *The Robots* from Zagreb, *Indeksi* from Bosnia (the first Yugoslav group to play its own songs, formed in 1962 and pioneers of the psychedelic rock in the country). In the 1970s, it was the time of *Bread and Salt* (from Skopje), *Papa Kinjal*, a punk band from Slovenia, the same republic where *Bastards* were founded. Ramet also accounts for several popular groups that “were formed toward the end of the 1970s-among them: the highly melodic *Galiija*, based in NiS, which first emerged in 1975; *Pekinska Patka* (Peking Duck), formed in Novi Sad in 1978; the Belgrade band *Laki pingvini* (Easy Penguins), established in late 1979; and the imaginative combo *Atomsko skloniite* (AtomicShelter), founded in 1977 in Pula” (2003:179).

The 1980s, the last decade for Yugoslavia as a whole, brought several important names onto the local rock scene: *Laibach* and *Sokoli* (from the ‘ashes’ of *Bastards*), both from Ljubljana; Belgrade’s *Elektritni orgazam* (Electric Orgasm), *Partibrejkers* (Party Breakers) *Sarlo akrobata*, *Bajaga and the Instructors* and *Yu-Group*; Zagreb’s *Steamroller*, *Prljavo kazaliite* (*Dirty Theater*)<sup>97</sup> and *Haustor*; *Crvena jabuka* (Red Apple) from Sarajevo, “as well

---

<sup>97</sup> By 1990-91, *Prljavo kazaliite* was considered Zagreb’s top rock band, achieving “an essentially legendary status among Croats, for both musical and political reasons”. (2003: 180)

as two all-female acts: Cacadou Look (from Opatija) and Boye (from Novi Sad)!” (2003: 180).

There was great diversity, a mirror of the diversity that defined the country itself. Bands such as *Riblja Corba* (Fish Soup), led by Bora Djordjevic, were famous and renowned for their social intervention through lyrics. However other bands “were bored with politics and sang of almost exclusively romance, such as the hard rock band from Zagreb, Steamroller”. (2003: 175)

As in western European countries, Yugoslav rock bands were substantially influenced by American rock music, its styles and sub-styles, bands and musicians. But they still managed to produce “their own blend, often crossing genres and blending elements not previously blended. (...) Some of the music of the Macedonian rock group Bread and Salt (*Leb i Sol*) illustrates this, blending rhythmic patterns of the Turkish Orient with rock melodies and interspersing country sounds straight out of Nashville” (2003: 175).

In Serbia, rock groups “have tended to be orthodox (or perhaps better, purist) in their approach to rock, giving the rise of ‘turbo-folk’ the character of a cultural threat. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, in contrast, White Button (*Bijelodugme*), long the most popular and most influential rock group in socialist Yugoslavia (‘the Yugoslav Beatles’ as one music critic put it, but a casualty of the war), sometimes used folk music as an introduction to its songs; another Sarajevo group, Blue Orchestra (*Plavi orkestar*), built its reputation by fashioning its own successful mix of folk and rock. (...) As Marshal Tito and his comrades looked on, rock music spread to every corner of Yugoslavia - even to economically and socially underdeveloped Kosovo, where the social separation of Serbs and Albanians was reflected, from early on, in the emergence of two parallel rock scenes divided by language, ethnicity, and, of course, politics” (2003: 187). Serbian groups in Kosovo sang in Serbian, while Albanian rock groups sang in Albanian.

Beyond doubt, the biggest punch in the stomach came from Slovenia and a group called Laibach. This band, founded in 1980 in the city of Trbovlje, a town with “a strong revolutionary tradition, which fed and nurtured Laibach. The first exhibition-concert by the new group, self-labelled as totalitarian (...), was planned for 27 September 1980, but the authorities did not appreciate the group’s posters and quashed the concert” (2003: 183). In fact, Laibach used to feed off the provocation they constantly gave out, advertising their “satirical attitude with the statement: our freedom is the freedom of those who think alike” (ibid.).

After having been forbidden to appear in public under their own name, Laibach formed a sort of parallel political structure, naming it “*Neue Slowenische Kunst* (New Slovenian Art, but always referred to either in the German or by the initials NSK). It passed ‘statutes’ for NSK, requiring that ‘a[n] NSK member must be diligent, respectful towards the

tradition and history of the NSK, obedient and cooperative in carrying out common decisions and irreproachable in living up to the universal and secret, legal and moral norms of the NSK' (2003: 184). With a radical, aggressive stance, they were accused of being fascists, even apologetic of Nazism but were eventually successful in predicting, and some years before the event, the breakup of Yugoslavia in a manner pretty similar to what reality came to show.

Provocative, Laibach created a virtual state with a bureaucracy similar to that of Yugoslavia, and were the protagonists in a cultural-artistic-political movement that influenced the Slovenian youth, even if based on the supremacist theses of Kazimir Severinovich Malevich<sup>98</sup>, a Soviet abstractionist painter, from the avant-garde, Russian, post-World War Suprematism, a movement he entitled and that was based on "his own unique philosophy of perception and painting". Malevich, ultimately, believed that "art should transcend subject matter -- the truth of shape and colour should reign 'supreme' over the image or narrative".

One Laibach member told Sabrina Petra Ramet that, "art has to be frightening. It cannot be comfortable," openly assuming the band was waging "psychological terror" on its audiences (2003: 184). Its shows featured constant political provocations; for instance, in 1989, when they played in Belgrade and Slobodan Milošević was already the head of the Communist party of Serbia. In that highly controversial concert, "Laibach showed *The Bombing of Belgrade*, a documentary German propaganda film from 1941, together with a section of a later (Tito-era) film entitled *First Official Meeting of the Nonaligned Countries in Belgrade*, in which the political leaders of the nonaligned states were shown dancing with their wives" (2003: 185). Before the gig started, the band members read out a text fusing Serbo-Croatian with German and "warning Serbs of the totalitarian proclivities of Serbian party boss Slobodan Milošević. In a prescient warning, the text read, 'Brother Serbs, we are not going to let anyone rape you any more. We understand your problems.' This was an allusion to Milošević's later-broken promise (of early 1987) that he would not let anyone 'beat you any more'" (2003: 185).

Everything on the Yugoslav music scene began changing just as soon as war broke out, first in Slovenia and Croatia, then in Bosnia. When the Bosnians Serbs laid siege to Sarajevo, some of the Bosnian capital's most renowned musicians fled. Goran Bregovic of *Bjelo Dugme* (White Button) went to Paris, Nele Karajlic of *Zabranjeno Pušenje* (No Smoking or Smoking Forbidden) to Belgrade" (2003: 176); as a matter of fact, just like his old time friend Emir Kusturica. And as the country was on the verge to collapse, rock bands – or, at least, some of the most significant – started taking "differing positions on whether and how to respond to the new situation. Some of them favored advocacy, such as Zagreb's *Psihomodo pop*, whose 1991 album, *Za Gardiste*, featured four "patriotic" songs, including

---

<sup>98</sup> <http://www.theartstory.org/artist-malevich-kasimir.htm>. Accessed on 31.03.2016.



the strident “Hrvatska mora pobijediti,” (“Croatia Must Win).”<sup>99</sup> In Serbia, rock stars such as Simonida Stankovic and Oliver Mandic gave “their support to the campaign, touring the front lines and serenading the troops. Stankovic even sang a panegyric to international bank robber and cut-throat Zeljko ‘Arkan’ Raznjatovic” (2003: 187):

“They’re protecting Serb glory,  
They are defending Serb lands,  
Arkan’s Tigers,  
They’re heroes without a flaw.”<sup>100</sup>

Under the rule of Milošević and Mirjana Markovic, there was blatant sponsorship of Ceca, the queen of turbo-folk and wife of the same... Arkan. She remains very popular in the region and, most surprisingly, even in BiH, where her husband’s men committed huge atrocities. But rock music has still continued, argues Ramet, “unabated, both in Bosnia and elsewhere in the post-Yugoslav region. In Croatia, in particular, a number of new groups were formed between 1990 and 1992” (2003: 188).

In Croatia, the punk movement was rather active against Milošević, singing obscene lyrics about him with music becoming a weapon of resistance. In 1992, *Atomsko sklonište* (Atomic Shelter)<sup>101</sup>, a band from Pula in Croatia, formed in 1977, and so veterans by the time of the war, “with its lead singer Bruno Langer, issued an album entitled *East Europe Man*, with a political message: the only escape from fratricidal nationalism and bigotry is to free people from ideology and the manipulation by nationalist-oriented politicians” (2003: 187). Belgrade’s rocker Bora Djordjevic went even farther since he “actually registered a political party, half in jest, calling it the Party of Ordinary Drinkers (Partija obiinih pijanaca, or POP). Soon he had recruited 1,100 members; so he decided to run as his party’s candidate for the Federal Assembly. He finished second in his district”<sup>102</sup>.

Throughout the 1990s, Serbian rock bands were taking political stances every now and then, against Milošević. In the winter of 1998, during the Zajedno (Together) coalition, holding office until the regime recognized the victory of the opposition in the municipal elections. Against the new law on information in late 1998, but also “lending encouragement to the Serb ‘national cause’ during the NATO aerial campaign in spring 1999” (Ramet, 2003: 190). This dissertation author was there, in Belgrade, during the NATO bombardments, and there is a refrain from a song by Riblja Corba, still echoing in his ears due to the countless times it was played: “Samo Sloga Srbina Spašava” (“Only Unity Saves the Serbs”).

---

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPPaam57tU0>. Accessed on 26.03.2016.

<sup>100</sup> Text in Ramet, Sabrina Petra (1995), *Social Currents in Eastern Europe, The Sources and Consequences of the Great Transformation*, 2nd ed., Duke University Press, Durham and London, p. 261.

<sup>101</sup> [http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/most\\_rok/1509880.html](http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/most_rok/1509880.html). Accessed on 26.03.2016.

<sup>102</sup> From *Politika Ekspres* (Belgrade), 16 June 1992, p.17. Quoted by Ramet (2003: 188).

Years before, in 1997, the same Bora Djordjevic, “referred to Mirjana Markovic, Milošević’s the wife and head of the Yugoslav United Left (JUL), as Grandma Jula (JULa)”. The veteran rocker sang: ‘On to chaos and disintegration,’ acknowledging in which direction the country had been heading. ‘We are led by Grandma Jula, who uses us all. We dance in a vampire ball, run by our decrepit Grandma Jula’” (2003: 190).

Ramet correctly links some of the names of the bands that emerged in the 1990s with “the general malaise associated with the Milošević years”, the thirteen years of the bureaucratic revolution of the lawyer from Pozarevac: “Belgrade Ghetto, Dead Idea (known, among other things, for its 1992 album, *Welcome to the Abyss*), Clinically Dead (Klinicki mrtav, formed in 1991), Urgh!, and Who is the Best; Eva Braun, a group based in Becej; and the Novi Sad group, *Generation without a Future (Generacija bez buducnosti)*”. (2003: 190). Soon after the NATO war ended, with Milošević still in power, there were concerts organized by the OTPOR (Resistance) student movement that contributed to eventually ousting Slobodan Milošević on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2000.

As Simon Frith<sup>103</sup> has pointed out, as quoted by Ramet (2003: 191): “The rock audience is not a passive mass, consuming records like cornflakes, but an active community, making music into a symbol of solidarity and an inspiration for action [even if only an inspiration to dance]. ...The rock audience is not always manipulated but can make real choices; the music doesn’t always impose an ideology but can, in [Greil] Marcus’s phrase, ‘absorb events,’ absorb its listeners’ concerns and values” (2003: 191). And can, as well, in the end, play a role in reconciliation processes.

## **2.11. Sports: Hooliganism and Nationalism**

According to many press articles, from the mid-1980s, Yugoslav football supporters, mostly youth fans from top clubs as Red Star (Crvena Zvezda), Partizan, both from Belgrade, and Dinamo Zagreb, increasingly began expressing “a sense of national allegiance, just as the greatest aggression was shown towards teams and supporters from different national centres” (Popov, 1996: 373).

In “Football, Hooligans and War”, Ivan Colovic points out that “the story of the collapse of Yugoslavia, in a frenzy of hatred and war, in honour of the gods of ethnic nationalism and pre-modern militarism, may also be described as the story of the evolution of violence in Yugoslav sport, especially among football hooligans, and of the gradual transference of that violence, at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, into the domain of interethnic conflicts and ‘greater-nation’ politics, and thence onto the battlefield”

---

<sup>103</sup> Frith, Simon (1978) *The Sociology of Rock*, London, Constable, p. 198.

(Popov, 1996: 373).

Some years before war erupted in Croatia, football fans began “carrying placards bearing political messages, portraits of national leaders and saints, national coats of arms and flags; they also began chanting Chetnik songs [the Serbs] and using the Ustasha initial and greeting [the Croats]” (ibid.). Did anyone do anything about it, to prevent this from escalating? On this occasion, at least, the press tried to do something. From 1989 to 1991, Belgrade newspapers and magazines, and especially sports publications such as *Sport*, *Sportski Zurnal*, *Partizanov vesnik* (from Partizan football club) and *Zvezdina revija* (from Red Star football club), “printed a large number of commentaries full of dramatic warnings of the danger presented by the spread of chauvinistic passions in sports stadiums, and appeals that something be done to put a stop to such a development” (Popov, 1996: 374). Even the newspapers belonging to rival clubs (Red Star and Partizan) followed this path: *Zvezdina revija* (‘No Politics in the Stadium’) and *Partizanov vesnik* (‘Threat to the principles of decency and strength of spirit’); in the latter, nationalism is described as “the greatest ill that could befall a multinational community”<sup>104</sup>. One month earlier, on 3.02.1990, a journalist had written in the same newspaper: “we are living at a time of the unbelievable raging of almost all the irrational delusions of the past, in which -in our Yugoslav space- the ‘vampirization’ of national chauvinism has become so rife that we are threatened not only with general civilizational disintegration, but a return to a time when the guillotine, the knife and harassment were in everyday use” (Popov, 1996: 374). “Sportsmen and sports officials were accused of nationalism, because ‘in all of this the people who occupy positions of responsibility in sports organizations are by no means innocent’” (ibid.), as *Zvezdina revija* would declare in the following September, a few months ahead of the war in Slovenia and the declarations of independence and secession from Yugoslavia, both from Slovenia and Croatia. Basically, the accusations of nationalism and of promoting violent attitudes and behaviour would fall upon supporters of clubs outside the Yugoslav capital, Belgrade. As the *Partizan Vesnik* would write, “aggressive and fascist behaviour of the spectator” (in Popov, 1996: 375), came mainly from clubs in cities like Mostar, Dubrovnik, Split (home to another major Yugoslav club, Hajduk Split). Colovic tells us that “According to one journalist, at the Dinamo-Partizan match in Zagreb on 25 March 1990, the supporters of Dinamo were overcome by a real ‘bestial madness’. ‘Like beasts, they smelled blood in the air, they wanted blood to be spilled so that their basest instincts could be satisfied’ (PV, 9 June 1990).

The picture painted of Hajduk supporters is no better since ‘in them the instinct of the wild beast has superseded human reason’ (Popov, 1996: 375). The republics from the north, Slovenia and Croatia, richer and with closer links to European Union, especially with

---

<sup>104</sup> *Partizanov Vesnik*, 3.03.1990.

Germany, were accused of egoistical aims and of being “obsessed with nationalistic hysteria and unbridled hatred of everything Yugoslav, the holders of power in Croatia and Slovenia have finally reached out to sport, too.” The ruling parties, DEMOS in Slovenia and HDZ in Croatia, were the targets of accusations published in Belgrade, such as the latter in *Partizan Vesnik*, on 24th August, 1990 (ibid.).

What about in Serbia, where Slobodan Milošević had already begun rallying the country, promising that no one would ever beat a Serb again and fostering nationalism and the idea of protecting Serbs wherever they might live? “When the nationalism of Belgrade supporters was not an imitation of others’ nationalistic ‘raging’, then it was the work of provocateurs from the ranks of some Serbian nationalistic opposition parties”. Besides the Croat leader Franjo Tuđman, the Kosovo Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova, and the Slovenian Dimitj Rupel<sup>105</sup>, only one Serb was mentioned as promoting nationalism by the Belgrade media and especially its clubistic media: Vuk Draskovic, an opposition leader. (Popov, 1996: 376). Ivan Colovic points out that “there is not the slightest allusion to the role of the ruling SPS party or its leader (Slobodan Milošević); there is no attempt to connect the atmosphere in sports stadiums with the similar atmosphere at political rallies in Serbia and Montenegro between 1988 and 1989; nor is there any mention of the striking similarity between the slogans, songs and placards that were appearing both in the stadiums and at political rallies, the main focus of which -in both cases- was Slobodan Milošević, to whom supporters in the stadiums and participants at rallies would frequently chant: ‘Serbian Slobo, Serbia is with YOU’ (“Slobo Srbine, Srbija je uz tebe’)” (ibid.). The same kind of rethoric merely escalated after war broke out in Croatia. An article published in August 1991 in the *Zvezda* (Red Star) magazine, about the cancellation of the start of the football league championship in Yugoslavia in 1991, was all about blaming Croatia, “with the Ustasha-like policies of Tuđman’s HDZ party”, against the Serbian population who, according to the Belgrade media, was “suffering precisely because it is Serbian.” The article also mentions “Croatian fighters in Slavonia and Krajina’ who ‘keep attacking the Serbian inhabitants ... who are defending their homes’” (ibid.).

When UEFA decided, in August 1991, to ban all European football competitions in stadiums in Yugoslavia, that was perceived by the state media in Belgrade as an act to dismantle Yugoslav football perpetrated due to the influential role of the “German lobby” or an “anti-Serb lobby”.

As Colovic wrote, “the exclusion of Yugoslav teams and clubs from international

---

<sup>105</sup> He was one of the authors, in 1987, of the Contributions to the Slovenian National Program, an intellectual manifesto that demanded a democratic, pluralistic and sovereign Slovenian state and raised a huge scandal in Yugoslavia. Rupel was the editor of the journal *Nova Revija* and because of the publication of the manifesto, was fired. Two years later, he founded the Slovenian Democratic Union (*Slovenska demokratična zveza, SDZ*), pioneering opposition to the Communist party.

competitions was also interpreted with reference to the international isolation of the Serbian regime as described by the state media”. According to their interpretation, Yugoslavia was under sanctions because “the main voice in the international community was that of enemies of the Orthodox Serbian nation, and above all the influential German and Vatican lobby”. And all this was happening because Serbia was better and far more advanced than “all others in this field” (Popov, 1996: 377).

Footballers made refugees were also given the floor to be outspoken about their natural complaints on arrival in Serbia: “one former player from Osijek was quoted as saying ‘I could not remain in a city where people were killed just because they were Serbs and Orthodox.’ According to the journalist conducting the interview ‘all the evil suffered by the Serbian nation in Slavonia could be seen in his eyes” (Popov, 1996: 378).

Along the same lines, trainers from Yugoslavia were being fired in western Europe, just because of being Orthodox or their adherence to the 'Serbdom' and thus suffering “innocently in various Catholic countries” (ibid.). The examples given were of Ljupko Petrovic<sup>106</sup>, sacked from Español, a team from Barcelona, after winning the European Cup with Red Star some months before; and, almost simultaneously, along with the basketball trainer Bozidar Maljkovic<sup>107</sup>, at the time coaching Barcelona. The alleged persecution of Red Star was compared to the persecution of Serbs in World War I, the fans would not regret a second spent in attending Zvezda matches, “neither time nor expense, neither effort nor unjustified absences from school nor the reprimands of their bosses or threats by the directors of their firms.’ To be with Red Star in those difficult times was the real education for the young, far more important than that imposed on them *by their teachers*” (Popov, 1996: 379). In 1991 and 1992, particularly in *Zvezdina revija*, it became firmly established that most important “value of the club was its Serbian identity, and that supporting Red Star meant, in fact, supporting ‘Serbdom’ and Serbia”. Red Star was “a European club in its results, but in its origin and through the allegiance of its fans, supremely Serbian”. Or, according to the Serbian newspaper in Croatia, *Nasa Nfjet* (Our Word), “Red Star is more than a football club, it is a symbol of the Serbian being” (Popov, 1996: 380).

Intellectuals did not stay on the shore. They also boarded the boat of nationalism fueled through sports and through what was written in the media as if sports was what it was about. Indeed, writer Brana Crncevic, in an interview in *Sport*, “gave apparently contradictory information about himself, that he was ‘a Partizan fan, who supported Red Star’. In fact, there

---

<sup>106</sup> <http://www.ljupkopetrovic.com/index.php?lang=en&page=Home>. Accessed on 27.03.2016.

<sup>107</sup> This Serbian professional basketball coach, one of the most successful in Europe, won league titles with practically all the clubs he trained; including four Euroleague titles with three different clubs (Jugoplastika Split, Limoges, and Panathinaikos).

was no contradiction because for Crncevic, Red Star was a symbol of Serbian identity. ‘Star’s successes’, added Crncevic, ‘meant a great deal both to Serbs in the diaspora and to Serbs here’” (*Sport*, 26 December 1991). Another important personality in the Serb and Yugoslav culture, the poet Matija Beckovic, told the *Zvezdina revija* in March 1992 he “had begun to support Star because ‘national allegiance was expressed through support’ for that club” (Popov, 1996: 381).

Modeled, as in many places in Europe, on their Italian (*tiffosi*) and English (*hooligans*) peers, Yugoslav football fans in the late 1980s started developing a kind of subculture, practising or praising “alcoholism, barbarity, vandalism, madness, sex and a pornographic vocabulary. Above all, it seems that the real target of the hooligan fans’ provocations was the ruling authority in their immediate social environment” (1996: 382).

Gradually, both “in Serbia and Montenegro, there began increasingly to appear among the supporters those who looked for a kind of patriotic justification for their provocative and aggressive behaviour, especially at matches where their team was playing against a club from a ‘different centre’” (1996: 384). Ethnic identity became “the predominant content from the mid-1980s, at the same time as the theme began to appear in political communication and propaganda, especially at the populist mass political rallies which set the tone of political life in Serbia and Montenegro in the course of 1988 and 1989” (*ibid.*). The football fans wanted to be perceived as belonging to their nation and as opponents of the nations of others, as well. The same was happening in Croatia with the supporters increasingly interested in identifying themselves with “the establishment of a nationalistic regime”. Red Star supporters would correspondingly sing:

“We are the Warriors from proud Serbia  
Come onto the terraces, greet the Serbian race  
From Kosovo to Knin, Serbs stand shoulder to shoulder  
Serbian Slobo, Serbia is with you  
Who says, who lies, that Serbia is small?  
It’s not small, it’s not small, it gave us Slobodan!  
Manastirka, rmanastirka, Serbian brandy:  
that’s what warms the Serbian army, Slobodan!” (1996: 384).

Partizan supporters would take the same path:

“Partizan, Partizan, that’s a Serbian team. Slobodan Milošević is proud of them.

The whole of Yugoslavia dances rock-and-roll, Only a true Serb supports Partizan” (1996: 385). In Croatia, there was even a rare sense of fraternity between Dinamo Zagreb and Hajduk Split supporters:

“Dinamo and Hajduk are of the same blood it doesn’t matter which of them is first, Dinamo and Hajduk are two brother clubs, the whole of Croatia is proud of them” (1996: 385). For Red Star supporters, this was the time to adapt chetnik songs from World War Two: “The Serbian army is on the move heading for Zagreb, heading for Zagreb, we will murder, we will kill, all who are not with us” (1996: 386).

However, in the new decade, towards the end of 1990, a new local hooligan was beginning to emerge in Marakana, the Red Star stadium: “the sports press, and particularly *Zvezdina revija*, began to write about positive changes in the behaviour of Red Star supporters, changes that were attributed to the influence of their leader -Zeljko Raznatovic Arkan- a man who was increasingly forcing himself into the attentions of the broader public. He was credited with reconciling the management of Red Star with a section of the unruly supporters, with establishing order and harmony between the mutually antagonistic groups of fans, and, most importantly, with succeeding in separating support for the club from political passions and interests”<sup>108</sup>. He is understood as someone with “an excellent understanding of events in the 'Marakana' stadium, who was helping ‘The Warriors’ to leave politics in the political arena” (ibid.). This was not exactly the case. Or, at least, not after a short while<sup>109</sup>. He was, in fact, taking the football fans into the political arena, and the politics prevailing at the time, would be on the battlefield, that is to say, war.

“Rznatovic made the decision to begin preparing Star supporters for real war, as he said himself, after the Dinamo-Star match of 13 May 1990 in Zagreb: ‘we began to organize immediately after that ... I could see war coming because of that match in Zagreb, I foresaw everything and I knew that the Ustasha daggers would soon be slaughtering Serbian women and children again’” (Popov, 1996:388).

Colovic recalls that Arkan was arrested in Una, Croatia, and spent some six months in prison, accused of trying to arm the Serbs in Krajina, and, by then, having already founded a militia called the Serbian Volunteer Guard out Red Star supporters and became the core of his private army when he was released and “became involved in armed conflicts in Slavonia, which, in the course of the summer of 1991, turned into real war” (ibid.). By December 1991, *Zvezdina revija* published a short ‘note from the front’ about Arkan, “the leader of the Star 'Warriors' and commander of his 'Tigers' who distinguished themselves in the liberation of

---

<sup>108</sup> The author of this dissertation interviewed Zeljko Raznatovic Arkan in Belgrade in May 1999, during the NATO intervention in Serbia: “I’m a citizen of this country and if a bitch at the Hague says to the world I’m a war criminal, I don’t give a shit. It’s a strong word but when you accuse an innocent man of being a war criminal, the normal reaction is to say that she is a bitch” (Alexandre, 2002: 48).

<sup>109</sup> *Zvezdina Revija* was, at that time, writing “about Star supporters in a different way, praising their behaviour. The club itself hurried to repay ‘The Warriors’ for their obedience to the supporters’ commissar Raznatovic by paying for some eighty of the most passionate supporters to go to Glasgow for a match against Glasgow Rangers, with Raznatovic as leader of the expedition (ZR, December 1990)” (Popov, 1996: 387).

Vukovar””. Occasionally, football fans turned into real fighters were visited on the frontlines by footballers, eager to show their pride in the fans sense of patriotism. War was taking over football on the pitch, as the star Sinisa Mihajlovic once complained (Popov, 1996: 389): “Our supporters are at the front ... my people are dying and bleeding, and how can I play? I even caught myself thinking that it was actually indecent for us to play and enjoy ourselves when there are so many victims” (quoting from Tempo, 11 December 1991).

Having gone to war in “paramilitary volunteer units, supporters from Serbia adapted their ‘hooligan’songs to their new function, turning them into patriotic and war folklore” (ibid.): “There will be hell again, there’ll be a madhouse again, the specials are on the move (...) They do not fear Allah, they do not fear the faith they do not fear Alija (Izetbegovic) and all his Turks”, was a song published in Javnost, the Bosnian Serb newspaper from Pale in the middle of the war and the siege of Sarajevo, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in October 1993 (Popov, 1996: 390). The most famous newspaper in Bosnia, and an example of tolerance amidst growing nationalism, was Oslobodjenje. At the Media Center in Sarajevo, veteran journalist Mehmed Halilovic, a former media service provider in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, told the author (in Sarajevo, in 2013) how he went to run the Oslobodjenje newspaper in wartime after replacing the well-known Kemal Kurspahic who now lives in USA. Halilovic recalls that his newspaper had the first journalist killed in the war, the correspondent of the newspaper in Zvornik, Republika Srpska, and tells us “how difficult it was to get the newspaper out in those conditions, sometimes the paper was not even suitable for printing”.

There was no need for the governments, whether in Yugoslavia (with its remanant republics of Serbia and Montenegro) or in the newly independent Croatia, to control the violence of their football fans: “in wartime the fans’ aggression became for the state a valuable ‘capital of hatred’, and the fans became welcome ‘cannon fodder’. The state did not have any need to repress the violent behaviour of the fans, partly because in wartime there was little opportunity for it to be manifested in the usual way. On the contrary, it was in the interests of the state that this ‘capital of hatred’ among supporters should be conserved in order to use it for the realization of war aims” (ibid.). War, more than football, was now what Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning<sup>110</sup> described as the controlled decontrolling of emotions.

It was mainly in Serbia, and to some extent in Croatia, on the eve of the outbreak of the conflicts in the 1990s that war propaganda, “above all through sports journalists, succeeded in directing the aggressive energy of the supporters towards the battlefields” (1996: 392). Young men who, in peacetime, would be seen, when gathered together, as petty criminals, were about to be considered war heroes, helping decisively to turn the conflicts into

---

<sup>110</sup> Elias, Norbert and Dunning, Eric (1992), *A busca da excitação*, Difel, Lisboa.



“vandalistic, destructive campaigns of hooligan-fans, taken over by the state for the aims of its war policy”, well armed, and sent to the frontlines to “fight with the ‘enemy’ as though it were a question of inter-supporter confrontation at some football match” (Popov, 1996: 392). And it did not take much to transform otherwise chaotic patterns of behaviours into a disciplined force, as Arkan himself recognized with sociological studies also there to prove this<sup>111</sup>. As Colovic argues: “the transformation of fans into soldiers is only a reinterpretation of the already existing structure of the supporters’ group, and that is why it is possible for the essential identity of the group, as fans, to be retained (Arkan’s volunteer ‘Tigers’ did not cease to be ‘Warriors’)” (Popov, 1996: 392-393). However, even if there was not anyone or anything to prevent them from disseminating hatred and destruction, the “grim stories that emerged from the war in Croatia and Bosnia, of sadistic orgies orchestrated by people in military uniforms engaged in military actions, suggest that the freedom of abandonment to the most gruesome forms of violence offered by war cannot be compared to that tasted by sports fans even at their ‘wildest’” (Popov, 1996: 393).

The French sociologist Michel Maffesoli<sup>112</sup> coined the term Urban Tribes in the mid-1980s to describe subcultures of people, sharing common interests and dressing in similar styles as well as behaving and partying similarly. However, what may be particularly original with Arkan's 'Warriors' stems from the fact revealing how one “group of hooligan fans showed itself particularly susceptible to recruitment and requalification into a war unit, and that had no difficulty in exchanging the stadium and conflict with the supporters of different teams for the battlefield and slaughter in the name of the nation-state” (Popov, 1996: 394). The anthropologist Ivan Colovic concludes his brilliant analysis in Popov's book by saying that war “offers a good opportunity to channel that violence so that its target is no longer authority and established social values, against which the aggression of hooligan fans is usually directed in peacetime, but external enemies of the nation. The regime in power acquires fighters, demonstrably fierce and fanatical, who, according to a widely held belief, are better able to carry out the ‘dirty’ business of war than the regular army, and at the same time it offers an opportunity for such hooligan-fan-fighters to redeem their peacetime transgressions and, sacrificing themselves for the Fatherland, to return to the fold and earn the love reserved for the penitent prodigal son” (ibid.). The next section of this chapter sets out analysis on the current scholarly debates around nationalism.

---

<sup>111</sup> See Bromberger, Christian, Main Hayot Jean-Marc Mariottini. "Allez L'OM! FonaJuve! La passion pour le football a Marseille et Turin". Terrain (8 April 1987).

See also Coelho, João Nuno (2001) *Portugal, a equipa de todos nós, Nacionalismo, futebol e os media*, Edições Afrontamento.

<sup>112</sup> Maffesoli, Michel (1996), *The Time of the Tribes: The Decline of Individualism in Mass Society*, SAGE, New York.

## 2.12. Current Debates on Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism (in a globalized world)

More recent debates on nationalism extend beyond the more strictly political issues and instead focus on issues such as borders and boundaries, blood sacrifice and violence, identity and difference, gender and sexuality. Political scientist Umut Ozkirimli, in his *Contemporary Debates on Nationalism* (Ozkirimli, 2005), reflects over these topics and about whether globalization brought about a crisis of nationalism and whether we may consider cosmopolitanism as an alternative to nationalism, which is the understanding of the dissertation's author. When rethinking nationalism, we must certainly take into account the heterogeneity and plurality of the social constructionist approaches. Ozkirimli (2005: 50, 51) says that one "can witness in the last two decades the emergence of a series of studies that seek to rejuvenate the theoretical debate by addressing a whole different set of questions, thereby opening up new avenues for exploration".

There are two distinguishing features of these studies. First, they are all interdisciplinary in nature (as this thesis aims to be seen), not only in the sense of crossing the boundaries separating classical disciplines but also in their openness to new fields such as cultural studies, global anthropology, gender and sexuality, new social movements, diaspora and migration studies, and so on. Second, they all give pride of place to issues and questions that have received scant attention in earlier, more mainstream studies.

Carolyn Marvin and David W. Ingle, both from the University of Pennsylvania, argue that blood sacrifices establish the cohesion of groups, that which binds them together. In their *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag* (Marvin, 1999), they relate how blood sacrifices preserve the nation and its shared memory then gets renewed on a periodical basis: "the creation of sentiments strong enough to hold the group together periodically requires the willing deaths of a significant portion of its members. (...) The most powerful enactment of this ritual is war" (1999: 5). These authors tell us that "nationalism and religion, and namely sectarian religion, share "the worship of killing authority, (...) central to religious practice and belief" (ibid.). To sum up, according to Marvin and Ingle, "what is really true in any society is what is worth killing for, and what citizens may be compelled to sacrifice their lives for". In what one might consider a rather non-mainstream approach, these authors state that, "in the broadest sense, the purpose of religion is to organize killing energy. This is how it accomplishes its social function of defining and maintaining the group. By this standard, nationalism is unquestionably the most powerful religion in the United States".

Even if we change from one group to another, we cannot remove ourselves from a system of violence while we are affiliated with some group. Or, going back directly to Marvin and Ingle's words, "Wherever we are, killing rules are in effect" (1999: 313). Being target of violence, particularly when associated with ethnic cleansing, may also generate a full

attachment to a community as observed in the case of the Albanians in Kosovo under the repression of the authoritarian rule of Slobodan Milošević in the late 1990s. Authors such as Arjun Appadurai<sup>113</sup> (2000: 132) argue that violence “produces full attachment, rather than the reverse”. He acknowledges that full attachment, rather than having its root in some sort “of shared community (whether based on language, history, soil or some other element), might actually be produced by various forms of violence instigated, sometimes even required, by the modern nation-state” (Ozkirimli, 2000: 52).

When the debates on nationalism focus on issues such as borders and boundaries, we must take into account that this topic has infiltrated the study of ethnic groups ever since the late 1960s when Barth published his benchmark *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969). Authors such as Prasenjit Duara (1996) propose that “a nationality is formed when the perception of the boundaries of a community is transformed, or when soft boundaries are transformed into hard ones” (Ozkirimli, 2000: 53).

The conflicts throughout the former Yugoslavia, and one may be referring not only to the wars in the 1990s but also to the Balkan Wars in the first decades of the twentieth century and the civil war in the aftermath of World War II, in a certain way accompany what Duara understands as the (trans)formation of an incipient nationality “when the perception of the boundaries of community are transformed: when soft boundaries are transformed into hard ones”. Every cultural practice, or ‘symbolic meaning’ as Duara terms it, may be considered a boundary marking a community. Groups with soft boundaries between each other are “sometimes so unselfconscious about their differences that they do not view mutual boundary breach as a threat and could eventually even amalgamate into one community” (ibid: 168).

That was what happened in Tito’s Yugoslavia. Boundaries between Slovenians, Bosnian, Croats, Serbs, Montenegrins and Macedonians were soft ones; people used to circulate freely and, to some extent, intermingle thus forming diverse ethnic and religious communities in each of the territories. Duara sets out an example from China: “dietary and religious practices may not prevent the sharing of a range of practices between local Hui Muslim and Han communities. The important point is that they tolerate the sharing of some and the non-sharing of other boundaries” (ibid.). Ozkirimli considers borders not only as “sites of power and domination, but also of subversion. This subversion is not always symbolic” (2005: 54). Such is the case with the administrative border set up between Kosovo and Serbia proper, at the time – in the late 1990s – still part of the same internationally recognized territory and with its sovereignty still disputed into the present day. While this

---

<sup>113</sup> A contemporary social-cultural anthropologist and a major theorist in globalization studies, born in India in 1949, Arjun Appadurai is a former Professor of Anthropology and South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, who gained recognition for his reflections about the importance of the modernity of nation states and globalization.

constituted a legitimate way of exercising power and domination by the Serbian authorities in Belgrade, controlling the influx of people and goods into the rest of Serbia, this also represented a site of subversion when seen from the perspective of the Kosovar Albanian independence movement. Nowadays, with Kosovo recognized as an independent country by more than one hundred countries, it works the other way around: the border is an attempt by the Pristina authorities to state their authority over a defined territory and, internally and to the world, assert that one thing is Kosovo another thing is Serbia; on the other hand, Serbs from Kosovo's north municipalities, decry these border controls, subverting the idea of Kosovo as an independent territory, sticking to the idea that Kosovo is – and will always be – Serbia.

In conclusion, as regards the importance attributed to borders and boundaries in the contemporary debates on nationalism, the author of this dissertation concurs with Ozkirimli when understanding borders as zones – calling them 'liminal' zones, "where nationalization projects may be most easily resisted, and where alternative, marginal, non-national, or transnational identities may be most easily constructed" (2005: 54).

Reflecting about nations and nationalism cannot, thus, be dissociated, in our complex world, from the process of globalization. To Boaventura Sousa Santos (2002), "globalisation is to be understood as a non-linear process marked by contradictory yet parallel discourses and varying levels of intensity and speed". A multilevel and multispeed process that intervenes and interacts with "other parallel transformations in the world system, such as the dramatic rise in inequality between rich and poor countries and between the rich and the poor inside each country, overpopulation, environmental disaster, ethnic conflicts, international mass migration, the emergence of new states and the collapse or decline of others, the proliferation of civil wars, globally organized crime, formal democracy as a political condition for international aid, etc"<sup>114</sup>.

In a globalized world, nations are losing their exclusive centrality as the main anchors of "economic, social and political initiatives. Intensifying interactions across borders and transnational practices have eroded the ability of the nation state to guide or control the flow of people, goods, capital or ideas as it did in the past" (ibid). Boaventura Sousa Santos argues that we are not in face of a new phenomenon, since "the impact of the international context on the regulation of the nation state is inherent in the modern interstate system and inscribed in the Treaty of Westphalia itself (1648), which established it".

In the past fifteen or twenty years, since the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, there has been an increasing debate on the influence of the globalization on local issues and contexts, and, vice-versa, the impact of local trends, and events, on the global flows.

---

<sup>114</sup> <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2002-08-22-santos-en.html>. Published on 22.08.2002, accessed on 19.10.2016.

Santos claims that “the globalised localisms and the localized globalisms are globalisation from-the-top-downwards, or hegemonic globalisation, and cosmopolitanism and the common inheritance of humanity are globalisations from-the-bottom-upwards or anti-hegemonic” (ibid.). The author concludes his idea admitting the inherent tensions between these two types of globalization, and we should not neglect it when analyzing modern nationalism, statehood and its controversies.

In his *Contested States in World Politics* (2009; Palgrave Macmillan, New York), Deon Geldenhuys, when defining those states, acknowledges “the internationally contested nature of their purported statehood” (2009: 3), which suffers from “a serious deficit in international recognition”. That proves exactly what happens with Kosovo. As Geldenhuys says, “most contested states find their very right of statehood being challenged by their original (or central) states and the broader international community. Even if a prospective state’s right of statehood is widely or universally recognized by established states, the translation of this conceded right into political reality can still be vigorously contested by a sizeable number of countries. (...) Great controversy also surrounds contested states’ ultimate political destination, given that their current unusual situation is only temporary. That transitory status amounts to life in international limbo” (2009: 3). They thus contrast “with confirmed statehood as enshrined in international law and embodied in the practices of states” (2009: 4).

Our era of globalization and distinctive political appeals for state sovereignty is loaded with examples of contested states that seek recognition or are somehow challenged by their original central state; including territories such as Kosovo that, despite having declared independence, “experiences collective non-recognition in the sense of being deliberately excluded from UN membership. This leaves contested states in a rather abnormal situation because the vast majority of contemporary states were accorded *de jure* recognition on gaining independence and accepted into the ranks of confirmed states without difficulty” (2009: 7). We would echo Geldenhuys in posing some important questions: “Were contested states refused recognition because they failed to meet the basic requirements of statehood? Or were they denied recognition on grounds unrelated to these standards? Conversely, have all confirmed states complied with the formal criteria of statehood or have different standards been applied to different candidates?” The disparity of standards and criteria demanded of different countries is not uncommon in international relations but one would say that this takes us into a different debate beyond the scope of this dissertation; nevertheless one must take into account these questions, when analyzing the dynamics of the region and especially the case of Kosovo, with its declaration of independence recognized by more countries worldwide than those who have hitherto refused to do so, but is nevertheless not yet

recognized as a UN member state and not even by EU countries, such as Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Romania and Slovakia.

Does a country whose independence is not yet totally recognized act as such? Does it develop foreign relations and perform its statehood prerogatives or is its task as a state impaired by this kind of limbo position? The latter may be the case with Kosovo, according to complaints from the Kosovar authorities throughout the years and to the author's observations on the field.

Could we say that a country in such a situation is simulating sovereignty, as put by Cynthia Weber (1995: 1)? This author starts by claiming that most IR theorists, whenever giving an account of the "history, concepts, and issues in their discipline, they seemingly are presented with a choice between two opposed options. They may provide explanations from within the tradition of realism, which takes individual sovereign states as its point of departure. Alternatively, they may give their accounts from within the tradition of idealism, which takes a community of sovereign states as its point of departure". In any case, sovereignty provides a key point of reference in international relations, "a ground or essential modifier for the state".

Weber understands statehood as an unsettled question, bearing in mind its historicity as "countless forms of state sovereignty co-exist in modern global political life" (2009: 2). In fact, sovereignty works as a site of political struggle "in such a way as to constitute a particular state - to write the state - with particular boundaries, competencies and legitimacies available to it". And Cynthia Weber points out what she considers to be a second "embarrassment for international relations theorists who presume settlement of the question of sovereignty, then, is that they cannot begin to investigate how the meaning of sovereignty is stabilized. They must close their eyes to what is without a doubt the most fundamental of political questions - how is the meaning of state sovereignty fixed in theory and practice?"

Instead of defining sovereignty<sup>115</sup> or attempting to achieve some sort of redefinition, which could eventually sustain a more suitable way of theoretically operating with the concept itself, the work of Cynthia Weber does something else, and of far greater value: she questions. "How is the meaning of sovereignty fixed or stabilized historically via practices of international relations theorists and practices of political intervention? In other words, how do practices of theorists and diplomats stabilize the meaning of sovereignty and, by default, write the state?" (2009: 3). The idea is not to find a solution to the problem of sovereignty but rather pose it as a question as well as doing the same with statehood. Even if the author agrees

---

<sup>115</sup> Cit. Weber (2009: 9) "no definition of sovereignty is offered. Rather, definitions produced under specific historical circumstances - particularly at moments of intervention practices - will be analyzed not by asking if they capture the "real," "true" meaning of sovereignty but by focusing on how these historically specific meanings affect forms of being or states".

not to erase them, they – both concepts – are inherently questioned. By focusing her analyses on the relationship between “the meanings of sovereignty and intervention”, she argues that “modalities of sovereign statehood are effects of the contestation of meanings of both sovereignty and intervention. Furthermore, the arenas where meanings of sovereignty/intervention are contested include practices both by diplomats and by international relations theorists” (2009:12). The dispute over the sovereignty of Kosovo, following the international intervention in 1999 against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia ruled by Milošević, and Montenegro, also trying to break away after Milo Djukanovic came to power in 2000) represents a very good example of an arena of discussion and contestation around the modalities of sovereign statehood and interventions that were put into place, and their practices contested, both by politicians, whether diplomats or not, and theorists.

In such circles, it seems practically common sense to listen to the idea of Kosovo as a failed state. The current dissertation, following some important scholars in the field of peace studies, refuses the concept of failed state as a label one can dress up a country in, and therefore correspondingly considering the failure of the nation-states a myth. As stated above, “Chandler (2002) and Mark Duffield (2001) make a critical reading” of this theoretical trend, “denouncing what could be understood as a historical revenge against anti-colonialism”. When we look at the role of the international community, mainly the so-called Western powers, in Kosovo, we must not forget the influence of those theoretical works that shed light on understanding “the complex management of expectations - and unfulfilled promises – made by those who do not take long, soon after promises of aid and development, besides unquestionable political support, to classify those same new states as ‘failed’”.

Even if Serbia “is never going to recognize Kosovo’s independence”, as former Serbia’s president Boris Tadić told the author of this dissertation in an interview in Belgrade in 2007<sup>116</sup>, and besides considerations that may be made about that positioning, as well as the positioning of some EU countries, the truth remains that for many years, and even now at the time of writing (July 2016), the lack of definition about the final status of Kosovo has been a huge thorn in its present capacities and very likely bearing an important impact on the prospects for development in the years to come. Looked from Pristina, the picture has been drawn in different colours but with similar results. Fatmir Sejdiu, then president of Kosovo, told the author of this dissertation in an interview at his office in Pristina in 2006: “Kosovo

---

<sup>116</sup> When the author asked Mr. Tadić if he was preparing himself to be the first president of Serbia without Kosovo, the answer was: “No, i’m not preparing to be president of Serbia without Kosovo. We are doing everything that is our range to protect our territorial integrity and sovereignty about Kosovo. I am absolutely certain that we are doing it in accordance with international law and this is very important for Europe’s future, bearing in mind the many consequences that may cause an eventual Kosovo independence”.

can not forget what Serbia did to the kosovar people, because a genocide and crimes against humanity were committed, our economy was destroyed, among other things. However, as we can not forget part of history, we are prepared to consider this chapter enclosed and are committed to the future, to have good relations with Serbia as two neighboring and sovereign countries. We want to accelerate our way to european integration and, of course, we want Serbia to give up the logic of domination over others”.

In modern debates about nationalism, explanatory and normative theories of secession are the focus of Aleksandar Pavkovic, a scholar based in Australia but of Yugoslav origins. He states that, “in finding out what causes a social phenomenon, scientists are trying to explain how and why it happens. For example, one could argue a secession of a particular region was to be explained, at least in part, by its wealth relative to the rest of the host state: people want to secede in order not to have to share their region’s wealth with the poorer regions of the host state” (Pavkovic, 2007: 173). This has seldom been the point for secessionism in Catalonia as was also the case in the late 1980s for Croats and Slovenes in the former Yugoslavia. In his *Creating New States Theory and Practice of Secession*, co-authored with Peter Radan, Pavkovic approaches the possible casual relation between the wealth of a certain region and its predisposition for secession: “If the relative wealth of a region, under specific conditions, is indeed the principal cause of its secession in one case, it may also be a cause of future secession of other regions in similar circumstances. Thus, establishing likely causal links between secessions and various structural features of the seceding region would enable us, the observers, to identify which regions, displaying similar features, are likely to attempt to secede in the future”.

Pavkovic and Radan also stress the relevance of preconditions, such as geographical, social, economic, political and even psychological preconditions in “an emotional desire for homeland independence” (2007: 177). Based on Anthony D. Smith’s theory of separatism and secession, the authors argue that the lack of response by the central government to minority demands (in most cases, related to inequalities in terms of accessing public employment and mid-high state positions), directly links with the demand for secession: “this should help us predict in which cases ethnic minorities and their elites will attempt to secede: wherever a central government fails to accommodate minority demands, an attempt at secession is likely. However, a number of cases of secession which we have examined – those of Iceland from Denmark, Norway from the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway, Slovakia from the Czech and Slovak republic, Slovenia from the SFRY – exhibit the alleged effect without its cause: secessionist movements, inspired by nationalist ideologies (‘ethnic revival’ movements), planned to proclaim and then did proclaim independence in spite of the readiness of the central governments or their negotiating partners to accommodate their political demands for power sharing and distribution of jobs” (2007: 182).



To the examples aforementioned, one could also add Kosovo, bearing in mind the concessions Belgrade was ready to make at the Rambouillet Peace talks in the first months of 1999. Therefore, Pavkovic and Radan raise the following question: “Can a proclamation of secession, motivated by a nationalist ideology, always be prevented through a political accommodation of the secessionist demands?” This dissertation’s author understands that such does not always represent the case as, very often, the cleavage between the central state efforts to accommodate and the minority demands for this accommodation is so wide that the positions of both parties are extremely difficult to reconcile or even to come to some sort of common ground of understanding. The current talks between Serbia and Kosovo, mediated by the EU, though not finished, are – as we see in detail in chapter V – are a very respectful and positive way of the leading parties to reach some sort of basis of understanding, despite the irreconcilable issues (recognition itself, first and foremost) that may persist.

In 1999, Kosovo was the stage of what evidence from international observers and organizations considered ethnic cleansing<sup>117</sup>, as was the case of the OSCE and Human Rights Watch, which reported that “despite the scale of the displacement during 1998 and early 1999, many observers believed Kosovo, with its 90 percent ethnic Albanian population, would be exempt from large-scale ethnic cleansing, if only for the practical obstacles to the expulsion of an entire people. By contrast, Kosovo with its overwhelming ethnic Albanian majority had experienced a steady outflow of its Serb population over prior decades, with Belgrade resorting to the forced resettlement of Croatian Serbs in an attempt to reverse the migration of Serbs out of the province. The slow initial response of UNHCR and NATO to the human tide of refugees into Macedonia and Albania in late March and early April is evidence that few in the international community believed the government of Slobodan Milošević would attempt the ‘ethnic cleansing’ of Kosovo. Many observers also believed that Milošević would quickly capitulate once NATO airstrikes began”. He did not. The ethnic cleansing, in fact, increased after 24<sup>th</sup> March. March 24-26 saw an aggressive operation to secure the southwest border with Albania, which involved large-scale displacement accompanied by killings of civilians”<sup>118</sup>. Belgrade took advantage of the NATO campaign over its territory to strengthen the repression and “unleash a full-scale offensive on the KLA as well as to order the expulsion of more than 850,000 Kosovar Albanians”. However, one question should very much be raised at this point of the dissertation, taking into account one is focusing on new approaches and trends in nationalism studies and the way nationalism is reflected by – and reflects – a globalized world. That question is: were there alternatives to

---

<sup>117</sup> <http://www.osce.org/odihr/17772?download=true>. Accessed on 30.07.2016. See also *Human Rights Watch, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: "Ethnic Cleansing" in the Glogovac Municipality, Volume 11, No. 8(D), July 1999*.

<sup>118</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/kosovo/undword-03.htm>. Accessed on 30.07.2016.

secession? Bearing in mind the will of the Kosovar Albanians, the armed struggle of the KLA and the support of the international community, and from what the author has learnt from his own experience on the field observing and interviewing, the answer could be a straight: no.

Deon Geldenhuys recalls that 2008 meant Kosovo's second bid for international recognitions, after a first unilateral declaration of independence in 1991, "when not a single confirmed state recognized its purported statehood" (2009: 126). However, after the conflict in 1999 and NATO intervention in Yugoslavia, the former Serbian province's path to independence "was provided by the Ahtisaari plan, a blueprint for internationally supervised statehood. Implementation was, however, delayed by the implacable opposition of Kosovo's two veto states, Serbia and Russia, to any notion of independence for Kosovo. Exasperated, Kosovo threw down the gauntlet with a unilateral declaration of independence in early 2008" (2009: 127). Despite Serbian, Russian and dozens of others refusals, including five EU countries, most states promptly recognized the country including the U.S., "Turkey and a host of others. One reason for the positive international reception was the new state's commitment to implementing the Ahtisaari plan; another was the lack of international sympathy for the obstructive role played by Serbia and Russia". Still, the vast majority of states had by mid-2008 still not recognized Kosovo and Russia may well veto its admission to the UN. This leaves Kosovo's statehood still being contested, although the chances are that the challenge will wane rather than wax". Once again, the question: were there alternatives to secession?

It is true that in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, contested states should be taken seriously. As Geldenhuys argues, after an inquiry that studied ten entities that could be classified as contested states (Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transdnistria, Nagorno Karabagh, Kosovo, Somaliland, Palestine, Northern Cyprus, Western Sahara and Taiwan, besides references to a few others<sup>119</sup>), that many academics, even if acknowledging that "contested states could undermine peace, security and stability in various regions, [some scholars] would still ask whether it really mattered – in a globalized world – if a dozen or so entities failed to achieve international recognition of their purported statehood and were compelled to exist as something less than full-fledged states? Are these putative states actually disadvantaged by their indeterminate status? After all, states are losing much of their traditional central authority through the processes of fusion from above and fission from below" (2009: 234). Whether disseminating or spreading authority through international and multilateral institutions, such as the EU and the European Central Bank (ECB), or "devolving authority to sub-national regions and groupings in their midst, which demand the right to take care of their particular interests and to gain independent access to the international arena" (2009:235).

---

<sup>119</sup> Geldenhuys (2009: 234) "Manchukuo, Croatia, Katanga, Rhodesia, Biafra, South Africa's four homeland states (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei), Bangladesh, Eritrea, East Timor and Chechnya".

Nevertheless, the world system still remains considerably organized around fully recognized states, even when it comes to multilateral or international organizations: its members are states, whose statehood is recognized by an abstract entity known as the world community. As Geldenhuys puts it, “global and regional forums where matters of high politics are decided are the preserve of full-blown states. Another consideration is that the development assistance offered by international financial institutions is mostly reserved for standing members of the community of states” (2009: 235).

An ethnic minority’s (or non-ruling majority) desire to be freed from political repression, which may have happened or be happening, economic distrust and deprivation, deep rooted feeling of inequality, lack of cultural rights, “or even extermination at the hands of the majority group(s) in control of the central state” are the reasons for secession. As the drive for secession, by nature and definition, runs counter to the will of the central state, violence between the two sides may occur. And even when violence is stopped, as substantially happened in Kosovo in June 1999, the original state (Serbia), as Geldenhuys argues, “will as a rule try to prevent its illegitimate offspring gaining international recognition and joining the community of confirmed states. In this capacity the original state can exercise veto power over the aspirant’s status ambitions” (2009: 236).

Despite the problems of recognition that Kosovo may have with Serbia, or Repulica Srpska within the Bosnian state, or Taiwan with China, or Palestine with Israel, the truth is that the secessionist “route to statehood has seldom led to generally recognized sovereign independence, however strong the political and moral justifications for a unilateral break-away may be”. Moreover, even when the intended statehood comes after aggression and illegal occupation (as happened with East Timor after Indonesia occupied the former Portuguese colony, amidst a local civil war in December 1975), the problem still remains that “once consigned to contested statehood, entities rarely graduate to confirmed statehood. Contested statehood is therefore not an antechamber to confirmed statehood or a finishing school for states-in-waiting” (2009: 236).

The rejection of worldwide recognition, as happens with Kosovo, has an important impact on the daily life of the would-be fully fledged state: “condemned to a netherworld, contested states are typically excluded from conventional bilateral diplomatic relations and from multilateral diplomacy. To overcome such handicaps, virtually all of them have developed alternative, semi-official links with confirmed states. These take the form of representative or liaison or trade offices abroad and reciprocal representation from foreign countries. We should add that government representatives from contested states manage to travel abroad on official business, even on the passports of their non-recognized countries” (2009: 237). Moreover, “contested states are frustrated at having their claims to statehood denied and being relegated to a twilight zone”. True, elites in contested states and their

associated patrons and even veto states may reap material benefits from the status quo, especially through the black market with its opportunities for smuggling anything from consumer goods to drugs, weapons and people. Such narrowly based opportunistic advantages cannot offset the diplomatic, economic and security costs borne by the various parties” (2009: 238). And the strength of the parallel economy in contested states may well be a reason for the international community to push towards formal recognition.

In today’s globalized world, there are many nuances along the dichotomy running from fully confirmed to fully contested states. Geldenhuys recalls that “Palestine and Western Sahara have long enjoyed titular recognition, meaning their right of statehood has been recognized internationally (Palestine’s by the UN and Western Sahara’s by the OAU/AU). Although both face formidable practical obstacles in realizing this right, not least of which is foreign occupation by Israel and Morocco respectively, Palestine and Western Sahara already have international endorsement of their claims to statehood. To overcome the resistance of their respective veto states, both may have to settle for an internationally supervised transition to conditional independence” (2009: 238).

What about the alternatives to the non-recognition of statehood? Is it possible to accommodate the long lasting expectations of those who want to open the doors of secession? Does this become even more difficult when ethnic diversity is in question? As Geldenhuys explains, “while they fall short of separatists’ cherished ideal of full-fledged statehood, these options (...) – if freely chosen by the people involved – constitute legitimate, internationally recognized expressions of self-determination. Our inventory included federalism, other forms of territorial and communal autonomy, consociational democracy and multiculturalism. All these are compromise options: the separatists do not get their coveted sovereign state, but the original state cannot merely revert to the old order either” (2009: 239). Despite the diversity of options, the author, a professor at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, with expertise in Human Rights, Foreign Policy and International Relations, understands that “the most viable compromise formula for resolving conflicts over contested statehood may be dual-level autonomy. By this is meant self-government, probably territorially based, for the former contested state within its original state, coupled with considerable international freedom of action. The internal element of autonomy is designed to safeguard the group interests of the erstwhile secessionist community and can best be ensured in a democratic political order. Democracies seem less likely to spawn secession than authoritarian systems violating human rights. Regional or group autonomy should be a price that an original state would be willing to pay to restore its territorial integrity” (ibid.).

Somaliland provides one example of an alternative attainable by other contesting entities: conditional statehood. What about Mitrovica North and its four municipalities to the north of the river Ibar getting assigned to their patron state (Serbia), breaking away from the

rest of Kosovo, which broke away from the rest of Serbia? That would be “territorial right-sizing” (2009: 240) but remains highly unlikely as this would imply something that the confirmed states that form the so-called world community most resist either doing or accepting: redrawing international borders.

When we talk about alternatives to secession, taking into account we are dealing with the deep commitments of the aspiring communities to statehood (no matter whether or not legitimate), we should bear in mind that alternatives such as that proposed are, following Geldenhuys, only serving “remedial purposes” (2009: 240), regardless of being “inter- or intra-state in nature, ranging from territorial right-sizing through transnational economic zones and cultural domains to multiculturalism and minority rights” (ibid.). In any case, some of these alternatives, under favourable circumstances and desirably with the help of international actors, may help to enable friendly partition processes or divorces between countries and nations, “a mutually agreed partition (as in Czechoslovakia) as opposed to heavily contested unilateral secession”, such as those in the former Yugoslavia.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>120</sup>, signed on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1948, and the European Convention of Human Rights, signed two years later, in addition to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (both came into force in 1976) constitute benchmarks that states endorse and embrace to become part of what is known as the international community and world community, besides membership in international organizations, such as the United Nations and the European Union.

Placing human rights in the centre of the political action is, therefore, something that one cannot rule out when reflecting about nationalism, and politics in general, in a globalized world. David Chandler, in *Bosnia: Faking Democracy After Dayton* (Pluto Press, 1999), reflects over this issue and states that “respect for human rights and their protection and promotion is generally seen to be an essential prerequisite for a democratic society. Nowhere is this considered more so than in Bosnia. One of the central preconditions, laid down by the international community, for the process of democratisation to be completed in Bosnia is the establishment of a culture in which human rights are universally respected” (2009: 90). And the author rightfully quotes the Office of the High Representative in BiH on this issue: “Human rights are the key to most other aspects of political and civilian implementation of the Peace Agreement. It is only when human rights are fully respected that the political life of the country can free itself of the factor of fear now so obvious. It is only when human rights are secure that the refugees and displaced people will start to return in greater number to their places of origin or choice” (OHRR, 1996d, par. 93). Chandler wisely assumes that for those

---

<sup>120</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>. Accessed on 31.07.2016.

who (whether in Bosnia, in Europe or in the USA) drafted the new Bosnian Constitution and the Dayton/Paris Peace Accords, “the removal of ‘the factor of fear’ through the promotion of human rights was a foremost consideration” (1999: 909). But Chandler also recalls that this implies human rights abuses from the electoral choice of the Bosnians in both entities of the country, giving majorities to nationalist parties, “which reflect Bosnia’s political and ethnic fragmentation, and then using human rights abuse to explain this fragmentation, can easily become a circular argument. An argument which, in turn, vastly exaggerates the extent of human rights abuses as well as narrowly interpreting political and social phenomena through the framework of human rights abuse” (1999: 109).

In Chandler’s edited *Rethinking Human Rights Critical Approaches to International Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), Fionna Fox elaborates about the prominence, since the 1990s and the first decade of this century, of an approach based on human rights, known as New Humanitarianism, “geared to strengthening those forces in society that can bring peace and stability to crisis situations in the developing world” (2002: 19). This breaks with traditional humanitarianism, which tended to be apolitical and neutral. The NATO intervention in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, due to the events in Kosovo in the spring of 1999, represented a turning point: “When NATO powers go to war for ‘humanitarian values’ it is clear that the old distinction between a national foreign policy and neutral humanitarian aid has disappeared” (ibid.).

In today’s world, humanitarian aid has now become a ‘policy instrument’, giving humanitarian aid “a more political role than in the past. It is no coincidence that MSF was the humanitarian agency selected over and above all the others to win the Nobel Peace Prize on the eve of the twenty-first century” (2002: 37).

Bearing in mind the circumstances for the production of most of this fieldwork – working as a journalist, covering the Balkans -, which set the grounds for this dissertation, one reflects on the journalism produced about the New Humanitarianism, considering the examples of the conflicts in Bosnia and Rwanda, the “simplistic narratives of good versus evil” (2002: 176), as Phillip Hammond puts it, “and the sympathies developed by some reporters have led them to welcome attacks on those designated as unworthy victims” (ibid.).

Chandler reflects on the limits of the human rights approach and argues that we live in a time in which “cosmopolitan international relations theorists envisage a process of expanding cosmopolitan democracy and global governance”, and through which, for the first time, “there is the possibility of global issues being addressed on the basis of new forms of democracy, derived from the universal rights of global citizens” (2002: 115). There is a shift in the approach from a territorial perspective of citizens rights, normally at a state or nation level, to expand and extend democracy and human rights – desirably - worldwide. To our understanding, this approach implies higher levels of accountability and a need to rethink

principles of sovereignty because “rather than the rights of states being the founding principle of international society it should be the rights of individual citizens”, according to Chandler (2002: 116), for whom “new flexible frameworks based on the rights of the global citizen, freed from territorial restrictions” that should be implemented (2202: 118).

Topics such as the dichotomy between non-interference and humanitarian interference therefore become ever more important, and decisions made by the citizens of one state or region, even if democratically made, “can no longer be considered to be truly democratic if they affect the rights of ‘non-citizens’, i.e. those outside that community, without those people having a say” (2002: 117); that is to say, respect for individual rights extend not only to those who belong to the nation as citizens, bearing the nation’s ID card, but the overall population of the community. Simultaneously, decisions from states with more globalized voices tend to produce impacts on others. The recognition of Croatia’s independence by Germany (and the Vatican, by the way), had a profound impact on the collapse of Yugoslavia, as today any decision coming from the Bundestag may play a significant role in the life of countries such as Greece or Portugal.

David Held, master of University College at Durham University, quoted by Chandler, advocates an ideally cosmopolitan democracy, arguing “people can enjoy membership in the diverse communities which significantly affect them and, accordingly, access to a variety of forms of political participation. Citizenship would be extended, in principle, to membership in all cross-cutting political communities, from the local to the global” (Held, 1995: 272)<sup>121</sup>.

Would this mean an end to state sovereignty and representative democracy? Chandler gives some considerable role to the traditional forms of political organization, although considering that “these institutions cannot have the final say in decision-making. In certain circumstances, where it is not democratic enough it must be possible for sovereignty to be overridden by institutions which are ‘autonomous and independent’ and whose legitimacy is derived from the universal rights of the global citizen, unconstrained by the nation-state framework” (2202: 119).

Nevertheless, Chandler concludes that “far from empowering individual global citizens, the cosmopolitan rights discourse has had the opposite effect, empowering the dominant international institutions and world powers, who have acquired a new set of rights of interference in and regulation over the affairs of non-Western states” (2002: 134).

The cosmopolitan approach is on the antipodes of this more elitist line, extolling democracy on an international basis and sovereign equality “alongside the perspective of limited rights of sovereignty and self-government dictated by the needs of global civil society

---

<sup>121</sup> Held, David (1995) *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Stanford, CA/Cambridge: Stanford University Press/Polity).

and the cosmopolitan citizen” (2002: 134). However, at the same time, this approach may be “a highly misleading one”, due to its trend to promote “the duty of Western ‘responsibility’ as a development of democracy rather than its negation” (2002: 134-135).

The same book, edited by Chandler, Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, discusses “Morality’s Avenging Angels: the New Humanitarian Crusaders”, referring mainly to NGO officials and journalists, pointing to the shift produced in less than one century: the Nobel peace Prize was awarded in 1917 to the International Committee of Red Cross, a politically neutral organization. The world was going through a devastating war: the Great World War, or the First World War as it became known after the Second broke out. In 1999, there was a NATO war in Yugoslavia because of the Kosovo crisis, a conflict that became known as the first humanitarian war. In that same year, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Médecins Sans Frontier (MSF), or Doctors Without Borders, an organization which has frequently proven “its willingness to condemn human rights abusers and to challenge national sovereignty if governments of countries on the receiving end of Western humanitarianism seek to resist or obstruct intervention”, as Hammond states (2002: 193). This happened in the 1990s, when MSF became one of the first NGOs to withdraw from refugee camps in eastern Zaire, and also took a stand in the Bosnian war in the same decade when, in 1992, the organization published a report with a detailed description of the “Bosnian Serb policy of ethnic cleansing” and crimes against humanity. Moreover, the organization “denounced the Bosnian Serbs for hindering supplies to Srebrenica and Gorazde Muslim besieged enclaves. They raised awareness and denounced the lack of protection of the population when the enclaves came under attack in 1994 and 1995 despite being declared safe zones by the UN”. Claiming its balanced approach, which is different than distinguishing perpetrators and victims in each situation, MSF came to denounce “a lack of access to the Serb refugees”, as well as pleading for international accountability in the case of Srebrenica, advocating, since 2000, “for parliamentary commissions to be set up to investigate the military and political responsibilities of the States involved in the Srebrenica crisis”<sup>122</sup>, namely Serbia and the Netherlands, as well as reacting to reports on Dutch responsibilities.

In 1999, western states, such as the U.S. and the U.K., NGOs and influential journalists like BBC’s Allan Little were very much supportive of the idea of military intervention, presumably to stop Milošević’s aggressive ambitions over the southern Serbian province. Hammond recalls that “appropriately, after NATO’s ‘liberation’ of Kosovo, MSF’s founder, Bernard Kouchner, was appointed as governor of the new UN protectorate: NATO’s aggressive bombing of a sovereign state exemplified the ‘right to intervention’ which he had long championed” (2002: 193). Interviewed by this author in Pristina, in June 2000, Kouchner

---

<sup>122</sup> <http://speakingout.msf.org/en/msf-and-the-war-in-the-former-yugoslavia>. Accessed on 02.08.2016.



admitted that “the security levels for minorities” in Kosovo then were “not the ideal”, but that they were improving. UNMIK’s biggest concerns were then “rebuilding houses, involving the Kosovars in all processes of administration and governance of the territory” (Alexandre, 2002: 140).

The author of this dissertation, covering the war on the ground in Belgrade in May 1999, witnessed how – following Hammond – “many journalists not only urged NATO bombing, but deliberately distorted events in order to encourage it” (Hammond, 2002: 193).

This dissertation’s author believes that pure objectivity in journalism is a myth since we are constantly influenced by our own values, prejudices and worldviews. Sometimes, that proclaimed objectivity incorporates a hidden agenda, favouring the most powerful instead of giving voice to the voiceless as the commandments of the profession have taught us. Thus, simultaneously, and because of the latter, we are supposed to develop skills that enable us to depart as much as possible from those prior values, prejudices and worldviews (accepting personally that being academically trained as a sociologist has been of great help along the way) and deal with the news in a balanced way, through accurate coverage, based more on facts than on opinions, on ethical procedures, on the respect and abidance for the diversity of sources “so as not to let their own emotional responses and political allegiances get in the way of reporting truthfully” (2002: 177).

This is a rather distant path from the “attachment journalism”, which emerged in the coverage of conflicts after the end of the Cold War, and the Balkans were, by far, the most mediatized. Therefore, “advocacy journalism has frequently coincided with the perspectives and policies of powerful Western governments. And despite claims to be pursuing a moral, human rights agenda, the journalism of attachment has led to the celebration of violence against those perceived as undeserving victims” (2002: 180)<sup>123</sup>.

In complete agreement with Hammond, the current dissertation denounces how this modern human rights journalism “involves suppressing inconvenient information, distorting public understanding of conflicts, applauding the deaths of designated Western hate-figures (including the civilians associated with them), and ignoring evidence of the destructive effects of Western involvement in countries such as Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia” (2002:

---

<sup>123</sup> “A well-documented example is the 5 February 1994 marketplace massacre in Sarajevo, in which a mortar explosion killed 68 people and injured 197. Amanpour maintains that she ‘put [the shelling] in context’: What I said was that over the years, our [UN] briefers had explained to us and shown us, numerically and by their own measure and statistics, that the overwhelming number of mortar shells and sniper fire and fire into the city was from the Serb side. Therefore, statistically, the likelihood is that it came from the Serb side. And furthermore, there’s never been any forensic evidence to suggest that the Bosnians were shooting at themselves. After extensive investigations, the UN declared it was unable to determine whether the mortar had been fired by Serb or Muslim forces, but a number of UN sources suggested the Bosnian Muslims were the most likely perpetrators (Binder, 1994–5). As Nik Gowing concludes: ‘on a clear balance of probabilities, all evidence pointed to the fatal mortar being fired by Bosnian [Muslim] forces’” (2002: 180-181).

194). Labelling one side of a conflict as total victims and the other side as merely and solely butchers is, above all, harmful for an understanding of any conflict and its corresponding prospects for reconciliation. That said, one cannot also neglect different levels of responsibility, the different intensities of violence committed and the different levels of engagement in the overcoming of conflicts. This does not amount to a question of blaming all sides equally; it is however a question of giving audiences the tools (through facts and accurate stories) so that they can make their own judgement to decide who – and if – is more to blame.

If the world is getting smaller, the distances shorter, interconnectivity faster, why is nationalism growing, and especially worryingly since there is no war between developed countries – if we exempt the wars in the former Yugoslavia or the conflicts resulting from the dismantling of the Soviet Union or the Falklands war between UK and Argentina? – for the past seventy years?

In the draft paper entitled “Global Governance & Cosmopolitan Citizens”, for *Globalization and Governance* edited by Joseph S. Nye Jr. and John Donahue, Pippa Norris (2004) asks three important questions to help us to shed some light on the debate on nationalism in a globalized world: “Has the rise of global governance transformed national identities so that more people have come to see themselves as part of their continent or world community rather than, say, Americans, Russians, or British, or, at a more local level, as Bostonians, Muscovites, or Londoners? How far do the public have confidence and trust in the institutions of global governance, including multilateral associations and international organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization of African Unity, and ASEAN? And how far do the publics support economic policies leading towards greater globalization, such as approving of free trade and labor migration?” (2004: 1).

We are indeed living in a world of local nationalisms and global governance. If communications and the economies have been so radically transformed, there has additionally been a profound change in the governance model, with “the growth of multilayered governance and the diffusion of political authority, with the role of the nation-state transformed by the development of regional trade blocs like the European Union, NAFTA, and ASEAN; the growing role of international bodies like the World Trade Organization, UN and NATO; the burgeoning network of transnational NGOs; and new norms and regulations of international and multilateral governance on issues ranging from trade to human rights and environmental protection” (2004: 2).

Reflecting on the nationalism-cosmopolitanism dimension, Norris (2004: 6, 7) understands nationalists “as those who identify strongly with their nation-state, who have little confidence in multilateral and international institutions, and who favor policies of national economic protectionism over the free trade of goods and services”. On the other

hand, cosmopolitans would be “those who identify more broadly with their continent or with the world as a whole, and who have greater faith in the institutions of global governance”. This dimension is somehow expected to produce “crosscut traditional ideological cleavages, although there may be some overlap. If leaning rightwards, cosmopolitans can be expected to support policies designed to dismantle protectionist economic barriers, while those on the left may favor other measures like stricter global environmental regulations and greater spending on overseas aid” (ibid.).

Are there social cleavages between the two, nationalists and cosmopolitans, with the latter being those who live and work “in different countries, familiar with travel well beyond their national boundaries, and fluent in languages, as well as well connected to international networks through global communications” (2004: 6)? Are nationalists lagging behind, staying at home, disconnected from the progress and advancement of societies? One should be cautious when drawing such lines. If, in previous eras, cosmopolitanism was something much more related to the “European aristocracy finishing their education in Paris and Rome on the eighteenth century Grand Tour”, the truth is that “the most recent wave of globalization in communications may have encouraged a resurgence of cosmopolitanism to spread well beyond elite circles to the mass public”. If this was so straight forward, it would be no great surprise that cosmopolitan identities supplemented “traditional national and ethnic allegiances, producing a broader identification with neighboring countries, citizens, and regions of the world” (2004: 7). Is it really so?

Will Klymicka (Ozkirimli, 2003: 145) identifies the “four main questions that underlie many recent debates about nationalism” as issues surrounding the nature of nationalism, its value, alternatives and its global diffusion. Regarding the nature of nationalism, Klymicka proposes a shift from a terminology that, “in the past”, divided nationalism between “civic” (understood as tolerant) and “ethnic” (understood as violent, aggressive) to a “thicker” nationalism, “in the sense of requiring or seeking a much higher degree of racial, religious, ethnic or cultural uniformity”, and a “thinner” nationalism, “in the sense of allowing and tolerating a high level of diversity within the nation, although virtually all nations at least seek to diffuse a common language and common political values throughout their territory” (ibid.).

Klymicka’s point is that nationalist movements are essentially crosscut, containing “a mixture of both ‘ethnic’ and ‘civic’ elements but also that there are many different dimensions of thinness and thickness, and nationalist movements can be thick on some while thin on others. There is not a single comprehensive choice to be made about being civic or ethnic but rather a hundred ongoing decisions to be made about education, immigration, citizenship, language policies, symbols, settlement decisions, legal structures, and so on. All of these decisions, in all nations, reflect ongoing contests about the necessary forms of com-

monality and homogeneity, and the desirable forms of tolerance and diversity. Nations can be inclusive/tolerant one day on one issue, but not the next day, or on the next issue” (2003: 146).

In his reflection about the futures of nationalism, Klymicka admits that probably the biggest challenge “to the normative acceptability of nationalism”, and following Fred Halliday (Ozkirli, 2003: 147), is its inherent inconsistency as “nations often demand rights of self-determination or of self-defence which they deny to other nations”. According to Halliday, this is the most important challenge to the normative acceptability of nationalism. Nationalism is not inherently inconsistent with universal values of human rights in the way it organizes its own domestic society, but it is prone to hypocrisy and selectivity in its response to the claims of other nations” (ibid.).

Bearing all this in mind, one can say that the ethnic/civic distinction is a challenge to understanding and overcoming nationalism, taking into account the perspective – that this dissertation follows – that ethnic conflicts may be worked out through the process of European integration. This view is not unfamiliar to an understanding of Europe in general and the European Union in particular as a space of multicultural relations and civic identities. The core focus of the next subchapter will be a reflection on some of the major studies and some of the currently prevailing scholarly debates about the Balkans, attempting to articulate those studies and debates with the current research.

### **2.13. Current Scholarly Debates about the Balkans**

Over a decade has now passed since Sabrina Petra Ramet published the seminal book *Thinking about Yugoslavia: Scholarly Debates about the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo* (2005). Her work contains an extraordinary assembly of authors and visions about Yugoslavia but mainly focuses on the approaches the authors have taken towards the conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo. Ramet, a leading global specialist and scholar on the Balkans, made an outstanding job in reviewing and analysing one hundred and fifty books about “the region” and displaying a very critical stance towards those who do not attribute full responsibility for the largest atrocities that happened in the former Yugoslavia to the Serbian leadership in Belgrade and its Bosnian Serbs acolytes. Nevertheless, due to both its amplitude and its in-depth analysis into controversies and academic divides, in addition to its organisation, by countries and by language, her work represents a unique as well as a fundamental tool for those interested in this troubled part of Europe.

Since then, much has been written about both the region and Sabrina Petra Ramet herself, who has been publishing about Yugoslavia since the 1980s, and extensively in the past decade, with works including *Media and Politics in Southeastern Europe* (2015);

*Memory and identity in the Yugoslav successor states; Trajectories of Post-Communist Transformation: Myths and Rival Theories about Change in Central and Southeastern Europe* (2013); *The ICTY – Controversies, Successes, Failures, Lessons; Ownership and Political Influence in the Post-socialist Mediascape: The case of Slovenia* (2012); *Croatia and Serbia since 1991: An Assessment of their Similarities and Differences* (2011); *Democratic Values and Ethnic Polarization in the Western Balkans: An Introduction; Serbia since 2008: at the Doorstep of the EU* (2010); *Confronting the past: The Slovenes as subjects and as objects of history; Redefining the Boundaries of Human Rights: The Case of Eastern Europe* (2008); *American Policy toward Serbia/Montenegro/Yugoslavia* (2007). However, the professor of the Department of Sociology and Political Science at NTNU (Norwegian University of Science and Technology), is not the only prolific author about the former Yugoslavia.

Political scientists, historians and journalists who became known to wider audiences due to books about the wars and disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s have continued along the same thorough research path about this complex reality. Historians such as Mark Mazower, professor at Columbia University, New York, author of the influential – assumedly to this dissertation – *The Balkans* (2000), reprinted as *The Balkans: From the End of Byzantium to the Present Day* (2002), has also published throughout the last decade: *Hitler's Empire: Nazi Rule in Occupied Europe* (2008), *Networks of Power in Modern Greece*, (as editor, 2008) *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430–1950* (2004), *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century South-Eastern Europe* (as co-editor, 2003).

Dennis P. Hupchick, an associate professor of history at Wilkes University, Pennsylvania, director of the East European and Russian Studies Program, authored the excellent *The Balkans: From Constantinople to Communism* (2002), but also the fundamental *The Palgrave Concise Historical Atlas of Eastern Europe* and *The Palgrave Concise Historical Atlas of the Balkans* (both with Harold E. Cox, 2001).

However, both of these authors, Mazower and Hupchick, do not have the former Yugoslavia as their primary field of expertise: Mazower is one of the most renowned historians specialized in Greece, while Hupchick fulfils the same role for Bulgaria. There is more Balkans beyond Yugoslavia.

Susan L. Woodward<sup>124</sup>, Ph.D. and M.A. from Princeton University, is a political scientist and professor on the Political Science Program at the Graduate Center of CUNY, the

---

<sup>124</sup> In the Balkans, she worked during part of the Bosnian war, for the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for UNPROFOR Yasushi Akashi, and, after the war, in 1998, as special advisor to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Mission (OSCE) to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

City University of New York. Previously, she had worked for the Centre for Defence Studies at King's College, University of London, and was a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution. An expert on the Balkans since the 1970s, as well as Eastern Europe, conflict interventions and post-conflict contexts, she worked in “the region” in the 1990s and authored one of the most important references to this dissertation: *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Brookings Institution Press, 1995), and the less known but also remarkably versed *Socialist Unemployment: The Political Economy of Yugoslavia* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1995). Woodward does not adopt any mainstream approach to the dismembering and collapse of Yugoslavia and the events that followed. Woodward remains very critical of the way a capitalist model of analysis is normally applied to a socialist context. Instead, what readers gain from her works, in addition to serious and in depth content, historical background, and statements from some of the major political figures, is above all her refusal to accept the most common approach that not only fully blames the Serbs but also proves quite blameless as regards the other parties who fought these wars. She is therefore a controversial author.

In a rather fruitful conversation with this author, and questioned (due to her controversial non-genocidal explanation) about what “Srebrenica” (the massacre) means today, Susan L. Woodward explained “that at the narrowest point, Srebrenica means that people should be more aware in civil wars of what the strategy of the parties is, because Srebrenica as a safe haven was a very skilful plan as part of the wartime strategy of the Bosnian government. The idea that UN would send troops to protect eight convoys and then thereby defend the community in Srebrenica against a war, was crazy from the beginning. And the people who get blamed, the Dutch peacekeepers and the UN French force commander, let alone the Bosnian Serb forces and Mladić, completely misunderstand what the safe havens are all about.” Woodward understands that the world does not know how to deal with these kind of war events today and also “didn’t know what they were doing then. It was George Bush’s refusal to send troops, and so he had the UN doing a chapter seven resolution, to support humanitarian convoys, not to fight a war. And I think there was a lot going on, on the part of the US government, in secrecy, where the abandonment of the three safe havens in the East [of Bosnia and Herzegovina] was part of a way of getting attention. So... there’s a lot of dirty business. But then as now, what has been fascinating is the extent to which, lots of different activists – mainly not from Bosnia – have used Srebrenica’s specially women, to leverage a whole range of actions on the world...”.

The author of the dissertation questioned Susan Woodward whether she perceives any controversy over the genocide committed in Srebrenica: “we all have personal views; I don’t think it was a genocide, it was certainly a mass murder, no question on that. But it was a war, it wasn’t with the intention of erasing the Bosnian Muslims from the surface of Earth.

So, I'm very careful about how I use the term, just like I wouldn't use it for Darfour when Colin Powell did. And also because under international law there is an obligation of states to do something, when there is genocide. So we'd better well use it carefully when we're going to require ourselves to act militarily, according to international law. By the way, I think we have turned the term around, so devalued under international laws that is not of use for us anymore. Going back to the wartime strategy, I think the Bosnian government commander in Srebrenica left! He didn't defend his town! It was in a middle of a war... so... (expression of sorrow and lament)... it's very complicated". The author of this dissertation insisted: could Srebrenica have been prevented? By the Dutch battalion? By Belgrade? By the Bosnian government? "Not at that time. I'm saying it was part of a long wartime strategy by the Bosnian government and I think in collusion with the Americans. (...) Here's the way how it could have been prevented: if President Clinton had agreed in January 1993 with the Vance-Owen Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we would have ended the war. Negotiations had been going on for a very long time. There were eight Peace Plans, every each of them rejected mainly by the Americans". Confronted with the fact, or common sense, that nothing was done to prevent the war when there was many people trying to effectively do something, Susan Woodward argues that by November 1991, "the UNSG Perez de Cuellar, Cyrus Vance and others, they all wrote letters stating that if they go ahead with the plan they got, without first solving diplomatically Bosnia, it would be a massacre beyond belief. They all knew five months before the March discussions. Whether it was prejudice, like 'no one is going to stop them, those Bosnians will fight anyway'; there was a kind of racist argument or at least mentality in Europe about Bosnia. Or it was because they didn't have the instruments or the knowledge, but they were moving really slowly. In late January 1992 I was in Sarajevo because I was at the World Economic Forum and a friend there said 'we all should be rushing to Sarajevo and support in solidarity because things are getting really bad'. As I was in Davos: 'why not to take another extra day or two and go?' And I did. When I was trying to meet with the member of the presidency for the Bosnian Serbs he was rushing all day back and forth to Mostar because the barricades were going up in the city and he was trying to negotiate that they would be pulled out. Because remember: Mostar used to be with as many Serbs as Croats and Muslims, genuinely multiethnic. So we already knew at the end of January that all the beginnings for the war had started even if it wasn't a war from the outside. I don't think the Europeans really took it seriously, that's what it felt like to me. They were also fighting over who should be in charge: I think that fact that Cyrus Vance succeeded in getting a cease-fire in Croatia, after Carrington tried in 23 meetings in the Summer and fall [1991] and couldn't, might have led the Europeans to push the Americans away I don't know... there was a lot... 'is this Europe's hour?'... there was the Maastricht Treaty in December and there was the Common Foreign Security Policy... Hans van den Broek, who

had the Presidency in July 1991, he was the Netherlands foreign minister, he fully understood the situation and tried to persuade people. There is correspondence from July 1991 saying ‘if we don’t negotiate the borders of these new states now that we’ve moved to recognize Slovenia and Croatia, because the Brioni Peace Agreement had been signed in the end of June, there will be a disaster’. But it looks no one else was willing. All the other eleven – the EU was twelve by then – said ‘no, we’re not interested’”.

Are there chances of reconciliation between those different peoples in the Western Balkans? “I don’t know what reconciliation is; I mean, Stephen Sestanovitch, about the Soviet Union, had a beautiful sentence when someone asked him about reconciliation: ‘the American civil war was in the 1860s and the North and the South still haven’t reconciled. What would you expect?’ What does reconciliation mean? The form of reconciliation of people living together in Bosnia, was created by the Ottoman system and had a long tradition of neighbours but everyone having their own religious practices, having coffee together. And then in the cities where people were secular, and they were educated in universities, it was like anyplace, the ethnic background didn’t mean hardly anything, except the quota system for jobs and government system that was a principle of equality, a sort of consociational democracy. So, if there is going to be reconciliation, there has to be some new social system created by practices on the ground, but the political leaders in Bosnia... the huge salaries they get for themselves by being elected to the Parliament, all the other perks, the material benefits of maintaining these divisions politically, they are incredible. There’s nobody who is able to do something that has power or has any will to do anything about it”. Even if the difference in perceptions about the facts of the conflicts may endure and the interpretations about the events may extend political quarrels, one can also agree that, and this is the line followed by this dissertation, that if the institutions are strong enough, societies surpass such issues, as happens in the United States. And if the economy develops, and if freedoms are guaranteed in a way that the past does not threaten the present and the future, that is the only way to move on.

What about the scholarly debates? Some critics point to Woodward overvaluing the economic dimension of the situation in the former Yugoslavia; Woodward, in turn, maintains that the economic dimension gets undervalued in most of the debates. The CUNY Political Science professor goes further in her point: “I would say that if you ask any average Bosnian, they would tell you it was the economic issues. First. Anytime I gave a speech in the United States, after my book was published [1995], and there would be any Bosnian refugees in the audience, they would come up to me afterwards and say: ‘don’t tell anybody because we are not supposed to say it, but you are absolutely right’. That is the first thing. Secondly, it isn’t an economic argument, it’s a political-economic argument. The constitutional quarrels between the six heads of the republics over revising the Constitution, were required by the



IMF in order to implement structural adjustment. It was requiring institutional changes, recentralizing control of foreign exchange and monetary policy; the Slovenes were the ones who were benefiting from this recentralization, that's why they left. But it's wrong to call my argument an economic argument, except in the sense that it was the austerity policies – like now in Greece or Portugal and Spain – of the IMF for more than ten years [in socialist Yugoslavia] had created very huge conflicts at the personal level. Almost seventy percent of the youth aged from 15 to 25 were unemployed, the other thirty percent were in informal agriculture, that's unsustainable”.

The former Yugoslavia is the field of expertise of other academics, such as Jasminka Udovic and James Ridgeaway (editors of the excellent *The Making of Yugoslavia, 1830–1945*”; and authors of *Burn This House: The Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia*), Maria Todorova (*Imagining the Balkans* is the most widely known book from this Bulgarian historian), Miranda Vickers (*The Albanians, a Modern History*, I.B. Taurus, 2001; *Between Serb and Albanian, a History of Kosovo*) and Lenard J. Cohen, who has published several books about the region since his 1995 *Broken Bonds: Yugoslavia's Disintegration* and *Balkan Politics In Transition: State Collapse in South-Eastern Europe: New Perspectives on Yugoslavia's Disintegration* with Jasna Dragovic-Soso, with her chapter ‘Why did Yugoslavia Disintegrate? An Overview of Contending Explanations’ (2007); *Embracing Democracy in the Western Balkans: From Postconflict Struggles toward European Integration* (2011), with John R. Lampe, among other books. Jasna Dragovic-Soso herself, has published several books: *'Saviours of the Nation'. Serbia's Intellectual Opposition and the Revival of Nationalism* (2003); articles such as ‘History of a Failure: Attempts to Create a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1997-2006’ in the *International Journal of Transitional Justice* (2016); ‘Coming to Terms with the Past: Transitional Justice and Reconciliation in the Post-Yugoslav Lands’, co-authored with Eric Gordy, in Dejan Djokić and James Ker-Lindsay (eds.), *New Perspectives on Yugoslavia: Key Issues and Controversies* (2010).

Limiting the analysis to that written about former the Yugoslav nations, one has to mention the James Ker-Lindsay 2016 articles about “The Hollow Threat of Secession in Bosnia and Herzegovina: legal and political impediments to a unilateral declaration of independence by Republika Srpska”; “Explaining Serbia's decision to go to the ICJ”, “Britain, Brexit and The Balkans”, “Pre-accession Europeanization!: the case of Serbia and Kosovo”, all in 2015; “Understanding state responses to secession peacebuilding” in 2014, just to mention his latest years of research and publications as Senior Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science .

From the historian Dejan Djokić, lecturer in history at Goldsmiths College, London, author of *Elusive Compromise: A History of Interwar Yugoslavia* (C Hurst, 2007), a 2002

article called “A Farewell to Yugoslavia”, where we became familiar with the Internet project Cyber Yugoslavia<sup>125</sup>, whose founders believe that “their former homeland was destroyed by politicians’ quest for power. To prevent the same fate befalling their Yugoslavia, they decided to give every Cyber Yugoslav, including the founders themselves, an equal amount of power. Thus each citizen is a minister of something – there are ministers of rain, silly walks, even of opposition, but no prime ministers, presidents, generals or kings. Because cyber space is unlimited, the creators of Cyber Yugoslavia think that territorial disputes – another reason behind the tragic collapse of Yugoslavia – are thus avoided. They plan to apply for UN membership once they have enough citizens”. Less ironical is the project of the famous Croatian writer Dubravka Ugrešić emerging as a consequence of her strong discomfort “with a new, narrower, Croat identity, imposed on her by the collapse of Yugoslavia. She initiated another Internet project designed to save Yugoslavia and Yugoslavism from total oblivion. With a group of friends she created a Lexicon of Yugoslav Mythology [the web site is available only in Serbo-Croat at present], a place where anyone, not just from the former Yugoslavia, can contribute by sending their own entries”.

Dejan Djokić rationally argues that “both projects are highly Yugo-nostalgic and thus idealize the former state, emphasizing only what was good about it. But the idea they have in common is that memory, however painful (the very fact that those good things are destroyed forever must be painful) is the only mode of survival”. We are not in a position to ascertain whether or not there is a Yugo-nostalgic school of thought, but, born and raised in Belgrade, he is without doubt one of the scholars most concerned about “those who genuinely felt Yugoslav, but after 1992 had no state to identify with”. The author himself states: “even though there is no country called Yugoslavia anymore, I can continue to declare myself a Yugoslav”.

Interestingly, even if always identified with Yugoslavia, this author realises that he “only became a real Yugoslav once the real Yugoslav state disintegrated, when I left Serbia for Britain. This is not just because it is only once you’ve lost something that you begin to realize what you had. It is mostly to do with the fact that I became a historian. Paradoxically, the more I learnt about Yugoslavia the more I discovered its faults, and yet I realized that it was the best solution for the Yugoslavs and the whole region (...) no matter how improbable, contested, imperfect - a united Yugoslavia was a far preferable solution to what followed its two disintegrations of the last century, that of the 1940s and of the 1990s” (ibid.).

Djokić states that “Yugoslavia was at the same time the most Balkan and the least Balkan of all Balkan states. Its creation required the balkanisation of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires. But at the same time, the unification of Yugoslavs was quite a different

---

<sup>125</sup> <http://www.juga.com>. Accessed on 31.08.2016.

phenomenon from what the toponym-turned-noun means according to the Oxford Dictionary of the English Language: “to divide into a number of smaller and often mutually hostile units as was done in the Balkan peninsula in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.”

Of course, Dejan Djokić is far from being the sole Yugoslav or ex-Yugoslav or post-Yugoslav to be writing, researching and publishing about “the region”. Just to mention a couple of examples, one may refer to Aleksandar Pavkovic, a political theorist and specialist in International Relations, based in Australia and Associate Professor in Politics and International Relations in the Faculty of Arts at Macquarie University in Sydney, who has authored several books, such as *Identity and Nationalism in the Balkans: Anthems and the Making of Nation States in Southeast Europe*, with Christopher Kelen (London, I.B. Tauris 2016); *Creating New States: Theory and Practice of Secession*, with Peter Radan (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007); *The Fragmentation of Yugoslavia: Nationalism and War in the Balkans* (London: Macmillan Palgrave and New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

Pavkovic, in an interview with Russian Television (RT), on 22.03.2014, after Crimea’s secession from Ukraine and annexation by Russia said he does think “there is international law on secession, so any appeal to international law is an appeal to a variety to either judgements or a variety of principles, none of which really deal with secession, (...) which makes that any statement we make about secession is primarily a political statement”. Bearing in mind that the international law regarding secessionist movements such as those in Kosovo or Crimea or Abkhazia leaves space for ambiguity, that ambiguity may easily be deployed for political manipulation even while Pavkovic recalls that the most important fact is that “states want to preserve their territory, that is one of their main functions, and consequently, any attempt to regulate how you take away territory from a particular state is going to be controversial, because very few states are ready to voluntarily give up territory”.

In our days, can an independence movement be independent from geopolitics? Pavkovic understands that if a movement does not have the agreement of the host state, then it needs “an outside sponsor”. This amounts to a sine qua non condition for successful secessionist movements. Pavkovic argues: “when you look at scholarly work on secession and on the morality of secession, you will find different and contradictory theories of how morally to regulate secession”. In this interview with RT, the Macquarie University professor declares there are no uncontested moral arguments for or against secession, partly because “secessions are not moral events. These are political phenomena and they have their own political dynamic. They are not regulated, strictly speaking, by morality”. Having publicly stated that 80% of secessionist events involve some form of violence, the author acknowledges in the same interview that “secessionist movements often if they are faced with opposition, with a rejection by the host state, are in fact motivated to use violence in order to provoke either moral outrage in outside states or to wear down the enemy. In other words,

violence is a useful instrument when you cannot achieve your aims by other means”, and he thinks that that could be avoided by legal regulation. Are we faced by an impossibility to reach a solution, an alternative to violence as a consequence of an attempt at secession? According to Pavkovic, “one way of resolving this issue is to make territory less valuable so that the host states would be more inclined to give up territory when there is a very strong secessionist movement there. I think that would be a more elegant solution to these problems, and we have such solutions; for example, in Scotland we might have a solution through a referendum without any violence. So there are peaceful solutions to secessionist conflicts and I think we should really foster those instead of trying to find some sort of legal regulation”.

As regards the secession of Kosovo, and confronted with its uniqueness as observed by some major western powers, Pavkovic understands that “the argument that Kosovo has produced an extraordinary amount of civilian deaths, and that itself justifies the independence of Kosovo, is both empirically very difficult to uphold because the question there arises – ‘how many deaths are sufficient for independence?’. In other words, what do you compare it with? And when you compare it to other kinds of successful secession, such as that of Bangladesh in 1971, which had many more deaths involved than Kosovo, and was indeed a precedent, if you want, for successful secession, we can see that there are many precedents to Kosovo, both in terms of violence and in terms of successful secession, so that Kosovo is in no way unique; however, this is not the point. It's really not the statement about the uniqueness of Kosovo, it's really not a point about the history of secession, it's rather a point that the governments which are arguing this is a unique case, what they're basically saying is ‘we are not going to support secessionist movements of this kind, so please don't take us as encouraging secessionist movements’”. However, Pavkovic does not contest the overall support for secession, since “no secessionist movement is successful without a widespread mobilisation of population. In other words, you have to get people to vote for you or to support you. (...) It is a question of the ability to politically mobilise a population, and that, of course, is helped if the population has grievances. (...) As a secessionist movement you are basically exploiting people's grievances to convince them that they need a separate state of their own. So it's not quite the sheer might deciding; however, if you have a very powerful state which is opposing you, then the question of who has more military skills, or whose sponsor have you got, becomes a crucial factor at the end, whether you are going to be independent or not”.

Slavenka Drakulic, born in Croatia in 1949, is not a scholar but rather an author, a writer, of both novels and essays, and a former journalist. Her works on Yugoslavia, feminism, communism, and post-communism have been widely translated with articles published in international media outlets such as *The New Republic*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The New York Review of Books*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *The Nation*, *La Stampa*,

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, and The Guardian. In the early 1990s, she left Croatia and went to Sweden after an article written by Slaven Letica, a former advisor to Croatian president Franjo Tudjman, accused her and other Croatian female writers of being “witches” and “raping” Croatia. The country was experiencing high levels of nationalism and going through wars both at home and, though then not assumed, in Bosnia. Drakulic was threatened with death and had her property vandalized. Feeling a lack of support from colleagues and friends, she left the country. A substantial proportion of what she has since published is somehow related to wars and the lives within them. *As If I Am Not There* (the rape of women in Bosnia), *They Would Never Hurt a Fly* (her experiences in attending the proceedings of the ICTY at The Hague), besides her books, her collections of essays on living under communism in Yugoslavia *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* and *Cafe Europa*. An acclaimed writer, both in the former Yugoslavia and internationally, in 2011, Drakulic published another collection of essays in the U.S., entitled *A Guided Tour Through the Museum of Communism: Fables from a Mouse, a Parrot, a Bear, a Cat, a Mole, a Pig, a Dog, & a Raven*, a ferocious critique both of the communist regimes and the unbridled and oligarch capitalism that replaced them.

In an interview with the author of this dissertation, in RTP’s Antenal studios in Lisbon 2010, when she visited the country for the Portuguese language launch of *They Would Never Hurt a Fly*<sup>126</sup>, Slavenka Drakulic argued that, “only normal men can be war criminals”. The former journalist, now a professional writer, witnessed the “impressive and challenging” Slobodan Milošević being questioned at the ICTY, saying he did not recognize the Tribunal and “presenting himself as a political prisoner” and as a Serbian leader, “like a Serbian Che Guevara or something”.

Drakulic quotes the Russian writer and Gulag survivor Varlam Shalamov when saying that the survival of a human being relies on his capacity to forget. Should we say that the survival of a country depends on its capacity to remember? The Croatian writer agrees that “both are important but I think that catharsis is the key word. To make it we need truth, until we have the whole truth we don’t have catharsis”. And from here, she acknowledges the importance of facing the truth, and, in her case, understanding that “the Croats also committed war crimes, we also kept concentration camps, we also killed Serbs and I do not speak only about war criminals or their defense but the reason is much deeper and the reason is called collaboration. No regime cannot survive without the collaboration of the people”. She gives account of those who, in Zagreb, occupied the houses, possessions and jobs of Serbs who had been killed or expelled. “These people do not want this war to be discussed, they just want to forget”. Confronted with the popular Balkan joke that “The Hague prison is

---

<sup>126</sup> Drakulic, Slavenka (2010), *Não Fariam Mal a Uma Mosca*, publisher Pedra da Lua, Lisbon.

the last place where Yugoslavia still works”, Drakulic assented: “indeed it is. Fraternity and union. All these guys that are there they live together, they cook together. It’s ironic”.

On the radio program in which this interviewed was aired, Visão Global, Ambassador Cutileiro commented on it promptly, saying that, contrary to Drakulic, “the ICTY is a complete nonsense, an exercise of moral authority to placate consciences of prosperous and quiet observers. You cannot undo what was done, what you can do is to establish basis for a viable future to the survivors”. The former Portuguese peace broker to Bosnia understands “the Tribunal instead of solving problems, is keeping wounds opened”.

Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic is a Senior Research Fellow at LSE Global Governance at the London School of Economics and Political Science, specialising in informal economic practice, conflict and post-conflict economic recovery. She co-authored *Transnationalism in the Balkans* (Routledge, 2008) and *Persistent State Weakness in the Global Age* (Ashgate, 2009) with Denisa Kostovicova and *Civil Society and Transitions in the Western Balkans* (Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming) with James Ker-Lindsay.

An article published on the Open Democracy website in 2011, “Transnational networks and state-building in the Balkans”, once again together with Kostovicova, assumes a critical tone towards the role of the international actors in the Balkans, saying that “to deflect criticism for the inefficiency of their state-building projects in Afghanistan and Iraq, Western politicians have been keen to invoke the Balkans as a success story. If the post-conflict rehabilitation of the Balkans is to be considered a guide for good practice, the future for the ordinary people further to the east looks pretty glum”. Very critical of the model of state-building that is systematically implemented by international actors in post-conflict contexts, Bojicic-Dzelilovic highlights what she considers three incorrect assumptions: “i) that state building starts from scratch disregarding the legacies of the past; ii) that inter-ethnic contestation is the major problem of dysfunction of post-conflict states (and not necessarily employment; rule of law; human rights protection...); iii) that there is a separation of public and private interests on which to mount an institution-building project, using the template of a liberal market democracy” (ibid.).

The war economy in the Balkans, as in other hotspots, has “transnationalized” the conflicts and their profiteers and the “key challenge to the western project in the Balkans has in fact been a parallel project of active reproduction of state weakness by the transnational networks, inherited from the conflict, which allows their rule to persist”. Political and ethnic elites “seem combined into a nearly symbiotic one. Their agendas become indistinguishable, as illustrated by such infamous cases as Serbia’s late Zeljko Raznjatovic Arkan, mafioso, paramilitary leader, indicted war criminal, elected parliament member, Serb nationalist and ‘businessman’” (ibid.). The complexity and amount of actors involved in a war economy, and the post-conflict economy of greatest interest to the current dissertation, make it difficult to

clearly distinguish between interests and motivations: who wants what; who has done this or that, or prevented anyone from doing it. Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic sets out an example: the “northern Kosovo town of Mitrovica has become infamous for its ethnic division into Serb and Albanian parts on two sides of the Ibar River after the end of the Kosovo conflict in 1999. But, it is precisely this division that has allowed it to become a hub for smuggling and organised crime facilitated by Serb and Albanian cooperation”.

In the past few years, new fields of discussion have emerged in societies, in which the scholarly debates, as well as life in general, though affected by wartime and post-conflict contexts, tend to prioritize daily life problems, youth expectations, employment, identity diversity, gender issues, etcetera. Damir Arsenijevic is a psychologist, working “in the fields of critical theory and psychoanalysis. His theoretical interventions establish settings for the discussion of painful topics after the war and genocide in former Yugoslavia (...). He was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar and Professor at the Department of Rhetoric, UC Berkeley in 2011/12 and after a Leverhulme Fellow at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK, leading the project ‘Love after Genocide’. He founded the Tuzla Psychoanalytic Seminar in BiH which opens up public space for the exploration of the unconscious of war and genocide”.

Fearless over using strong words to describe – to this dissertation’s author, in an interview in New York, in 2015 - the problems of Bosnia and Herzegovina and identify responsibilities: “‘The two Schools Under One Roof’ is the apartheid that the international community imposed. The international community creates and maintains the apartheid in Bosnia”. Very active in pursuing community engagement for “developing strategies and generating a political space in art to enable a discussion of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990 and the Bosnian genocide in post-war societies in Yugoslavia”<sup>127</sup>, Arsenijevic has co-founded Yugoslav Studies, “a platform which brings together theoretical, artistic and cultural research, production and practice, positioning its open model of work through a politics of emancipation, equality and solidarity. Currently, Damir is promoting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) activism throughout Bosnia to develop community solidarities beyond the restrictions of identity politics” (ibid.). And the latter represents an increasingly important topic of discussion, with considerable political implications, taking into account the EU acquis, in the countries studied, especially in those yet to join the European Union. In terms of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), Arsenijevic told the author of the dissertation that “Bosnia should have got rid of the DPA long time ago, because the DPA was a provisional framework that was never meant to stay. Somehow conveniently forgot that Dayton is called General Framework Agreement for

---

<sup>127</sup> Arsenijevic, Damir (2014), *Unbribable Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Fight for the Commons* (Southeast European Integration Perspectives), Baden-Baden, Germany.

Peace, which meant it was to be revisited, but it was never revisited. Now, a very interesting study would be how much money was poured into Bosnia on account of international community salaries, because there are some stunning figures that the international community itself profited a lot from the peace-building in Bosnia, from keeping the status quo in Bosnia, from the frozen war in Bosnia”. This young author elaborates about “ethnic oligarchs”, those rich people who gained their wealth during the war”. Regardless of ethnicity? “Yes, absolutely. The ethnic project is the ethnic project. We know that these ethnic oligarchs speak among themselves and they are good buddies, they trade well and they traded well during the war: they were united during the war, they were not on opposite sides”. Arsenjievic sustains that “because they own collectively nine billion dollars, which is fifty percent of GDP, they are eighty-five people and that money is not in Bosnia, it’s not revolving making new jobs, it’s not invested in Bosnia, is out of the country. And the international community made these oligarchs, they negotiated with them, they kept them, and you cannot get that money out of the country without it being recorded internationally. So, that kind of theft of Bosnian money was recorded somewhere by international transaction flows. And there is no government willing to freeze those oligarchs’ assets. The international community is tacitly endorsing and accepting the theft”.

In this new wave of Balkanist scholars, Eric Gordy deserves referencing. A political and cultural sociologist, Senior Lecturer in Southeast European Politics at the City of London University’s School of Slavonic and East European Studies, he researches on Southeast Europe, especially the former Yugoslavia. He authored the book, *The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction Alternatives* (1999), which, according to the author’s own words, represents “an effort to offer an understanding of nationalist-authoritarian government and its staying power that concentrated not on political leaders and preconceived ‘ethnic’ categories, but on the experience of everyday life, blockage and distraction under conditions of constraint”.

In *Guilt, Responsibility and Denial: The Past at Stake in Post-Milošević Serbia* (2013), Gordy develops the “bottom-up approach to large-scale political events”, aiming to explore ways “in which dialogue about public memory and understanding of the wars of the 1990s both moved forward and met obstacles, and both efforts at opening discussions of memory and efforts at denial were transformed in response to ongoing events”.

Another most relevant scholar focusing on “the region” is Denisa Kostovicova, an Associate Professor in Global Politics at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Regarding the Balkans, she is one of the scholars who argues, and has been involved in projects based on finding conditions to achieve this aim, that “a regional character of contemporary wars has to be addressed with a regional approach to transitional justice.” She has long been focused on issues such as nationalism and democratisation in the global age,



post-conflict reconstruction and security, civil society and human security, war crimes and transitional justice, and the European integration of the Western Balkans. She has authored several books about Kosovo: *The Politics of Identity and Space* (Routledge 2005), *Transnationalism in the Balkans* (as co-editor, Routledge 2008), *Persistent State Weakness in the Global Age* (Ashgate 2009), *Civil Society and Transitions in the Western Balkans* (Palgrave Macmillan 2013). More recently, besides Brexit and its emotional impact on Europe, she has written on “the Karadžić verdict: how the trial played out and what it means for Bosnia”, “transitional justice in the Balkans: the victims of war crimes and their civic voice” and, importantly, about the “EU in the western Balkans: hybrid development, hybrid security and hybrid justice” (ibid.).

Robert Donia, an American scholar, has also got an extensive track record in writing on the Balkans. A Research Associate at the University of Michigan's Center for Russian and East European Studies, he has also been appointed as Associate Professor of History at the University of Sarajevo. He has authored books about Bosnia, such as *Islam under the Double Eagle: The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1878-1914*, and co-authored *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed*. He served as an expert witness in the war crimes trials at the ICTY. In 2014, he published his new book, *Radovan Karadžić: Architect of the Bosnian Genocide*.

Interviewed by the author of the dissertation during the ASEN Congress in Columbia University, in New York, on 24.04.2015, Robert Donia agreed that people probably “blame too much DPA” for what happens in Bosnia. His point is that the system created at Dayton gives the existing nationalist elites great incentives to continue behaving in the way they do, but he says one should not exclusively blame Dayton for this. Donia sees “the region” changing “more slowly than I wished it would”, but trying to adapt to new circumstances, “trying to bring forward leaderships like the present leadership of Serbia that is willing to make compromises”, a reference to the ongoing negotiations over Kosovo status, “particularly to gain entrance to the European Union, and become part of the general European community; that is the big factor in the region”. Even in countries where the public opinion is divided over the benefits of entering EU, it is an issue “that changes the whole political dynamic, because no leadership or group of leaders wants to deliberately alienate the EU. They want to comply as much as they can and give their constituencies preconditions to open the talks. (...) It’s a slow process but it’s having an effect: it’s now inconceivable that these countries would go to war, because whoever starts the first shot will become a pariah to the EU and everybody else is going to rush in”. Robert Donia concedes however that it is not easy to promote reconciliation in the former Yugoslavia: “it’s very difficult; experiences in Bosnia and Kosovo would suggest that it is relatively rare for reconciliation to proceed in these post-conflict situations, without a tremendous investment on the part of the western

countries, and basically nobody is in the position of doing that right now. So, reconciliation comes hard, comes infrequently, and only with a great amount of investment and resources”.

Florian Bieber is one of the most important examples of the tenacity of some scholars in keeping alive the need to study “the region”. Extremely prolific, very likely the most productive among those of his generation (born in Luxembourg in 1973), he is “a political scientist and historian working on inter-ethnic relations, ethnic conflict and nationalism, focusing on Southeastern Europe. The Director of the Center for South East European Studies at the University of Graz, he runs the Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group. He is also a Visiting Professor on the Nationalism Studies Program at the Central European University and is the editor of the book series Southeast European Studies, published with Routledge (formerly Ashgate) as well as editing the open access journal Contemporary South Eastern Europe”<sup>128</sup>.

Professor Bieber, who has studied in the U.S., Vienna and Budapest, has made quite a substantial contribution to some of the most relevant journals about the Balkans in the past few years in his role as editor in chief of Nationalities Papers between 2009 and 2013, associate editor of Southeastern Europe, among other publications. For some years, he worked both in Belgrade and Sarajevo with the European Centre for Minority Issues and has been an International Policy Fellow of the Open Society Institute. His extensive training experience in the field of diversity and minority rights, nationalism and ethnic conflict and political systems of South-eastern Europe, enrich a professional and scholarly portfolio, which also includes authoring books such as *Nationalism in Serbia from the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milošević* (2005, in German) and *Post-War Bosnia: Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector* (London: Palgrave, 2006), besides editing or co-editing four books on South-eastern Europe.

In an article published in 2016 and co-authored with Nikola Dimitrov, a former ambassador of Macedonia to the USA and member of the Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group (BiEPAG), “Europe needs the US to keep the peace in the Balkans”, Bieber, also BiEPAG’s coordinator, argues that “as the EU becomes resistant to accepting new members, Balkan countries need better incentives to continue democratizing.” In the past twenty years, and particularly after the Srebrenica massacre in July 1995, as the authors acknowledge, “the United States has had a hand in every major breakthrough in peace processes in the Balkans, spending vast resources on peacekeeping efforts in the region. Europe too has been an essential presence, making sure brokered agreements were sustainable, taking over peacekeeping missions and, most importantly, using the promise of prospective membership in the European Union to promote democracy and economic prosperity in the region”, besides

---

<sup>128</sup> Available at <https://florianbieber.org/about/>, accessed on 31.08.2016.

providing immense financial assistance. All this has undoubtedly contributed to lowering the tensions between former belligerent states and nations, besides reforming their economies and democratic institutions (even if not as much as the EU would have expected, and far from meeting the expectations of their own citizens but that makes up another story). The problem emerges from, in the wake of the accession of Romania and Bulgaria, after the Brexit referendum and the public debt crisis in the Eurozone, (helped by the surprising triumph of Donald Trump in the US elections), some EU countries (especially in the north) are becoming increasingly obdurate over allowing in new members.

Florian Bieber and Nikola Dimitrov warn that this “lack of political appetite for Europe’s enlargement threatens to send the wrong message to a region where peace remains fragile. Today, political elites across the Balkans show little interest in adhering to Europe’s bedrock democratic values. Instead, authoritarianism and clientelism are on the rise. Citizens in the region face increasing hopelessness in the face of rampant unemployment as their countries continue to struggle to return to the levels of GDP they had as part of Yugoslavia. Brexit may be the last nail in the region’s coffin. Not only has the U.K. been an important advocate for enlargement, its departure will keep the rest of the EU far too busy to pay much attention to the Balkans. The situation has handed a powerful argument to a Balkan ruling class happy with the status quo: Why bother joining a union that is falling apart, and that doesn’t want us?” (ibid.) This political context undermines the efforts of the last two decades and may reflect a substantial influence over public opinion, and especially among the youth, which is – as the survey developed under this dissertation witnesses – mostly and clearly in favour of European integration. But things may be dangerously changing.

Kurt Bassuener, co-founder and Senior Associate of the Democratization Policy Council, a think-tank which incorporates a global initiative for accountability in the promotion of democracy, is an internationally renowned voice about the Balkans. An American based in Sarajevo for many years, Kurt Bassuener, interviewed in New York by the author of this dissertation, considers a revision of the DPA framework as something fundamental to getting things moving forwards in Bosnia. “The problem is that we are right now in a dead zone”. The existing rules are not being enforced and a new set of rules is yet to be created, adds Bassuener for whom, “as contradictory it might sound, to have a foundational forward, we need to reiterate our willingness to enforce the Dayton construct; not because we want to stick to it, but because without making clear that those rules will apply until they are consensually changed, there won’t be incentives to consensually change them”. 2005 was the tenth anniversary of the DPA, Bassuener recalls: “the US government adopted the constitutional reform as a goal. (...) Anyone who had a concern about that, resisted it. Even the SDA, who completely supported the April package” pushed back, since they did not want the Americans to check out, “because they didn’t trust the Europeans”.

There was also a reasonable number of journalists who became famous after the coverage of the Balkans conflicts and, in addition, as reporters or as well as turned-out-to-be historians or political scientists, published important books about “the region”: Noel Malcolm (*Bosnia: a Short History*, 1994; *Kosovo: a short history*, 1998; Books on Bosnia: A critical bibliography of works relating to Bosnia-Herzegovina published since 1990 in West European languages, 1999), Tim Judah (*The Serbs: History, Myth and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, 2000; *Kosovo: War and Revenge*, 2002; *Kosovo: What Everyone Needs to Know*, 2008), Misha Glenny (*The Fall of Yugoslavia*, 1996; *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804-2011*, revised edition, 2012); Alfonso Rojo (*Yugoslavia, holocausto en los Balcanes*, 1992), David Rhode (*Endgame: The Fall and Betrayal of Srebrenica*), Laura Silber and Alan Little (*The Death of Yugoslavia*), just to mention some. The latter two were interviewed by the author of the dissertation: Rhode in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1997, at the time the American journalist was reporting for the Christian Science Monitor, later for the New York Times; and Laura Silber, in New York, in 2015.

Silber, according to this author’s interpretation, in a certain way downgrades the role played by the international actors in the Balkans wars of the 1990s and the collapse of the socialist Yugoslavia. Confronted with that view by the author of this dissertation in an interview in her Open Society office, in New York, in May 2015, the former journalist clarified that “the outside powers, whether it is the US, or the EU or Russia, played for the most part a very negative role, certainly in the first part of the 1990s, being ineffective to halt the war and stop the violence, but I think we can’t absolve the local actors of responsibility for the wars”. Back then, one could travel in 1991 from Belgrade to Sarajevo and to Zagreb and conclude that “none of these people wanted a war, but those were not the people, necessarily, who were making the decisions. And that was the problem and I think that somehow the federal government was made, in some way, of the best and the brightest, people who were brilliant and really for reform. There was some really remarkable people in Ante Markovic’s government”, but they were not really aware “of what was going on beyond that kind of very isolated federal government in Belgrade”. Silber perceives the war as not inevitable, and, compared with countries such as Bulgaria, “Yugoslavia was so much better placed to make the transition, a well educated population, a place where people seemed to be living well”, so the international actors could have better aided Ante Markovic’s government, argues Silber<sup>129</sup>.

Regarding the DPA, which Silber once defined as “peace through ethnic cleansing”, the author now working for the Open Democracy projects of the Soros Foundation, argues that Dayton was made “to stop the fighting, to stop the killing”, but stresses that she is “very

---

<sup>129</sup> Interview with the author in April 2015, in New York.

critical of what was agreed at Dayton in the sense that it was not fair”, due to having rewarded gains from the war. In the interview given in New York, he accepts that the DPA “left an impossible country in Bosnia, too complicated to rule and to govern. However, Dayton could have been reevaluated; there was nothing saying Dayton was written in stone”, as the country is still governed by the Dayton constitution which still does not work, adds Silber. Furthermore, she understands there is a deeper problem: a clear lack of leaders throughout Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia, “who have a vision, who could be a model for a European future; (...) I’m sure that they do exist, when I travel there I meet people who are unbelievably impressive, but they are not in power and they don’t have a serious chance of being in power anytime soon”. Bearing in mind the regional interdependence, Silber understands that “it is not difficult to imagine that Bosnia won’t blossom if Croatia and Serbia have not”.

The most recent and young academics, the think-tank analysts, journalists, political analysts, diplomats, human rights organizations and military strategists who are interested in this fascinating region, those who are still studying it in universities or are just curious about its realities, should not overlook some classics about the Balkans. First of all, *The Balkans Since 1453* (1965), authored by Stavros Stavrianos, a monumental work, “stands as one of the great accomplishments of European historiography. Long out of print, Stavrianos' opus both synthesizes the existing literature of Balkan studies since World War I and demonstrates the centrality of the Balkans to both European and world history, a centrality painfully apparent in recent years”<sup>130</sup>. Leften Stavros Stavrianos (1913-2004) was a Greek-Canadian historian, who was a very prolific author, and besides *The Balkans since 1453*, published his most influential *A Global History: From Prehistory to the 21st Century* and *Lifelines from Our Past* (Pantheon, 1990), “a non-standard historiography that represented a new approach to the study of human history.” Stavrianos argued “the study of history provides modern man with ‘lifelines’ for understanding and responding to the contemporary situation.”<sup>131</sup> He is considered one of the first historians to challenge the Orientalistic views of the Ottoman Empire. In *The Balkans Since 1453*, Stavrianos proposes an epitaph to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, with “the following three phrases: federalism versus centralism, rural overpopulation and the alienation of the intelligentsia” (Stavrianos, 2000: 643).

Another important reference would be *The Balkans in Transition: Essays on the Development of Balkan Life and The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920 (A History of East Central Europe)* from Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich. This couple

---

<sup>130</sup> <https://www.amazon.com/Balkans-Since-1453-L-S-Stavrianos/dp/0814797660>. Accessed on 15.08.2016.

<sup>131</sup> <http://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/archive/newsrel/arts/Stavrianos.asp>. Published on 31.03.2004; accessed on 01.09.2016.

of Balkanists, with their later and important book tracing the social, political, cultural, and economic picture of the Balkans up to the aftermath of the First World War, “explore the contrasts and similarities among the peoples, within the context of the Ottoman Empire and Europe”<sup>132</sup>. The University of Indiana stores a repository of their papers and other publications throughout the twentieth century<sup>133</sup>.

Last but far from being the least, professor Ivo Banac (Dubrovnik, 1947), living in the USA since the late 1950s, graduated from Stanford, taught at Yale University, often visited Yugoslavia and personally met Franjo Tudjman, and, describing the Croatian leader as someone who could not tolerate dissent, then became one of his strongest critics, especially after having joined the Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSLP), and then the Liberal Party. He was Minister of Environmental Protection in 2003. From 2007 to 2009 he held an important human rights role, as President of the Croatian Helsinki Committee. He served also as director of the Council on European Studies at Yale University. Out of the vast bibliography Banac has published, this research would mention *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (1984)<sup>134</sup>; *With Stalin against Tito: Cominformist splits in Yugoslav communism* (1988), besides relevant articles published in academic journals, such as *Slavic Review*, *East European Politics & Societies*, *The Slavonic and East European Review*. Approached as a nationalist Croat by some authors, such as Aleksa Djilas, he is one of the most renowned authors and historians from the ex-Yugoslavia.

The scholarly debates about the Balkans have seen academics engage in theoretical and, mostly, ideological quarrels surrounding the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the role of Serbia and its blameless, or immensely blameful, role in the wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia. These debates again surfaced with the NATO intervention in federal Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in 1999.

Aleksa Djilas<sup>135</sup> - the son of the late Milovan Djilas, a historian and one of the most renowned members of Tito’s partisans and, from the 1950s onwards, one of the most famous dissenters of the Yugoslav regime and the eastern bloc in general – has embraced huge controversy in the academy with his reviews of some author’s books, namely Noel Malcolm’s *Kosovo: a Short Story*, but also John R. Lampe and Sabrina P. Ramet. When speaking about “that only seemingly strange part of our old continent which almost everyone in the world

---

<sup>132</sup> <http://www.washington.edu/uwpress/search/books/JELEST.html>. Accessed on 31.08.2016.

<sup>133</sup> [http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/view?doc.view=entire\\_text&docId=InU-Ar-VAD4111](http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/view?doc.view=entire_text&docId=InU-Ar-VAD4111). Accessed on 01.09.2016.

<sup>134</sup> Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

<sup>135</sup> Aleksa Djilas is a sociologist, historian and writer from Belgrade, Serbia. A researcher first at Harvard University and then a Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, he has authored, *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution, 1919–1953*, Harvard University Press, 1991/1996.

calls the Balkans but some much more correctly the South-Eastern Europe<sup>136</sup>, and mainly about the independence of Kosovo, Djilas argues that “Kosovo’s independence was primarily the work of the United States, which has lobbied ever since, in all parts of the globe, for its international recognition, and in general plays a crucial role in Kosovo’s internal and external affairs”, adding that significantly and amusingly, “there is a four-meter-tall bronze statue of President Clinton on Bill Clinton Boulevard in the center of Kosovo’s capital, Pristina” (ibid.). Moreover, he sees Kosovo in the future as “America’s satellite and obedient ally in its pursuit of imperialistic policies, if necessary even against Europe” (ibid.). Regarding regional reconciliation, he acknowledges that there is “a profound lack of understanding both in Belgrade and Zagreb of the enormous gains which a close collaboration between the two countries could bring them in the areas of security, political stability, democratic development, and general prosperity. Indeed, by working together they could exert great influence not only on regional affairs but even on European ones. Like the reconciliation between post-war France and Germany, the one between post-war Serbia and Croatia should not be guided only by pragmatic concerns or based solely on economic interests. It should have a moral foundation and be turned towards both the past and the future”.

In a controversial article entitled “The academic West and the Balkan test<sup>137</sup>, published in December 2007 – at the end of the Portuguese EU presidency and ahead of Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence - in the *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Volume 9, Number 3, Aleksa Djilas reviews John R. Lampe’s book *Balkans into Southeastern Europe: A Century of War and Transition*<sup>138</sup> and the aforementioned Sabrina P. Ramet’s *Thinking About Yugoslavia: Scholarly Debates About the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo*<sup>139</sup>.

Questioning whether Ramet has “has really read” the almost 150 books discussed in her volume, he states that his biggest concern does not stem from Ramet’s indisputable knowledge, but “the author’s profound bias, which causes her to evade difficulties and conceal complexities”. He quotes Michael Mann, as a leading historical sociologist who “convincingly rejects any attempt to chastise entire ethnic groups as perpetrators of expulsions and genocide<sup>140</sup>, before then critiquing Norman Cigar’s *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of Ethnic Cleansing*, for being nationalist “‘since it is nationalists who claim that the nation is a singular actor’ and because they condemn German, Turkish and Serbian

---

<sup>136</sup> In “De Gaulle’s Vision of Europe and the Problems of the Contemporary Balkans”, by Aleksa Djilas, *Global Research*, December 06, 2010.

<sup>137</sup> Djilas, Aleksa (2007) 'The academic West and the Balkan test', *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 9:3, 323 – 332. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14613190701728320>. Accessed on 01.09.2016.

<sup>138</sup> Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006.

<sup>139</sup> Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005.

<sup>140</sup> Mann, Michael (2005), *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*, p.20.

nationalism ‘in ways that reproduce the categories of nationalist thought’” (Mann, 2005: 20). He turns to Mann to point out Ramet’s perception of Cigar as a “meticulous scholar” (Ramet, 2005: 269) “and Genocide in Bosnia as a ‘brilliantly executed book” (2005: 16). And what Mann says about Cigar’s book, Djilas applies to Ramet’s and complains about what he considers a disrespect for “well-known professors who have devoted their lives to Yugoslav studies, like Paul Shoup, Susan Woodward, Steven Burg and Robert Hayden”, who are, according to his opinion, in Ramet’s books “accused of nothing less than moral relativism”, allied with the devil and “to dispute Ramet’s dogmatic conclusions is to stand in the way of justice”<sup>141</sup>. What Ramet, who “sees herself not only as a political scientist and historian but also as a philosopher with an unassailable moral position” (2007: 326), clearly wants in Yugoslav studies are “polemical, aggressive books advocating military intervention against the Serbs (in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo, as well as in Serbia) and swift and merciless punishment of defeated Serbian leaders” (ibid.).

Moving forward but deepening his criticism of Ramet’s work, Djilas wonders “if someone wanted to read a recent book on Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav tragedy that is the exact opposite to Sabrina Ramet’s? Is there an antipode (and also an antidote) to *Thinking About Yugoslavia*? Unfortunately, there is not. However, until such a book appears, one could recommend John R. Lampe’s *Yugoslavia as History: Twice there was a Country*, published in 1996, whose revised and updated edition appeared in 2000. Mercifully, it is free of extremism and excess, respectful of alternative views, and above all, to use again the quote from Michael Mann, does not ‘reproduce the categories of nationalist thought’. Well researched and accessible, it has become a standard textbook for university history courses. Curiously, Ramet does not mention it”.

In fact, John R. Lampe<sup>142</sup> is analyzed by Djilas, in the University of Maryland

---

<sup>141</sup> Djilas, Aleksa (2007: 326): “In the spring of 2006, the Bosnian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Sarajevo, which is run mostly by Muslims, came out with the figure of between 500 and 600 Serbian civilians murdered by Muslim forces in Sarajevo during the war. At the same time, Slobodna Bosna [Free Bosnia], a moderate Muslim weekly also in Sarajevo, maintained that there had been as many as 850 Serbian victims. Not only does Ramet not mention any figures for Serbian victims, but there is nothing in her book that even suggests such killings. There are now not many Serbs, Croats or Jews left in Sarajevo, but for Ramet the city’s aura of multi-ethnic tolerance is untouched and undiminished. The Sarajevo daily *Oslobodjenje* [Liberation] received more international awards than any newspaper in history for its alleged truthfulness and opposition to nationalism; but today even the editors do not deny that at the beginning of the war they made a decision to support Bosnia’s president and Muslim leader Izetbegović and went to his office to offer their services. But again, Ramet is silent”.

<sup>142</sup> A history professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, and a former foreign service officer who lived and worked in Belgrade in the mid-1960s. *Balkan Economic History, 1550 – 1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations*, “a book of over 700 pages he co-authored with Marvin R. Jackson, was published in 1982 and immediately established him as a leading authority on the region’s economics, past and present, as well as a competent general historian” (Djilas, 2007: 328). More recently, Lampe published *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth Century Southeastern Europe* (CEU Press, 2004), co-edited with Mark Mazower.



professor's new book, *Balkans into Southeastern Europe: A Century of War and Transition*. To important questions that Djilas perceives as still rather relevant – “How do you prevent or halt ethnic wars and ethnic cleansings? Who, and under what conditions, has a right to separate and create a state? How should we decide where to draw borders and how to protect minorities?” (Djilas, 2007: 328), he regards Lampe's *Balkans into Southeastern Europe: A Century of War and Transition* as “a step forward in the search for answers, regional and global”. Nevertheless, Lampe is criticized for allegedly giving an “uncritical account of the role of the USA in the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the subsequent wars. This is in stark contrast to his balanced presentation of the conflict and war between Croats and Serbs” (2207: 330). In his review about the two books, Lampe concludes by saying: “in spite of the enormous difference between them in approach and quality, they are both written from a distinctly Western, and in particular American, point of view. Lampe and Ramet sometimes even resemble a good cop – bad cop routine—she attacking mercilessly, he all softness and diplomacy. Like most Americans, however, they are completely unaware of their nationalism. We in the Balkans may be more nationalistic than Americans but we also have fewer illusions about ourselves” (2007: 331).

In a response in *Foreign Affairs*,<sup>143</sup> entitled “Is Kosovo Real? The Battle over History Continues”, Noel Malcolm claims his books focus on the “mass of factual evidence, carefully referenced to sources drawn from the whole range of existing literature in what Djilas, with characteristic inaccuracy, calls ‘a dozen languages.’” Malcolm stresses the absence of Kosovo in Djilas's book on the Yugoslav national question (“total lack of interest in Kosovo. In its 259 pages Djilas does not devote a single paragraph to Kosovo”), and the author himself is accused by Malcolm of defending the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia (“Western journalism may not have noticed the major change in his approach since he began revisiting Belgrade in 1990 and returned to live there permanently in 1993. From almost the start of the Bosnian war he has been advocating the dismemberment of Bosnia, which means rewarding the ethnic cleansers with the land they have cleansed”).

Malcolm argues there is Vaticanophobia in Djilas arguments and the debate goes even to the locations of the archives consulted, with Malcolm justifying the predominance of archives from catholic countries such as Austria and Italy, arguing that in Greece and Bulgaria, orthodox countries, where “there is nothing of remotely comparable importance” and due to the fact, unfortunately Malcolm contends, that “Serbia itself possesses no archive properly covering that long period of Serbian history”.

Malcolm's harshest argument against Djilas comes at the end of his response in *Foreign Affairs*: “the conclusions Djilas draws from his a priori assertions about ancient

---

<sup>143</sup> January/February 1999 Issue Kosovo-Serbia.

ethnic hatreds are, nevertheless, puzzling. He thinks that ineradicable hatreds in Bosnia justify its dismemberment but that such animosities in Kosovo can never justify removing Kosovo from Serbia". Claiming to support the claim that the territory of Republika Srpska "is an intrinsic part of a Bosnian entity based on criteria of historical continuity and ethnic geography", Malcolm understands that "the claim that Kosovo is an intrinsic part of a Serbian entity is extremely weak on both of those criteria. While Kosovo did not exist as a political unit for most of the Ottoman period, neither did Serbia; the Kosovan territory has been legally part of a Serbian unit for just over 50 of the last 500 years". In the last lines of the response, he states: "Djilas is entitled, of course, to express his ideas about how to maintain Serbian power over Kosovo against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of its inhabitants. What he is not entitled to do is to engage in the wholesale misrepresentation of my book merely because my findings make so many of his own preconceived ideas about Kosovo impossible to sustain".

Malcolm's book about Kosovo has, nonetheless, been the object of criticism from other authors, such as Stevan K. Pavlowitch, Professor of Balkan History, University of Southampton, U.K., in his text "Facts First" in the same Foreign Affairs issue, considering himself in a privileged position for such critical analysis as someone "who has studied Balkan history for over 40 years and taught it for 30", and who does not think that "Malcolm's book is a profound, as opposed to an impressive, work of scholarship". Malcolm, argues Pavlowitch, "wants to show that Serbian, Montenegrin, and Yugoslavian policies from 1912 onward are the core of the Kosovo problem and that independence for Kosovo is the only way out. I happen to agree, but it should have been the conclusion the historian drew from the evidence, not an assumption made first and then bolstered with evidence".

In his reply to Malcolm's response, Djilas correctly argues, in our understanding, that there are far more justifications to "doubt that anyone can be the expert in such a complex field as the study of nationalism. Indeed, being aware of the limits of our knowledge is a prerequisite to any objective, dispassionate, mature understanding of the Kosovo problem", and points out to more balanced approaches to the Kosovo issue as those produced by Mark Mazower and Miranda Vickers. Moreover, Djilas compels the readers to take a look at his writings criticizing Serbian nationalism and Slobodan Milošević, such as "A Profile of Slobodan Milošević" (Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993) "to refute Malcolm's claim that I deprecate Serbian nationalism 'only in the abstract.'" He also acknowledges, something the author of this dissertation agrees with based on what he witnessed in the field in Sarajevo in 1996 and 1997, that from the Bosnian capital, "which according to Malcolm and many other Western journalists is a haven of multiethnic tolerance, the large majority of Serbs and Croats have been expelled" or fled due to lack of security and discrimination in access to employment. (...) Almost all streets with old Serbian and Croatian names have new Muslim

ones [Vase Miskina renamed to Ferhadija, for instance], (...), and the media is permeated with nationalism and fundamentalism”.

However, this dissertation’s author does not agree with Djilas when concluding that, “the brutal reality of these irreversible changes has made me conclude that although Bosnia’s partition is a tragedy, there is no alternative. I say this with great sorrow, but it would take a superhuman task to put the clock back”.

John Lampe’s response to Aleksa Djilas, ‘The Academic West and the Balkan Test’<sup>144</sup>, about his *Balkans into Southeastern Europe*, argues that what happened in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, “the abuses of the Milošević regime left little room for reversing this moral narrative in Serbia’s favour or even, in the Bosnian case, room for accepting what I have called ‘the fallacy of false equivalence’, holding all three sides equally guilty for ‘the same dirty business’” (Lampe, 2008: 113). Lampe refutes “Djilas’s own criticism of US aid to the Croatian army as decisive in 1995 and as significant for the Kosovo Liberation Army in 1999”, arguing that he “exaggerates the role it played, an exaggeration that infers a guiding Great Power hand in Croatian and Kosovar actions that is hard to support”, and points to another book of American scholarship, which itself, can easily dismiss the accusations of an uncritical approach: “*Winning Ugly: NATO’s War to Save Kosovo*, by Ivo Daalder and Michael O’Hanlon for The Brookings Institution in 2000”.

Sabrina P. Ramet also responds to Djilas harsh criticism and beginning with quoting the “rare reviews” her book got from scholars such as “Gale Stokes, Ivo Goldstein, Alex Bellamy, Denisa Kostovicova and Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic’, among others” accusing the son of Milovan Djilas of misrepresenting her book “in some important ways”. The author of *Balkan Babel* understands “these terms are, in turn, the key to understanding a central debate in the field of Yugoslav studies, a debate in which, however, only a minority of the scholars discussed in the book actually took part”. Referring to prior and personal works, not a review of books as is the case with *Thinking about Yugoslavia...*, in both *Nationalism and Federalism* and *Three Yugoslavias*, Ramet highlights “the courage and activity of Serb liberals (by name in some cases) in their opposition to Milos̄ević’s policies”.

Ramet puts her acting sheriff’s hats on with the more than twenty books she has edited and repeatedly welcoming and including “chapters expressing viewpoints which differ in important ways from” her own. To sum up: “I believe that Djilas has treated the work of Noel Malcolm, Marko Hoare and others unfairly (without any explanation other than alleged

---

<sup>144</sup> Lampe, John R. (2008) ‘Responses to Aleksa Djilas, ‘The Academic West and the Balkan Test’, JSEB, Vol. 9, No. 3, December 2007’, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 10:1, 113 – 120. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14613190801923276>; accessed on 01.09.2016.

‘bias’), and that he has seriously misrepresented my own work. Readers wishing to know what is actually in *Thinking about Yugoslavia* should read the book”.

Leaving harsh and controversial debates aside, which emerge only from time to time, when there is a big and divisive event such as the NATO intervention and the Kosovo crisis, one could begin – at least apolitically, if such ever proves possible, the immersion in this complex “region” with one last reference: the classic Rebecca West’s *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: a journey through Yugoslavia* (1941), also cited in Ramet’s reference book, a travel book based, as “Edith Durham, a noted authority on the Balkans, bitchily put it at the time, ‘an immense book on the strength of one pleasure trip to Yugoslavia, but with no previous knowledge of the land or people.’ For the record, Miss West had made three trips to Yugoslavia: the first, at the invitation of the British Council, to give lectures in the spring of 1936; a second with her husband, Henry Andrews, in the spring of 1937; the third in early summer of the following year”.<sup>145</sup>

With its “two volumes, totalling half a million words”, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* became “an immense and immensely complicated picture not simply of her own soul but that of Europe on the brink of the Second World War. The result, which she feared ‘hardly anyone will read by reason of its length, is one of the supreme masterpieces of the 20th century”.

In the text published in *The Guardian*, “Journeys into History”, Geoff Dyer quotes West in a phrase that could be both the fate and a possible definition of Yugoslavia, and, simultaneously, her intention with the book: “to show the past side by side with the present it created” (*ibid.*).

In conclusion, the debates about the Balkans and between authors who focus their work on the region, tend to emerge mostly when there is a disruptive political event happening and thus contributing to divide some of those authors, mainly into fields of criticism and advocacy of Serbian political positions.

---

<sup>145</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/aug/05/featuresreviews.guardianreview2>. Published on 05.08.2006; accessed on 01.09.2016.

## CHAPTER III - FROM DISINTEGRATION TO EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

### 3.1. Introduction

The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the USSR “was not irrelevant to the disintegration of Yugoslavia” (Ramet, 2005: 35)<sup>146</sup>, in the sense that the country shared “an ideology of equality and common problems of legitimation, institutional malfunctioning, economic degeneration and institutional dysfunctionality with other states in the region”. The final and fulminating phase of Yugoslavia’s disintegration began with the rise of Slobodan Milošević to the leadership of the Communist Party of Serbia in 1987. The situation of the, then deprived, Serb minority in Kosovo was the pretext for a nationalist turn, which challenged the foundations of the state and was on seized by Slovene federal party leaders, firstly, before then Croat leaders adopted the path of independence. In the former case, this did not happen without a brief war; the latter starting with the Serb minority in Croatia supported by the JNA, the Yugoslav Federal Army, triggered conflict lasting between 1991 and 1995 and some of the bloodiest conflicts in the Yugoslav disintegration. At the time, any balanced, nonpartisan approach would have easily come to the conclusion that it was not only the Serb minority in Kosovo nor the Albanian majority in Kosovo who were living in poverty-stricken environments, but rather all of the populations in the southern province regardless of their ethnic or religious backgrounds.

This chapter focuses upon the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, detailing the key events and facts that led to the wars, as well as the major issues regarding the present political, social and economic situations in the region and, especially, in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo. In keeping with the thoughts of the *Balkanist* historian Maria Todorova, who argues that “when political entities disintegrate, the first casualty is the institutional structure”, one can also say that in the Yugoslav case, the disintegration was “accompanied by major demographical discontinuities” (Gorupa, 2013: 34-35). However, this disintegration must and shall here be analyzed across its multiple and diverse dimensions.

In the 1970s, no one would have believed in the disintegration of Yugoslavia, then a place, as the historian Mark Mazower observes, “idolized by American policymakers and by the New Left in Europe; the language of international non-alignment and of workers’ self-management at home fell on receptive ears abroad. (...) Mass tourism brought millions to the regions’ beaches and ski-slopes, and turned peasant culture into after-dinner entertainment. The picturesque replaced the violent, and the worst problems most tourists anticipated were poor roads and unfamiliar toilets” (Mazower, 2000: 5).

---

<sup>146</sup> Ramet, Sabrina P. (2005), *Thinking About Yugoslavia, Scholarly Debates About the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Firstly, the Slovene leadership, then the Croat, took the path of secessionism and issued declarations of independence; the former after a short war, with the latter launching conflict with the Serb minority in Croatia, supported by the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA)<sup>147</sup>, between 1991 and 1995, that accounted for some of the bloodiest events in the disintegration of Yugoslav.

The independence referendum held in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 29<sup>th</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> March 1992, although boycotted by Bosnian Serbs<sup>148</sup>, sparked the civil war, with episodes that were to shock the conscience of Europe coupled with the prolonged inaction of the major European powers and the tergiversations in US policy: the siege of Sarajevo lasted more than three years (1992-1995) and the Srebrenica massacre (July 1995) was the worst single event of ethnic cleansing in Europe since World War II, essential facts that would later, much later, result in the Serb, Slobodan Milošević, and the Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić, appearing before the ICTY<sup>149</sup> for war crimes and genocide.

The agreement in Dayton, Ohio, ratified in Paris in late 1995, restored peace in Bosnia and established a country separated along ethnic lines, through its two constituent entities: the Muslim-Croat Federation (Federation) and Republika Srpska (RS, Serb Republic).

From 24<sup>th</sup> March to early June 1999, the NATO intervention against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in support of the separatist Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)<sup>150</sup> and Kosovo's civilian population, against the presence of Milošević's forces in the southern province of Serbia with an Albanian majority, opened the space for a new war and new waves of displaced persons.

With the end of the conflict and the presence of international forces on the ground ensured through the Kosovo Force (KFOR)<sup>151</sup> mission, the victims very often turned into perpetrators with the Kosovo Serbs subsequently the target of violence committed by their Albanian neighbors, incidents that did not assume worse proportions due to the continued presence of international troops, especially after Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence by the Kosovo Albanian leadership, on 17th February 2008.

There is little surprise at the deep commitment the countries of the former Yugoslavia are putting into the process of European integration, which is, as of writing in July 2016, endangered by the so-called Brexit, with the entry of new member states to the EU, at least on an informal level, put on hold. Slovenia has been a member state of the European Union since

---

<sup>147</sup> Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija was the military force of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

<sup>148</sup> Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina of Serb origin.

<sup>149</sup> The international body was itself eventually an external actor of deep relevance in the Balkans.

<sup>150</sup> The present text commonly applies the acronym in the original Albanese language, UÇK (Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës), for the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), in English.

<sup>151</sup> KFOR is a NATO-led international peacekeeping force.

2005 with and Croatia joining in 2013; all other countries emerging from Yugoslavia eagerly seek European integration, and this definitely constitutes the main objective of their governments: from Serbia, whose application for membership has been accepted following the country's formal application in 2009<sup>152</sup>, to Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia, whose accession processes are at more embryonic stages. However, the lingering of these processes over time and the international economic crisis since 2008, brought about "the development of a leftist critique of European integration" (Dérens, 2012: 30)<sup>153</sup>, in countries such as Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia. With the novelty of a certain generational shift, as the most critical voices come, in fact, "from those who are not ex-Yugoslav but post-Yugoslav, a generation that did not live the former socialist federation, and although sometimes may idealize the disappeared state, accepts as a normal reality the republics which succeeded" (*ibid.*) Thus, the argument of European integration as a means to overcome conflicts between Balkan countries, may mean not so much to them, as the contacts with the other republics back to being natural" (*ibid.*) and taken for granted.

Nevertheless, despite the Eurozone crisis and widespread doubts about the future of the European Union, EU accession appears as the most powerful catalyst in shaping the consolidation of democracy in Western Balkans – "the last unintegrated part of the European geography" in the words of Vuk Jeremic, former Serbian Foreign Affairs Minister and former UN General Assembly president<sup>154</sup> - and the path to reconciliation among nations and peoples in the region as readers may later infer from the results of the research survey with some of its results set out later in this chapter. While in the next chapter of this dissertation, we analyse the constraints facing the countries under study, we firstly need to return to the past, to focus on the systemic constraints that led Yugoslavia into wars and running counter to widely disseminated theories that regard this part of Europe as endemically violent.

---

<sup>152</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/serbia/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/serbia/index_en.htm). Accessed on 31.03.2015.

<sup>153</sup> Dérens, Jean-Arnault (2012), "O Fim do Sonho Europeu nos Balcãs", IIª Série, 5, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Portuguese edition.

<sup>154</sup> Interview with the author, in Lisbon, 02.04.2008. To the quoted statement he added: "as long as the Balkans remain unintegrated, there will be a source of instability in Europe. It is very much in the interest of the EU to complete the process of integration, so that the Balkans accedes and Serbia is key to Balkans' accession".

### 3.2. Systemic constraints and the failed case for endemic violence.

Is there any scientific or, at least, meaningful and non-stereotyped purpose to the word ‘Balkanization’? Is there any serious remark when one refers to a given region, even if not in Europe, as ‘Balkanized’, a label with intrinsically violent connotations?

The word ‘Balkan’ began as a place and no more than, the route from Central Europe to Constantinople, “a name applied to the mountain range better known to the classically Western traveller as ‘ancient Haemus’ (Mazower, 2000: 1).

It was not until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that published references to ‘Balkan’ peoples started to appear. In his itinerary collections through “Turkish Europe”, in 1864, the French writer Ami Boue, quoted by the historian Mark Mazower in the opening pages of his fundamental *The Balkans*<sup>155</sup>, jokes in a condescending way: “how often have I heard people ask who the Christians populations of Turkey belong to – Russia, Austria, France? And when some dreamers replied: ‘These populations belong to themselves’ – what amusement, what pity at such utopianism” (in Mazower, 2000: 3). That was some decades before a young Russian journalist, later famous as Leon Trotsky, “looked out of his carriage window as he travelled by rail from Budapest to Belgrade on the eve of the First Balkan war, and enthused: ‘The East! The East! – what a mixture of faces, costumes, ethnic types and cultural levels’” (in Mazower, 2000: 10). While true that the old world order came to an end with the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by the young Serb nationalist Gravilo Princip in Sarajevo, in June 1914, “for this, if nothing else, the Balkans were henceforth cursed in the European consciousness” (2000: 14). However, in line with Mazower and drawing upon his words, this research would also propose that “a truer and less jaundiced understanding of the Balkans requires us to try to unravel the way in which attitudes to the region have been shaped not only by events which took place there but by more sweeping narratives of the development of European identity and civilization” (ibid.).

The Balkans has always been part of the history of Europe, its contingencies, power struggles, constraints and challenges. Why did violence erupt in such extreme forms in the last two centuries, when peace had prevailed among its peoples for several centuries? Mazower refers to “contemporary contingencies of mass politics and urban, industrial life, the rise of new state structures and the spread of literacy and technology may well turn out to be as important in the Balkans as the supposed eternal verities of religious fracture, peasant rootedness and ethnic cleavage. We might find then that the story we tell does not so much affirm as undermine any sense of European superiority” (2000: 17). Therefore, Europe,

---

<sup>155</sup> Mazower, Mark (2000), *The Balkans*, Phoenix, London.



according to Mazower, “gave them the ideological weapons – in the shape primarily of modern romantic nationalism”. Besides political instability and wars, due to its geographic location, this part of Europe was frequently affected by plagues and famine, as “vulnerably located on the disease routes from the Near East to Western Europe” (2000: 27).

It was only during Tito’s rule, in the second half of the last century, that Yugoslavia (like other Balkan countries), embraced a process of urbanization; “until well into this century, the peasant predominated” (2000: 27). Rural populations, though focused on “innovation and experimentation with new crops” (Mazower, 2000: 30), and experienced on displacements and resettlements due to climatic conditions or political and economic transformations: “border changes, natural catastrophes such as drought or abrupt fluctuations in crop prices were enough to prompt mass migration”. The dissertation’s author understands and suggests that studies on the former Yugoslavia about displacement as an incorporated and rooted cultural feature might potentially aid in explaining the huge number of IDPs due to the wars in the 1990s. This clearly does not function as a single cause and by no means ever undervaluing the role of violence and its principals.

Before the aforementioned process of urbanization, over three centuries of Ottoman rule, “it was the village which they referred to as their ‘fatherland’ and its representative spoke for them before the dignitaries of the state and other intruders” (Mazower, 2000: 47), with the peasants inclined to identify themselves with the “moral essence of national life: ‘There are no members of the Serbian nation but peasants”, pronounced Vuk Karadžić early in the nineteenth century. We are talking about extremely poor populations, economically plundered by wars, bad politics and climatic conditions. Moreover, the arrival of a money economy and consequently the modern state, something which was as true for the Turkish Empire as it was for Austria-Hungary or Russia, “disrupted old patterns of social relations, and helped pave the way for political changes as well”.

Mazower posits how only by taking into account what he describes as “dramatic and societal disruption can one understand the emergence of mass nationalism in the nineteenth-century Balkans”. Above all, the peasants were worried with their “rights to land, livelihood and fair taxes” (Mazower, 2000: 43). For a better understanding of the political importance of these issues and their impact on the political life of the region, we should recall how “the 1875 Hercegovina revolt which triggered off a major collapse of Ottoman power in the Balkans, was provoked by harvest failure and the subsequent maltreatment of peasants by soldiers accompanying the tax farmers” (Mazower, 2000: 44). To sum up, nationalism and class struggle that had been emerging side by side ever since the French revolution, had brought forth the idea and concepts of emancipation through the action of the masses, the people.

Non-Muslims were considered second-class citizens under Ottoman rule. Although

tolerated and bearing some rights as ‘people of the Book’, “they were not allowed to ride horses, wear the color green or build churches above a certain height. Their word counted less than of a Muslim in Ottoman courts and they bore heavier taxes, supposedly for not performing military service” (Mazower, 2000: 57).

The Christian Orthodox remained as a central element to life in the Balkans during but specially after the Ottoman Empire, achieving contours of national identity and political significance, “which left no space for the kind of anti-church secularism which emerged in western Europe and Italy in the struggle against Catholicism” (Mazower, 2000: 85). Of course, the intervention of international actors, the Great Powers, took on a fundamental role in ending with the Ottoman power: “The First World War was the culmination of this entangling of Balkan liberation struggles with the European state system”, argues Mazower.

Bearing in mind what constituted the traditional societies of the Balkan countries, leaders of the newly formed states “had to create the Nation out of a peasant society that was imbued with the world-view of its Ottoman past” (Mazower, 2000: 96). Therefore, the involvement of the Great Powers in the internal affairs of the region’s new states comes as no surprise: they drew up their constitutions, changed borders and adjusted territories at diplomatic conferences, imposing “views on all parties through gunboat diplomacy and economic arm-twisting. (...) What thwarted their efforts was the strength of expansionism as a major focus for popular politics in the countries they had themselves created. Here lay the fundamental instability of the new situation in the Balkans” (2000: 101).

Territorial expansionism was the driving force for each of those new states but particularly true in the case of Romanians in the then Hungarian Transylvania and the Serbs in Croatia and parts of the Ottoman territory. The point is that, this expansionism, the willingness and capacity for irredentism, says Mazower, may have been overestimated by the Balkan countries themselves but, on the other hand, “the Great Powers failed to take them seriously enough. They had a low opinion of their new creations and often treated them as puppets” (2000: 102). People like the Serb Alexander Obrenovic<sup>156</sup> were looked upon as corrupt and easily controlled. The truth is that, by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Russia was looking to the Far East, the other European powers were expanding in Africa, and only Austria was focused on Southeastern Europe. However, defeat by Japan, in 1905, made Russia “return to Southeastern Europe, and the tension with Austria-Hungary turn sour. The point of conflict was the heart of what remained of Ottoman Europe – Macedonia” (2000: 103). At this time, “the traditional deference to dynastic authority was waning. The roads, railways and schools the Austrians were building in their new province, facilitated the spread of Serbian nationalism among the Bosnian Orthodoxy. And Serb nationalism was linked to

---

<sup>156</sup> Also known as Alexander I. King of Serbia from 1889 to 1903, the date of his assassination by Serbian officers. He was then only 27 years old.

the agrarian question” (Mazower, 2000: 107). The whole question was pretty much interlinked with a desire to transform the standards and conditions of living. “While in Croatia, Hungary and Serbia, the peasants were free, in Bosnia and Herzegovina four-fifths awaited emancipation and existed under an Ottoman feudal order preserved by the Austrians”.

The nineteenth century saw the emergence of a South Slav cooperation movement, partly due to what historians such as Mazower consider “Hungary's increasingly autocratic rule over Serbs and Croats” (ibid.), with the former invested in a self-portrait of them rescuing all “South Slavs from captivity” (2000: 107) and perceiving the annexation of Bosnia by Austria as an act against them.

Secret societies were disseminating both in Serbia and Bosnia, “among them Union of Death, the organization implicated in the Sarajevo shooting in 1914” (2000: 108). The assassination of Franz Ferdinand by the young Serb nationalist Gravelo Princip, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the Young Turk revolution that followed, with clear Turkish nationalism, “simply increased Christian enmity” (2000: 108).

The Serbian army resisted for two years but the Austrian army prevailed in 1916 and local forces had to “retreat to the sea and abandon the country to military occupation” (2000: 112). Bulgaria joined the coalition of the Great Powers and managed to take to battle the impressive number of “800,000 men” (ibid). But it was precisely the military advance of the Entente forces (including French, British, Greek, Serbian and Italian troops) in September of 1918 in Bulgaria that “led German military leaders to conclude that the war was lost” (2000: 113). But even after 1918, it was not the end of the war for the Southeastern Europe region. The Turkish-Greek war went on, with the Greeks moving forward to become an overwhelming majority in Macedonia and also in Thessaloniki, “with the resettlement of thousands of refugees from Asia Minor” (2000: 114), which had contained a Jewish majority until 1914.

Under the Treaty of Versailles, the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was created, “which will be better known by its later name of Yugoslavia”. After the collapse of the Habsburg Empire and under threat by Italy, the Croats could do no better than join their South Slav neighbors under the Serb King Karageorge’s dynasty. Mazower recalls that the “suspicions that what they were getting was not federalism but centralized rule from Belgrade and Greater Serbia were alive from the start” and argues that “1921 confirmed their worst fears: henceforth, Serb civil servants and army officers dominated the new Yugoslav state” (2000: 14).

Ivo Banac (1984: 140)<sup>157</sup>, in his *The National Question in Yugoslavia, Origins,*

---

<sup>157</sup> Cornell University Press.

*History, Politics*, considered that if “the unitarist idea represented one step toward a solution of a considerable problem of regionalism, it also stood as an ever-present danger to the full affirmation of Croat statehood, especially since unitarism was very attractive to the articulate urban strata. But unitarism, based as it was on the idea of Slavic reciprocity, could only be maintained when it was truly reciprocal”. And this was far from how the Croats experienced their situation. Banac explains that, “when the national question emerged in the new Yugoslav state, chiefly as a result of the dominant position of the Serbian ruling classes, the unitarist ideology lost most of its impact, and the individual South Slavic nations moved toward a final consolidation” (ibid).

In fact, the collapse of empires was not the driving force to achieving the peace some western liberals were hoping for; on the contrary, there was many border contestation issues to be dealt with, territorial claims, nationalism: “all the new states had ethnic minorities whose existence undermined their claims to rule in the name of the Nation” and their rivalries grew as ideologies “as fascism and communism took hold” (Mazower, 2000: 114-115). Minorities were never treated as equals in these lands, as it happened with the Serbs in what they used to call the “Southern regions” and in Croatia, Bosnia and Montenegro. This opened doors and windows to the renaissance of underground resistant movements, as in Croatia and Macedonia, eager to overthrow the Versailles Treaty “and aligned themselves with revisionist powers like fascist Italy” (2000: 122).

State modernization led to the centralization of power in the whole region. However, the minority groups, when urban and skilled, were necessary for fostering economic development and liberal state-building and “repression was often not so much the ultimate goal as an aspect of the modernization of the state” (2000: 122).

In 1941, Croatia was a nominally independent country but effectively functioning as puppet-state of the Nazi regime, ruled by an extreme nationalist party, the Ustase led by Ante Pavelic, established in the Axis-occupied parts of Yugoslavia. Clear racist measures were enacted by the government targeting minorities, such as banning “the use of the Cyrillic alphabet, persecuted Serbs and Jews, and set up a one-party state whose aim was to ‘work for the principle that the Croatian people alone will always rule in Croatia’” (Mazower, 2000:123). The most dramatic symbol of the regime was the Jasenovac camp, where “several hundred thousand” people were killed, mostly Serbs and Jews, giving a “huge boost to the emergence of the partisan resistance movement” (2000: 124). However, defeat of the Nazis did not end the ethnic civil war in Yugoslavia. “Fighting in Kosovo between Albanians and the Yugoslav partisans lasted for months, even years in some areas” (2000: 124). Serbs fled Kosovo, Germans were expelled from Vojvodina, Slav-speaking communities from the North of Greece: “by 1950, the ethnic composition of the Balkans had been drastically altered” (Mazower, 2000: 125), increasing ethnic homogeneity in all the Balkan states.

Mazower recalls that “in Yugoslavia, Tito attempted to solve the country’s deeply rooted national problems by substituting multi-national rule by a single dictatorial party”, with early regional ambitions of dominance over Albania, Bulgaria and Greece, but while “this dream ended with the Yugoslav break with Moscow in the summer of 1948, federalism remained the communist strategy for handling nationalities within Yugoslavia. ‘Brotherhood and unity’ may have not been a reality but it was something more than a slogan: even after the Tito-Stalin split, Moscow’s hegemony in Eastern Europe helped to ensure that minority issues and irredentism, while never entirely absent, would not disrupt relations between states in the way they had before 1940. But the tensions had not vanished, and would re-emerge when communism collapsed” (2000: 125).

The economic crisis would bring about the erosion of the strength of the federal government and “opened the way for nationalist struggles at the regional and republic level over economic resources and political power” (2000: 137). By that time, in the late 1980s, Yugoslavia had basically become a confederal state, and, following Raymond Detrez, one can assess how “in none of the federal units did ‘systematic discrimination’, ‘exploitation’, or ‘gross and systematic violation of constitutional rights’ took place. On the contrary, Yugoslavia was going through a radical process of democratization and liberalization, which significantly increased constitutional rights. The abolition of the one-party system, the creation of a free market economy, the first free elections, the establishment of free media, etc. all occurred by the end of the 1980s, at the very moment that claims for independence were raised in Slovenia and Croatia” (Coppieters, 2003: 131). This author concludes that “the rise of secessionist movements cannot be seen as a result of state repression, but their emergence had been made possible by democratization and liberalization. Even in Serbia, Milošević’s conservative and authoritarian regime could not prevent these developments. This means that there was, strictly speaking, no ‘just cause’ for secession” (ibid.). As Jack Snyder, professor at Columbia University, points out, “ethnically concentrated regions started to engage in a politics that sometimes is called ethnic outbeating”, with candidates to leadership trying to be “more pro-serbian than his Serbian rival”, doing that by “portraying a threat coming from a different ethnic group”<sup>158</sup>.

Even before Tito’s death in 1980, in both the leaderships in Serbia and Croatia, “nationalist currents emerged among party cadres. The Bosnian party, which had the most hardline leadership of any of the republics, became increasingly important in supporting the federal leadership against the centrifugal tendencies operating from the grassroots”. However, with the death of Tito, the federal leadership was weakened by the economic crisis and lacked success in “balancing the competing claims of different nationalities. With the rise of Serbian

---

<sup>158</sup> Interview with the author, New York, May 2015.

nationalism in the mid-1980s, the system began to break down” (2000: 139). Since the earliest years of his rule, Tito “made no secret of his determination to weaken Serbia, asserting that it was responsible for all the woes that had befallen pre-war Yugoslavia. More importantly, Tito's partisans had little support in Serbia, which was the center of the Mihailovich movement, and which had a history of hostility to tyrants” (Dragnich, 1995: 67). About the idea of a Serb-dominated Yugoslavia, Dragnich notes that “prior to the secessions, key positions in the Yugoslav government were held by non-Serbs: Prime Minister Ante Markovic and Foreign Minister Budmir Loncar were Croats; Minister of Defense and Supreme Commander General Kadijevic was the son of a Serbian-Croatian marriage; Deputy Commander of the Armed Forces, Stane Brovet, was a Slovene; and Chief of the Air Force, Zvonko Jurjevic, was also a Croat. While the army's officer corps was predominantly Serbian, the high command was 38percent Croatian and 33percent Serbian”. (1995: 111). The Yugoslav diversity was represented in the army, but as in the country itself, some nations or republics were better represented than others.

At the time of the Bosnian declaration of sovereignty, in October 1991, Kadijevic promised President Izetbegovic to do everything possible to prevent war from spreading to Bosnia-Herzegovina” (Woodward, 1995: 256). The promise was fulfilled until April 1992, when those who had managed to keep the peace during the Fall and Winter, such as the generals Nikola Uzelac in Banja Luka and Milutin Kukanjac in Sarajevo - both Serbs, by the way - lost power to other two high ranking Serb generals “seeking to escalate fighting (officers of Serbian ethnicity - Ratko Mladić and Momcilo Perisic - and of Muslim ethnicity - Colonel Vehbija Kadic, who then left to command the Bosnian territorial forces). The purge of the Titoists, or Partisan faction, of the YPA began only after Kadijevic's resignation [in January]: twenty generals in February 1992, thirty-eight in March” (ibid.).

The balance of powers between the state and the republic levels extended to the armed forces as well. While the Yugoslav People's Army, JNA in the original acronym, was a federal state institution “deployed with technologically advanced weaponry”, at the republic level, under their control, socialist Yugoslavia had “an all-people's civilian militia (the territorial defense forces, TDF), designed to present a systematically organized, prolonged, guerrilla resistance to any invader” (Woodward, 1995: 26), very much based on the doctrine and legacy of partisan resistance against Germans, Italians and others during World War II. TDF troops were naturally familiar with the territory where they were based and, by its nature and status, highly committed to defending their own homes. “No high school or university graduate could receive a diploma without passing the obligatory four-year course in pre-military training” and, after 1974, in the last years of Tito, “all adult citizens were required to spend time each year in the active reserves”, and, moreover, deeply involved in the social context, as “TDF units were organized at every workplace in the public sector, and local

authorities were obliged to maintain stockpiles of weapons and supplies” (Woodward, 1995: 26,27). When the wars started in Slovenia, and afterwards in Croatia and Bosnia, the TDF units were natural born armies for the republics and with ready to use weapons and equipment.

Regarding the economic constraints, it is worthwhile mentioning that all the Balkan states went through industrialization processes during the 1950s and, in a single generation, what had been primarily agrarian societies, “had made the leap to modern urban life” (Mazower, 2000: 134). There was a huge expansion in the cities. The population of Belgrade almost doubled between 1960 and 1991: from 585,000 to 1.1 million inhabitants, “Sarajevo more than doubled” (2000: 134). However, peasants retained their strongest identity features with religion very much included, bringing the village into the city: “religious sentiment was often stronger than communist atheism” (2000: 135). Rural life itself also changed because of economic development and urbanization: “new roads eradicated peasant isolation” (2000: 135).

Communist reformists wanted to build a modern economy, but “private enterprise was permitted only on a limited scale and the lack of management experience with competitive business hindered all efforts to modernize and streamline state firms” (2000: 136). Slovenia, with decades of non-confrontational relations with Serbia, had always been pivotal in the country’s stabilization, acting as “a brake on autonomist forces in Croatia (which periodically appeared, most recently in 1967-71) in the interests of political stability in the second Yugoslavia.” (Woodward, 1995: 63). In Serbia, Tito was criticized for the “purge of liberal reformers and economic managers who had responded to market opportunities to expand into other republics”. Criticism of the purge of liberals and the managerial stratum took on nationalistic tones in 1977, when the Blue Book against discrimination came out in Serbia. Intellectuals were now speaking out and expressing their discontent ever more openly and, by the mid-eighties, the nationalistic tone had already become exacerbated, far beyond the initially incipient “revolt among ethnic Albanians in the province of Kosovo. By 1983 members of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU) were meeting to analyze the ‘political and economic crisis’ and to write a platform - in draft by 1986 - defining Serbian national identity and interests” (Woodward, 1995: 71).

The generational changes in the party leadership gained in political significance: “By the time of the thirteenth party congress (June 25-28, 1986) 127 of the 165” members of the Central Committee were aged under 40. With Edvard Kardelj passing away in 1979 and Josip Broz Tito in 1980, some of those who had been the target of purges came back into political life. For instance, this was the case of Franjo Tudjman, the man who became father of an independent Croatia, had entered political life in the first nationalist movement of the late sixties and early seventies (1967-71), and wrote a dissertation which tried to produce a

reassessment of “the death toll of the Croatian fascist regime during World War II”<sup>159</sup>. (Woodward, 1995: 71).

Also in Croatia, the Catholic Church campaigned actively for the rehabilitation of Archbishop Stjepinac, charged as a traitor for collaborating with the Germans in the Second World War. The Ustace name became “an epithet for contemporary right-wing Croatian nationalists, who were usually assumed to have foreign support. Although Croatia's conservative reign maintained tighter wraps on political debate, there were local revivals of non-party cultural and religious groups, cases of blatant nationalism and gender intolerance in the press, and even acts of vicarious (largely youthful) violence against non-Croats” (Woodward, 1995: 75).

In Belgrade, Serbia, such historical reflections were also promoted by a popular writer, Dobrica Cosica, and his novels in the 1970s “chronicling the Serb losses but glory in World War I; in scholarly studies by Vladimir Dedijer, Kosta Cavoski, Vojislav Kostunica, and others that opened new archives on the pluralist alternatives and political purges of the immediate post-war period.” (Woodward, 1995: 75-76).

The increasing nationalism among intellectuals and urban elites in general, was accompanied by demonstrations in favour of the rights of Serbs in Kosovo, in rallies promoted by the Orthodox Church and Serb leaders in the southern province: “Both demographic growth, which had raised the proportion of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo from 67 percent to 78 percent between the 1961 and 1981 censuses, and the movement for a separate republic had increased the fears of Serbs living in the province. Tales spun of forced expulsion and even rape of Serbs and Montenegrins by rebellious Albanians became the basis for emotional appeals to a receptive parliament to prevent what was increasingly called genocide against Serbs” (Woodward, 1995: 75-76).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the early 1980s, groups emerged propagating pan-Islamic views, the most prominent being that headed by Alija Izetbegovic<sup>160</sup>, put on trial for “hostile and counterrevolutionary activity from positions of Muslim nationalism, sentenced in August 20, 1983, to fourteen years in prison”<sup>161</sup>. In fact, the Islamic Declaration had been

---

<sup>159</sup> For a debate about the atrocities committed during the Ustace regime and the Jasenovac death camp, see Ljubo Boban, "Notes and Comments: Jasenovac and the Manipulation of History," *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 4 (Fall 1990), pp. 580-92, the commentary by Robert Hayden, "Balancing Discussion of Jasenovac and the Manipulation of History," and Boban's reply (to which Hayden was not permitted a response by the journal's Croatian editor) in vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 207-17.

<sup>160</sup> Creating the first ethnic party in Bosnia, the SDA, the Democratic Action Party (a secular liberal wing of the party eventually broke off, and formed another party, MBO, under Adil Zulfikarpai), Alija Izetbegovic cannot be, for many observers, absolved from responsibility for the descent of Bosnia into war.

<sup>161</sup> Sarajevo Trial of Muslim Nationalists Ends," *TANJUG Domestic Service*, August 20, 1983, in *FBIS, East Europe*, August 22, 1983, p. I3.



written many years before, in 1970, but was used by the communist Yugoslav authorities for a political trial thirteen years later.

A constitutional commission was formed to “harmonize the differences” as was the expression deployed by the party’s nomenclature. Manufacturing a consensus was the goal and the report in 1985 yielded an eminently vague compromise: “The proposed constitutional amendments conformed with the principles of economic liberals aiming to reduce the power of the party and government. They also acknowledged the IMF requirement that the authority of central monetary institutions be increased and the ability of the federal administration to make effective decisions strengthened. At the same time, however, the report also reasserted the autonomy of the republics and of enterprises that had been established by the 1974 Constitution” (Woodward, 1995: 76). A kind of squaring of the circle.

The collective party presidency wanted both to prevent “too rapid change and the equal danger of too little reform. Emphasizing incrementalism, the party leadership experimented with new forms of checks and balances such as seating members alphabetically instead of by republic so they could no longer caucus by republic” (Woodward, 1995: 81).

The new leader of the Serbian Communist Party, Slobodan Milošević, adopted the rhetoric of the myth of Serb victimization: the honourable defeat in Kosovo in 1389, which ended the Serbian medieval empire and the beginning of the Ottoman occupation of the Balkans, as well as the victories with the Allies in both world wars that meant huge human losses but that had not brought Serbia a state of its own (the kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes after the 1914-18 conflict, and the socialist Yugoslavia after the 1939-45 war). Amidst rising nationalism, Milošević “capitalized on the widespread belief in the 1980s that Serbs and Montenegrins were being forced once again to flee their historic cradle. And he helped propagate the analysis of many Serbian intellectuals, that Serbia had been maltreated in Tito's Yugoslavia, that the federal state was constructed to divide and weaken Serbia and to prevent the Serb nation from having its own state” (Woodward, 1995: 92).

More than following any strategically articulated plans, the Slovene – Milan Kucan - and Serbian – Slobodan Milošević - leaders were reacting to specific events, “choosing tactics of consequence, but they were not necessarily thinking out the chain of those consequences or the logic of their daily steps. This is important in understanding the political dynamic, if not the responsibility” (Woodward, 1995: 94).

Milošević wanted to revoke the extensive degree of autonomy granted to the provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina by the 1974 Constitution and began the process of revising the republic’s constitution in January 1988. By October, the LCY central committee had “approved the Serbian parliament's revisions, reducing to provincial status what Serbia claimed was the de facto republican status of the two provinces” (Woodward, 1995: 94). While the majority in Serbia still remained in favour of a liberal, Europeanist, and pro-

Yugoslav option, the economic crisis had its effects on the urban and educated middle class and “Serb liberals could not long sustain an opposition alone. To protect their non-nationalist option or restrain rising militancy, they had to form alliances and gain support from liberals in other republics. At a minimum, this meant doing so in Slovenia and Croatia, where economic interests in Western-oriented liberal policies were most substantial. An ever-larger portion of liberals in those republics, however, was anti-federalist, increasingly nationalist, and unwilling to work with Serbs” (Woodward, 1995: 95).

In Slovenia, the JNA had started in Spring an offensive against the youth journal *Mladina*, an anti-establishment paper and at “a meeting of the federal parliamentary committee for national defense on June 16, three journalists (Janez Jansa, Ivan Borstner, and David Tasic) were placed under house arrest for revealing army secrets as part of a campaign against arms sales and charges of counterinsurgent activities by the JNA. At their subsequent military trial, little regard was shown for their civil rights, such as the right to be tried in the Slovene language. Their conviction to prison in the late fall instigated large protests in Slovenia that lasted into the spring of 1989” (Woodward, 1995: 95).

In December 1989, Milošević, leader of the party, elected President of Serbia by the republican parliament earlier in May, received the votes of over 85 percent in a popular referendum and, at that time, openly supported by Western banks and governments: “They supported him because he appeared to be an economic liberal (with excellent English), who might have greater authority to implement reforms (...). He was director of a major Belgrade bank in 1978-82 and an economic reformer even as Belgrade party boss in 1984-86. The policy proposals commissioned by the ‘Milošević Commission’ in May 1988 were written by liberal economists and could have been a leaf straight out of the IMF book” (Woodward, 1995: 107).

In Croatia, the first protests against the government came from Serbs living in the territory, in fact, mixed population “historically contested” lands (Woodward, 1995: 108). The Serbs in the *Krajina* (border) region, a name given as it once represented the borderland between the Habsburg and the Ottoman empires, “considered this their historical home but also had a long tradition of bearing arms to defend those homesteads, which they were given in exchange for military service to defend Croatia and the Habsburg empire”. Pursuing the same right of self-determination that had been conceded to the Croats, since “their petitions fell on deaf ears, they began to demand local autonomy” (Woodward, 1995: 108). The political theorist Vladimir Gligorov addressed the issue with a question that became famous in the region: “Why should I be a minority in your state when you can be a minority in

mine?”<sup>162</sup> If it only could possible to believe in politicians’ words, such as Hashim Thaçi, when in an interview in Pristina in 2000, he told this autor: “I do not make distinctions between citizens of Kosovo, majority and minority. I’m worried with all the violence aimed at all citizens of Kosovo and we condemn all the forms of violence against all citizens of Kosovo” (Alexandre, 2002: 142).

Woodward argues, in a line of thought this author embraces, that despite the economic, political and social crisis in Yugoslavia of the late 1980s, “there was also still room for major actors to pull back from confrontation, for political groups to emerge with an outcome other than militant nationalism, and for political management to divert the momentum of incompatible national interests and economic reform into a peaceful compromise and genuine political reform” (Woodward, 1995: 112-113). However, the lack of political will to overcome the tensions, was becoming increasingly evident.

When Milošević emerged as party leader in Serbia, he “began to reassert Serb power in Kosovo and Vojvodina”, and as Slovenia and Croatia broke away it became clear that he was fighting not for Yugoslavia but rather for the creation of a Greater Serbia “which would allow Serb minorities in Croatia and Bosnia to remain part of the same overall political community as Serbs in Serbia and Montenegro” (2000: 140).

When only the Slovenian and the Croatian elections had been held, with the first phase of the economic reforms implemented, an authentic shock therapy program, the federal government led by Ante Markovic achieved some successes. Inflation was rapidly brought down from an “annual rate in 1989 of 2,714 percent (with a rate of more than 50 percent in December alone), it went to zero in May 1990”.

However, in the second semester, “prices accelerated sharply, exports fell, the currency became overvalued, and the policy of real interest rates (at 23.4 percent) and heavy taxation led to a massive wave of company bankruptcies. By December, 8,608 enterprises employing 3.2 million persons, in a work force of approximately 6 million at the time, were in serious trouble” (Woodward, 1995: 128-129). Moreover, the efforts at budgetary containment carried out at the federal level, were not followed by the republics; indeed, the contrary happened. Each one “ignored the monetary restrictions of Markovic's stabilization program in order to win votes” (Woodward, 1995: 128-129), promising higher wages, pensions, and even the increase of governmental salaries.

The following spring would be crucial in the escalating disintegration of Yugoslavia, with declarations of sovereignty by republics and uncertainty about whether the federal authority still persisted over the federal army. The collective state presidency was

---

<sup>162</sup> Vladimir Gligorov, "Is What's Left Right? (The Yugoslav Heritage)," in Janós Matyás Kovacs, ed., *Transition to Capitalism? The Communist Legacy in Eastern Europe* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1994), pp. 147-72.

increasingly representing the interests of individual republics rather than the country, that was then divided into three factions: “between independence-oriented confederalists (Slovenia, Croatia, and Kosovo Albanians); those who wanted to retain Yugoslavia but with an even more reduced common state and unclearly specified notions of state sovereignty to its republics (Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina); and those who wanted to retain a united federation (Serbia, Montenegro, and the army)” (Woodward, 1995: 140).

Students and pro-democracy activists, among others, came out onto the streets in Belgrade on March 9<sup>th</sup>, rallying against Slobodan Milošević’s monopoly control of TV and newspapers. Jovic, the Serbian representative to the federal state presidency, “called on the army to interpose troops between the crowds and police to protect civil order in Serbia” (Woodward, 1995: 140). The army eventually intervened because “the police reaction was so disproportionate that the protest turned violent, eventually lasting four days, with two dead and about ninety wounded” (ibid.).

Four days later, good news for the Slovene and Croat processes of independence arrived from the European Parliament. MEPs had approved a resolution, declaring that “the constituent republics and autonomous provinces of Yugoslavia must have the right freely to determine their own future in a peaceful and democratic manner and on the basis of recognized international and internal borders”<sup>163</sup> (Woodward, 1995: 158-159).

When the EP arrived at its understanding of the Helsinki Accords principles, and its article 3 about the inviolability of frontiers, as applicable to internal borders - as was the case with the republic’s borders within the federal state of Yugoslavia -, it took “a momentous decision” (Woodward, 1995: 448). In *Balkan Tragedy*, this author states that “while most European governments continued to support the federal government and to insist that the Yugoslavs “stay together, the apparently uncontroversial nature of this declaration, as if fully in line with CSCE principles, demonstrates how far Slovenia and Croatia had influenced European opinion and how little chance there was that alternatives to republican sovereignty would be heard.” (Woodward, 1995: 158-9).

The pressure on Belgrade and Milošević’s Serbia was increasing and the Nickles Amendment<sup>164</sup>, authored by Senator Don Nickles, Republican of Oklahoma, and allegedly

---

<sup>163</sup> European Parliament (EP) resolution on Yugoslavia, clause 8, cited by James Gow, *Survival*, Vol. 33 (July/August 1991).

<sup>164</sup> In Woodward, (1995: 458). The “Nickles Amendment, a vehicle ‘to penalize the government of the Serbian Republic in particular and Yugoslavia in general for the repression of ethnic Albanians in the Kosovo region’ said that economic aid must be halted ‘if it is determined that there is a pattern of systematic gross violations of human rights in Yugoslavia,’ to be certified by the Secretary of State. The Zagreb daily *Vjesnik* quoted a New York Times story on the suspension of aid that ascribed the ‘main driving force behind the moves’ to ‘Senator Bob Dole.’ See ‘Daily Accuses U.S. of Political Punishment’, *TANJUG*, May 19, 1991, in *FBIS, East Europe*, May 22, 1991, p. 40”. See also <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/05/22/world/bush-tells-belgrade-that-us-may-consider-restoring-aid.html>. Published on 22.05.1991; accessed on 09.07.2016.

campaigning behind the stage by US Senator Bob Dole, threatened to cut off economic aid by May 5 if relations between Serbia and the Albanian population of Kosovo did not improve, was invoked only weeks before the European Community took the opposite track. EC president Jacques Delors and the prime minister of Luxembourg, Jacques Santer, visited Belgrade on May 29th and made a commitment to the territorial integrity and international borders of Yugoslavia, reinforcing the idea that the Yugoslav-EC association agreement was “contingent on the country remaining united” (Woodward, 1995: 160).

The EC wanted the Yugoslavs to implement political reforms: a market oriented economy, democratization of the system (which, eventually, as the situation evolved in the country, only benefited the nationalist forces in each individual republic), dialogue towards a constitutional settlement, “a respect for minority rights (which was now largely outside federal competence), and the seating of Stjepan Mesic as presiding chair of the collective presidency”. The ‘offer’ “was on condition that Yugoslavia remain united, a single state” (Woodward, 1995: 160). However, on December 5, 1991, at a joint session of the houses in the Croatian Parliament, Mesic resigned from his federal functions saying that “the Parliament had, on October 8, 1991, adopted the decision on cessation of state and legal connections on the basis of which the Croatia, together with other republics and regions, formed the former SFRY, thereby denying the legitimacy and legality for any bodies of the former SFRY.” (Mesic, 2004: 415). In *Broken Bonds*, Lenard J. Cohen (1995: 228) quotes Stipe Mesic as having said: “I have fulfilled my duty: Yugoslavia no longer exists”, something which the former Croatian president denies.

At this point, the role of international actors cannot be excluded, as well as the respective religious hierarchies and the influential diasporas (especially in the Croatian case) as they all “served to escalate rather than moderate the pace of political disintegration in Yugoslavia”. By October 1990, Slovenia and Croatia had begun “seeking explicit support in the West for their sovereignty, with some success”. The tensions in Kosovo, as well as in the Croatian Krajina and Slavonia regions “brought U.S. criticisms of Milošević and unspecified warnings to the army not to engage in the internal conflict” and, by March 1991, Western powers had begun taking sides and “to intervene directly, but not as neutral mediators” (Woodward, 1995: 145).

There has been long debate about the role of Germany at this point in the Yugoslav crisis. Despite warnings that “without a comprehensive political settlement for the whole of Yugoslavia, the tens of thousands of dead, hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons, and massive destruction of many villages and towns in Croatia would seem a picnic beside a war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl persuaded his colleagues in the European Community on December 15-16, 1991, to recognize Slovenian and Croatian independence within the month”. By internationalizing the war, through

granting recognition, it would be easier to “deter further Serbian aggression (in their view, the cause of the war) and thus bring a quick end to the fighting” (Woodward, 1995: 146-147). On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, the US Secretary of State, James Baker, would apply the same argument to convince Western allies to recognise the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 1992. A major blow to the hopes of survival of Yugoslavia stemmed from the acceptance by Western powers of the nationalist definitions of the conflict “undermining or ignoring the forces working against radical nationalists, and acting in ways that fulfilled the expectations and reinforced the suspicions of nationalist extremists”. Susan L. Woodward, despite her criticism of the western role in the disintegration of Yugoslavia, believes “this was no concerted policy. Western powers responded piecemeal, in terms of either domestic political calculations and pressures or national interests in their foreign relations with countries they considered significant. The longer the fighting went on, the more involved they became, but they never stopped to alter their original reluctance, reduce their contradictory messages, recognize the role they were playing in the conflict itself, or formulate a policy” (Woodward, 1995: 147).

Would this all have been different were Serbia a mostly Catholic country or, on the other hand, Croatia an orthodox country? The truth is that, as with German political intervention pressuring the other EC members towards recognition, the Vatican also openly campaigned for the independence of both Croatia and Slovenia, “predominantly Roman Catholic republics, with decisive influence through episcopal conferences on the Bavarian wing of the ruling German party, the CSU, and hence on Kohl's CDU” (Woodward, 1995: 149). Moreover, Croatia, like Poland, was a good market to place German exports, supply of industrial components and workforce as well. Germany could thus solidify its leading position within the EU and this was a factor of major importance as well.

In this process, the influential newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, also played its role since it “was particularly sympathetic to the Croatian prospect of independence, and waged a campaign against Slobodan Milošević and Serbian nationalism that had a major role in shaping German opinion about the conflict” (ibid).

This approach was far from being countered by the American side because some of the most senior US officials had previous knowledge of, and particular interests in, the complexity of Yugoslavia. As Woodward recalls, “Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger had been ambassador to Yugoslavia in 1977-81 (and second secretary in Belgrade, 1962-65); and the director of the National Security Council, Brent Scowcroft, had been assistant attaché at the U.S. embassy in Belgrade in 1959-61, and written his doctoral dissertation on the country. If anything, Eagleburger and Scowcroft were inclined to keep some distance from the Yugoslav imbroglio because questions about their private business ventures with Yugoslavia - conducted in the period between their diplomatic careers and their

return to governmental service - had already threatened public embarrassment over possible conflicts of interest” (1995: 155).

In the aforementioned dissertation thesis, submitted to Columbia University, about the US Congress voting on financial aid both to Yugoslavia and Spain in 1967, entitled “Congress and Foreign Policy: an Examination of Congressional Attitudes Toward the Foreign Aid Programs to Spain and Yugoslavia”, Scowcroft concludes by giving an account of the dissensions that Yugoslavia had already by then “made” in US foreign policy: “The resignation of George Kennan, Ambassador to Yugoslavia and one of the ablest officers in the Foreign Service, in protest at the rigidities introduced into United States foreign policy by congressional behaviour, is testimony of the problems and frustrations this divergence of outlook entails” (Scowcroft, 1967: 343).

The US government approach was effectively that if Yugoslavia did have to break up, it would be better to “wait until the different groups had resolved their differences through political settlements, and only then would the question of recognition be considered” (Dragnich, 1995: 73). Secretary of State James Baker “warned the Slovene and Croat presidents that if they seceded unilaterally there would be civil war. Similarly, Lawrence Eagleburger revealed in August 1992 that he had also warned that in case of unilateral acts of independence, there would be 'civil war of mass proportions'.”

Alex N. Dragnich (1995: 76) argues that the event that triggered Secretary Baker going to the UN to ask for sanctions against Yugoslavia (i.e. Serbia and Montenegro) was the “killing of a number of Sarajevo residents who were lined up in front of a bakery to buy bread, for which Serb gunners were blamed. Subsequently, it was determined that the victims were killed by anti-personnel mines laid by anti-Serb elements. Some observers had introduced doubts at the time because of the fact that TV cameras were on hand to record the tragic event and because none of the victims had wounds above the waist”.

At a European Community meeting in Maastricht in December 1991, Hans Dietrich Genscher, when the vote to recognize Slovenia and Croatia's independence was eight to four against, declared that the German delegation “would not leave the table before they got unanimous support for recognition” (Dragnich, 1995: 73). At 4 a.m. he got what he wanted. The way the recognition of independence of the two richest Yugoslav republics and its borders was dealt with by the European Community was, in a certain way, instrumental to enabling Slobodan Milošević to “pose as the only defender of Serbian interests, and declare that his answer to the EC would be to recognize as separate nations the Serb-inhabited areas of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina” (ibid).

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, was the European Community aware of the economic constraints facing the Yugoslav republics and the solutions put forward by their nationalistic leaderships? The evidence given by the action taken by the EC, or rather the lack

of it, shows great shortcomings in the knowledge about the local social, economic and political circumstances. Opening the front doors to independence and subsequent wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the EC contributed to the erosion and marginalisation of the “moderates, non-nationalists, (...) the federal government, and the majority of the population caught in an ethnically complex situation without any representation or say in the matter” (Woodward, 1995: 169).

British Prime Minister John Major said in 1993 that the conflict in Bosnia “was a product of impersonal and inevitable forces beyond anyone’s control”<sup>165</sup>. For centuries, argues Mazower, “life in the Balkans was no more violent than elsewhere; indeed, the Ottoman Empire was able better than most to accommodate a variety of languages and religions” (2000: 143, 144). Ethnic cleansing, “was not the spontaneous eruption of primeval hatreds but the deliberate use of organized violence against civilians by paramilitary squads and army units: it represented the extreme force required by nationalists to break apart a society which was otherwise capable of ignoring the mundane fractures of class and ethnicity” (2000: 144). Moreover, Balkan states did not kill or incarcerate more of their citizens than other nations: “compared with the eleven million criminal suspects and two million prisoners in the United States, and the huge prison population in Russia, contemporary southeastern Europe looks rather humane” (2000: 148). In Mazower’s opinion, “writing off Balkan violence as primeval and unmodern has become one way for the West to keep the desired distance from it”. Arguing that ethnic cleansing is not at all a phenomenon specific to the Balkans, this author suggests that “the roots of its ferocity lie not in the Balkans mentalities but in the nature of a civil war waged with the technological resources of the modern era” (2000: 150). She acknowledges the fact that “these wars are a form of aggression is indisputable. But the focus on aggression diverts attention from its immediate cause – the breakup of a country and the contest over the location of new frontiers – and from the role that the United States and European powers together played in that process in 1990-2” (Woodward, 1995: 14).

To Susan L. Woodward, despite several and substantial warnings of the dangerous consequences, “western governments did not intervene to alter the roles and perceptions that were feeding the escalating cycle of disintegration and violence; instead, they contributed substantially to the drama”. They kept insisting on the same stereotyping and common sense, such as “that the Yugoslavs were not like them, that such atrocities always characterized the troublesome region and its penchant for war and balkanization, that more than anything else the violence demonstrated the difference between *them* and *us*”. Misunderstanding the relevance of the conflict to their own collective security, they saw it as if it was a simple and

---

<sup>165</sup> Cited in Mazower (2000: 143).



unpleasant “reminder of old ethnic and religious conflicts that modern Europe had left behind, rather than as part of their own national competition to redefine Europe and respond to the end of the cold war.” (1995: 20)

The collapse of the country did not happen from day to night and the complexity it involved was in line with the complexity of the system itself, the object of pressures due to social and generational transformations during the 1970s and the 1980s. Nevertheless, besides the relevance of the endemic factors, one should not dissociate the Yugoslav breakup from the strategic and economic international environment. The attempt, led largely by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), of rescuing the international monetary system in the 1970s through “massive global lending of recycled petrodollars, came to a halt after 1979. Banks retreated. The interest rate on the U.S. dollar skyrocketed, and with it the foreign debt of all countries holding debt in those dollars. The Western recession that started in 1975 intensified into a worldwide economic depression in the 1980s” (Woodward, 1995: 47).

Europe was hedging its bets on the most likely outcome of the process: “although the EC's Brussels draft treaty convention - so called because it was written by EC civil servants in Brussels - was impressive in its construction of compromises that seemed to offer a hope of long-term stability, it contained provisions that were at the core of radical nationalism in the three dominant republics” (ibid): it included a “special status of autonomy” for Kosovo Albanians but this had been at the core of problems regarding the 1974 Constitution and political fighting over its revoking had been at the centre of Milošević ascent to power. “The idea of special status for all territorially concentrated minorities” was also rejected by the Croatian government, more interested in getting foreign aid to recapture lost territory, as well as the Krajina Serb leadership, “who by then controlled almost one-fourth of Croatian territory and had rejected President Tudjman's offer of local self-government to Serbs around Knin on July 31” (Woodward, 1995: 181). Serbia itself argued that the autonomy of its provinces was an internal affair and thus should not be the object of international interference.

Ten days after the Vatican, Germany recognized the independence of Slovenia and Croatia on December 23, which had a fundamental effect, and “was overwhelmingly a response to domestic pressures, however, and had little to do with the Yugoslav conflict. Public sympathies in Germany were already strong for Slovenia and Croatia by the spring of 1991 for many reasons: the leanings of major mass media, particularly newspapers, the public relations campaigns of the Slovenes and Croats that portrayed their actions as a ‘fight for freedom and democracy,’ the active propaganda from the Croatian émigré and *gastarbeiter* community and the Catholic Church (particularly in its political stronghold of Bavaria and its wing of the governing party, the Christian Social Union [CSU], but influenced by a Vatican-led campaign beginning several years earlier), and the public's greater familiarity with Slovenia and Croatia through tourism” (Woodward, 1995: 184-5).

Woodward (1995: 469) claims that although more numerous in Germany than the Croats, the Serbs were less organized and politically mobilised. There was no clear and evident support for Milošević's policies among them, while their Croatian counterparts "were well-organized on national lines since the early 1960s, in part to ensure cultural continuity with Croatia and to provide education for their children (funded in part by the Croatian government), and actively supported independence and Tudjman".

In Bosnia, the principle of national self-determination could hardly be realized through territorial sovereignty due to significant parts of the population being "intermixed in marriages, neighbourhoods, and towns when it came to ethno-national identities" (Woodward, 1995: 192). Tensions between ethnic communities had risen during the electoral campaign preceding the November 1990 elections "because nationalist political leaders began to mobilize support along communal lines. The leaders of Serbia and Croatia were already working on a secret agreement to divide Bosnia between them should the country fall apart. By March 1991, the issue of partitioning Bosnia had even been discussed by the federal presidency" (Woodward, 1995: 192-3).

With the deterioration of the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in early 1992, the priority of the EC negotiators – under the Portuguese presidency – was to hinder war breaking out in the most ethnically mixed republic of collapsing Yugoslavia. A week before the referendum on independence called for by Muslim Bosnians, with the Serbs (comprising more than one third of the country's population rejecting participation), EC mediator Ambassador José Cutileiro negotiated separately with the three party leaderships (Muslims, now Bosniaks; Serbs and Croats). "The stated objective was to gain the commitment of the three party leaderships to existing Bosnian borders, without making any commitment to Bosnian sovereignty at the time. By March 18, the three party delegations, meeting in Lisbon, had agreed on and signed a document outlining the political principles of a republic composed of three constituent nations, each with the right to self-determination, and the regional cantonization of its territory along ethno-national lines (laid out in a compromise map proposed by the EC). At the same time, apparently influenced by the appeals for recognition from Izetbegovic's foreign minister, Haris Silajdzic, Secretary of State Baker was intensifying his pressure on the European capitals" (Woodward, 1995: 196-7).

Dragnich (1995: 74-75) acknowledges the positive results that were likely to derive from the EC Cutileiro Plan and the setback that followed the Lisbon meeting: "Soon after returning to Sarajevo, however, the Muslim president, Izetbegovic, reneged. The available evidence indicates that it was the United States that advised him to go back on his commitment, while the Europeans had reservations". Dragnich furthermore claims, even while accepting the non-availability of any clear confirmation, that American President Bush and State Secretary Baker, eager to achieve peace, "were being pressured by Saudi Arabia to

recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina”, stressing that the Bosnian Muslim leaders in Sarajevo “were moderates, the type of Muslim that America was relying upon in the Middle East”. (1995: 76).

However, in fact, Muslim leader Alija Izetbegovic had authored a document that circulated secretly during the Tito era (...), the *Islamic Declaration*, in which he advocated for the “renewal of Islamic religious thought and the creation of a united Islamic community from Morocco to Indonesia” (1995: 78), a caliphate. The first president of the independent Bosnia publicly stated that the “upbringing of the people, and particularly means of mass influence – the press, radio, television and film – should be in the hands of people whose Islamic moral and intellectual authority is indisputable” (ibid) and that there could be “neither peace nor co-existence between the Islamic religion and non-Islamic social and political institutions” (1995: 108). Nevertheless, the most common idea conveyed by the western media during the Bosnian civil war was that of a Muslim leadership eager to live in peace and harmony in a multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In his text about “the West's mismanagement” of the Yugoslav crisis, and after acknowledging atrocities committed by all three sides, “Serbian shelling of Sarajevo with its helpless civilian population has been the most obvious, but the Croatian and Muslim shelling of smaller cities has been equally repugnant, if on a smaller scale” (1995: 82), Dragnich concludes: “without any attempt to exculpate Serbia's Milošević for his contribution to the Yugoslav tragedy, it certainly appears that the West's determination to lay sole blame on him is but a lame effort to justify a one-sided policy. At the same time, any objective effort to assign responsibility for the Yugoslav civil war and its consequences must include all Yugoslav leaders – Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Muslims<sup>166</sup>, Macedonians and Albanians – as well as the media in the West, which battled unashamedly to make foreign policy but with no corresponding responsibility” (Dragnich, 1995: 83).

Even if Western analysts, journalists, diplomats and politicians were misled into considering the Balkans' politicians of war as persons capable of nothing but thinking and acting across ethnic lines, the truth remains that they were very often thinking strategically and their military commands were pursuing territory according to that strategy. Was Vukovar important for Croatian Serbs because many of them were born and lived there? Was Vukovar important for the Croatian authorities just because the attack on the city meant a violation of the integral territorial sovereignty of the newly recognized state? Or, as Woodward maintains (1995: 269), we cannot dissociate the escalation of the conflict in Vukovar with the fact that the city was a natural river port for the Sava-Danube basin, which attributes a geopolitical significance to the fight for the city, with “the Danube River as an international waterway for

---

<sup>166</sup> Dragnich refers to them either as Muslim Bosnians or Bosniaks.

commerce and defence in the continental expansion of European trade with the end of the cold war". Additionally, in the case of western Herzegovina, historical and ethnic claims by Croatia should lead us to undervalue the strategic importance of the region: "as an essential cordon protecting the Dalmatian coast tourist trade and its thin, long, vulnerable line of north-south communications of an independent state of Croatia" (ibid).

As the war endured, the armies in conflict were increasingly looking for "routes, defensible corridors, and contiguous territories". The international negotiators kept insisting on the ethnic quotas of territory, pursuing a just solution "including their aim of not 'rewarding aggression.' Neither had much resonance in the behaviour of military forces, whose leaders were thinking in strategic terms of independent survival and natural lines of defence and stable borders." (Woodward, 1995: 269).

Susan L. Woodward puts forward evidence of this theory by pointing to how Ratko Mladić's forces targeted cities that were demographically and economically important, "because of their military assets (airfields, oil depots, hydroelectric power plants, armaments factories, communication lines for supplies)" (Woodward, 1995: 269-270). Examples of these attacks include: the airfield at Banja Luka, the fuel depot at Bosanski Brod, the Marshal Tito Air Force School in Mostar and the city's position on the Neretva River, "the hydroelectric plant at Jajce and along the Neretva valley, the coastal shipbuilding industry (with its large military component), and the gunpowder, rocket fuel, and explosives plant at Vitez were Croatian targets; and the industrial heartland of central Bosnia, where most defense plants were located, over which Croat and Muslim forces battled through most of winter-spring 1993" (Woodward, 1995: 493).

Woodward argues that in early 1992, the twelve European countries under the Lisbon presidency "did nothing on Bosnia during January and February, losing an invaluable opportunity for political negotiations" (Woodward, 1995: 279).

The author of this dissertation confronted the then chief EC negotiator with Woodward's approach. Ambassador José Cutileiro<sup>167</sup> answered that Woodward may be accurate in her thinking "but just referring to January. Portugal took over the Presidency that month but Lord Carrington's first visit to Sarajevo was only on February 2. I went there with him, and came back there without him a few days later, to preside over the first meetings on constitutional arrangements. In Sarajevo and in Lisbon we had several meetings with the parties and, by March 17, we reached an agreement from the three" – Muslims, Croats and Serbs. So, who brought down the Cutileiro Plan? The renowned Portuguese diplomat assures that "later, Alija Izetbegovic told other people that he was going to reject it, while at the same time he was telling me that he was keeping committed to accepting it". This tergiversating

---

<sup>167</sup> By email sent on 29 May 2015 to this author.

and ambiguous attitude “lasted until June, helped by the Americans. Ralph Johnson, from the State Department, who was in Sarajevo in early April, told Izetbegovic not to accept a tripartite solution, but with more parties, instead”.

The game of interest surrounding the negotiations (developments in the situation on the ground, US pressure, individual – and not national – interests) produced this turning back; and, a week after the meetings in Lisbon, the Muslim leadership, Alija Izetbegovic, reversed his position that was then followed by the Croat Bosnian leadership, Mate Boban, in a drive to get more territory than hitherto allocated. On April 6<sup>th</sup>, Izetbegovic launched the general mobilization of his TDF on the grounds of fears over what was called “a Serbian onslaught”. At a NATO meeting in its Brussels headquarters, the American Secretary of State, James Baker, “succeeded, persuading his Western allies to recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina as a sovereign state” (Woodward, 1995: 196-7). This took place exactly 51 years after the German bombardment of Belgrade that initiated World War II in the territory of Yugoslavia. A country that did not even exist anymore, a “highly diversified multinational state” as Banac (1984: 414) puts it but whose nationalisms or “multinationalisms could not promote constitutionalism while the national ideologies of the principal group<sup>168</sup>, encouraged the notion that domination through assimilation was imminent” (ibid).

EC-UN led negotiations in Geneva after the London Conference in August 1992 provided for drafting a constitution that set out political and jurisdictional competences, as well as self-governance rights to all three parties alongside a territorial base within Bosnia. This time, in January 1993, it was Radovan Karadžić, the Serbian Democratic party (SDS) leader in Bosnia, who refused to sign the constitutional principles of the Vance-Owen peace plan. With the aim of legitimizing the sovereignty of Bosnian Serbs within Bosnia, he wanted a revision of the constitutional preamble so that it declared “Bosnia-Herzegovina a state of three constituent nations, each with the right to self-determination” (Woodward, 1995: 211).

The events described in this section – the systemic constraints of the Yugoslav politics, the economic situation, the role of the international players, the descent into war, the independence processes and the wars and their aftermaths - are important to a better understanding of the current situation prevailing in each of the case countries studied as well as acknowledging the importance of the main political objective of the Western Balkans in the current decade. In the next section of this chapter, we approach how the goal of European integration represents a common objective to the countries in the region.

---

<sup>168</sup> The author refers to the Serbs.

### 3.3. European integration as a common goal

Political theorists tend to see European Union and European integration “as a laboratory for exploring how far the nation state, and the forms of domestic and international politics to which it gave rise, has been affected by the various processes associated with globalization” (quoted in Dryzek, 2006: 245). The source of these last lines, Richard Bellamy, metaphorical *winifies* the institutional relationship between supranational organizations and their member nation-states: “the new bottles of supranational institutions are filled with the old wine of nation-state politics”. However, the process of “intense inter-state and inter-citizen cooperation is producing some novel blends”. Characterized as an “intergovernmental organization of an advanced kind, a nascent federation of states and a new form of post-national, post-state entity”, the EU’s true novelty “may lie in mixing elements of all of these, or it may be destined to collapse into one or other of them” (Dryzek, 2006: 257).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the one hand, there are increasing demands for constitutional reforms on the part of the FBiH, questioning the Dayton Peace Accords framework; on the other hand, some of the decisions taken by Republika Srpska (RS) in the 2010s may be understood as steps towards broader autonomy or even secession.

In Croatia, challenges emerge from the country's recent accession to the EU, specifically minority rights and their integration into the country’s educational system, and coexisting employment with competitiveness as the major requirement facing the newest EU Member State on the economic front.

In Serbia, there are the ongoing negotiations with Kosovo and their respective influence on the EU accession talks. This, therefore, constitutes a demanding moment with major influence over both the three countries and the regional political, economic and social environment, in particular in Kosovo itself, but also in Montenegro and Macedonia (FYROM<sup>169</sup>). Stability in the Western Balkans extends far beyond a mere regional problem and amounts to a major European challenge in order to accomplish another wave of enlargement and prevent violent disruption as happened in the 1990s.

Croatia was the second former Yugoslav republic to join NATO and also the second to be invited to join the European Union, after Slovenia. Having declared independence in 1991, Croatia had to go through four years of ethnic civil war, with Croatian Serbs, helped by the JNA, the Yugoslav federal army, controlled by Slobodan Milošević in Belgrade after late 1991. However, in Zagreb, there was also a nationalist and authoritarian leader, Franjo Tuđman, a former communist who paved the way for the country’s independence and garnered international support for the new state’s sovereignty.

---

<sup>169</sup> FYROM – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The death of Tudjman in 1999 alongside public concerns about rising corruption among politicians in the ruling party (HDZ)<sup>170</sup>, the Croatian Democratic Union, a nationalist party, provided the conditions for a political shift in the Croatian political party landscape. Stjepan Mesic, from the Croatian People's Party (HNS)<sup>171</sup> was elected president and the Social Democratic Party (SDP)<sup>172</sup> won the parliamentary elections. Its leader, Ivica Racan, was correspondingly named Prime Minister. The country began a process of deep political and economic transformation to meet the criteria established in Copenhagen<sup>173</sup> for joining the European Union.

On November 24<sup>th</sup> 2000, the Association and Stabilization Agreement was formalized in Zagreb<sup>174</sup>. The HDZ came back into power but had by then already changed its own approach towards European integration as well as its notion of statehood. The Accession Treaty was signed on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2001<sup>175</sup>. Croatia's commitment to reforms in its administration, rational public spending, a dynamic private sector, changes in the judicial system and a body of laws that eased investment gradually transformed the country into a rather business friendly environment. The communication and transport infrastructures were repaired and the tourism industry achieved its best results ever in 2012<sup>176</sup>. This process was, however, far from easy, especially taking into account the period the EU was itself going through: "Croatia was the first country to join the EU amidst the global and European economic crisis and continued Eurozone recession. A persistently depressed labour market and Croatia's own internal recession led to lower welfare, incomes, and financial security of Croatian citizens even beyond accession" (Kmezić, 2015: 22).

Nevertheless, some Croatian businesses and companies were going through regional and global expansion with young entrepreneurs playing an important role against the backdrop of a young and vibrant civil society<sup>177</sup>. In a report published in June 2013, based on a research study on the role of Croatian CSOs in the EU accession process, Irena Đokic and Marijana Sumpor conclude that "the most common mode of participation was through active

---

<sup>170</sup> Hrvatska demokratska zajednica.

<sup>171</sup> Hrvatska narodna stranka – liberalni demokrati, (HNS) is a liberal democrat political party in Croatia.

<sup>172</sup> Socijaldemokratska partija, SDP, is the largest centre-left political party in Croatia.

<sup>173</sup> The Copenhagen criteria are the rules defining whether a country is eligible to join the European Union with key requirements including democratic governance, human rights, rule of law and a functioning market economy. These membership criteria were laid down at the June 1993 European Council in Copenhagen, Denmark.

<sup>174</sup> The author covered this political event to RDP-Antena1, in Zagreb.

<sup>175</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/pt/document.html?reference=EXPO\\_IDA\(2015\)534999](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/pt/document.html?reference=EXPO_IDA(2015)534999). The Western Balkans and EU Enlargement: Lessons learned, ways forward and prospects ahead. Paper requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs. Author: Marko Kmezić, Senior Researcher, Centre for Southeast European Studies, University of Graz, Austria.

<sup>176</sup> Available from <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-2202585/Croatia-set-record-best-year-tourism-history.html>. Accessed on 28.12.2014.

<sup>177</sup> NGOs Gong (<http://gong.hr/en/>) and Documenta (<http://humanrightshouse.org/Articles/9439.html>) are important examples.

and continuous engagement in preparation and/or implementation of EU projects (32percent of respondents)” (Đokic, 2013: 3).

The EU accession process generated a momentum that civil society organizations proved able to leverage: this “created an additional incentive for stronger activation of civil society in the policy formation process. As stressed in TACSO’s needs assessment report (2011)<sup>178</sup>, “Croatia has established an innovative and comprehensive set of institutions for mediating relations between the government and civil society and supporting its development” (Đokic, 2013: 9). However, the country is still coping with the aftermath of severe deindustrialization that followed the fall of communism and the breakup of Yugoslavia, as well as the loss of the Yugoslav common market. Ethnic minority rights remains a demanding issue for the Croatian authorities as incidents continue to take place<sup>179</sup> although on a lesser scale than ten years ago. Human rights focusing on tolerance towards ethnic, religious or sexual diversity will still very likely dominate Croatia’s civil society discourse in the years to come.

In the case of Serbia, the country is still paying its debts from the recent past. The role Serbia played in the violent conflicts<sup>180</sup> that followed the breakup of Yugoslavia, left the country with almost a decade of international isolation and sanctions. There was a huge brain-drain of the most qualified and educated Serbian young generation, “estimated at about 300,000, mostly younger people fleeing this European tragedy” (Robert and Ash, 2009: 306), “well-qualified and often liberal-minded people fleeing abroad to remake their lives” (Gallagher, 2003: 176), besides the almost three months of intensive shelling from NATO forces led by the USA, between 24<sup>th</sup> March and early June 1999, in order to force Belgrade to stop the offensive against Albanians in Kosovo.

The country lost territory, wealth and industry. However, Serbia was also the country that showed the world the strength and leadership of social mass movements, when students and workers, in a national protest embraced by the democratic opposition, managed to topple Milošević on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2000. “8:00 PM, local time. In the first channel of the state TV, one can listen: ‘This is the new Radio Television of Serbia’. There was cheering, applause,

---

<sup>178</sup> TACSO (Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations in the IPA Countries), 2011, Needs Assessment Report – Croatia, Zagreb: TACSO. [http://tacso.org/doc/HR\\_NA\\_report.pdf](http://tacso.org/doc/HR_NA_report.pdf). Accessed on 03.04.2016.

<sup>179</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatia-police-arrest-anti-cyrillic-activists-in-vukovar>. Published in 23.09.2014. Accessed in 03.04.2016. <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatian-war-veterans-present-cyrillic-ultimatum>. Published on 24.09.2014. Accessed on 03.04.2016.

<sup>180</sup> Paul Collier names these conflicts as one of the “development traps”, being the legacy of conflicts “the lack of trust”. Interview with the author at Nova School of Business, Lisbon, 28.09.2012. Collier agrees with the author of the dissertation that post-conflict reconciliation is much more difficult in multiethnic societies, but adds that “the record is not that bad”, giving recent good examples from Rwanda to Sierra Leone. “There is a long period in which the international community needs to be a guarantor of peace, and also, a guarantor of clean public finances”, he stated, understanding it as “the vital thing”.



kisses, hugs and tears of joy at Belgrade Media Center. Some journalist cannot even believe” what was happening, this author reported then (Alexandre, 2002: 228).

One might say that after the end of Milošević’s rule, three visions of the country, and for the future of the country, were in competition in the Serbia. Firstly, the vision of those who demanded the swift modernization of the economy and government administration to put the country on the path to EU integration, mainly an urban qualified population, youth and young professionals, public service professionals who had been fired or put apart by the old regime, the most enthusiastic mass of the 5<sup>th</sup> October ‘revolution’, all led by Prime Minister Zoran Djindjić – and his Democratic party, DS, on the forefront of the new government. Another vision, pro-democratic reforms but insisting and praising as major goal the preservation of the union between Serbia and Montenegro, as well as reintegrating Kosovo, composed of more conservative people, older in average than the first group, put forward by President Vojislav Kostunica and those who stood with him in the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS). Finally, even if their leaders had already been arrested and about to be sent to Hague, there was the vision of the Socialist Party (SPS) of Slobodan Milošević, and the Serbian Radical Party (SRS) of Vojislav Seselj<sup>181</sup>, which resisted European integration, advocated stronger ties with Russia and China, and could still count on some broad popular support, especially among older people, non-skilled labour force, extreme right-wing youth and adults from rural deprived areas, as the economy failed to advance as they stood against the state restructuring and privatizations, which were leaving many people jobless.

Zoran Djindjić’s assassination on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2003, fatally shot in front of the government building in downtown Belgrade, blew away popular expectations regarding a brighter future for the country (Hodge, 2006: 173)<sup>182</sup>. To those eager for reforms in the country, was some kind of a nightmare after two and a half years of hope, despite the ongoing problems inherent to economic recovery and the efforts to regain credibility on the international stage. There is a general acceptance, as John B. Allcock argues, “that Djindjić’s willingness to cooperate with the ICTY was one of the reasons behind his murder by agents acting for one of the large criminal organizations” (Ingrao, 2009: 373).

Ivica Dadić, former spokesperson to Slobodan Milošević, took over the Socialist Party in early December 2006, and started reforming it with a clear focus on EU integration and more social justice, Boris Tadić took over the Democratic Party and won the presidential elections in 2004, with Vojislav Kostunica again in power, but now as Prime Minister, in a

---

<sup>181</sup> Serbian Radical Party (SRS) is an ultranationalist political party that had been in power in coalition with Milošević during the 90’s.

<sup>182</sup> Hodge, Carole (2006), “Zoran Djindjić, was assassinated in Belgrade by a mafia organisation, and a consequent polarisation of the Serbian political scene made the climate for investment increasingly hostile” (p. 173).

DS and DSS coalition government<sup>183</sup>. This political evolution was accompanied by the dissolution of the union with Montenegro, who voted for independence in a referendum solely for residents (whereas most of its citizens lived outside its borders, namely in Serbia) in 2006<sup>184</sup>, followed by the unilateral declaration of independence in Kosovo, in 2008. Against its will, Serbia was... independent... and alone.

Further important changes were about to arrive. Aleksandar Vučić and Tomislav Nikolic left the SRS and formed the new Progressive Party of Serbia (SNS) in 2008, which meant a major shift in their agenda: European integration was understood as a priority and the fight against corruption and respect for the rule of law, were raised as important political flags. Surprisingly, the Democratic Party and Boris Tadić were defeated<sup>185</sup>, Nikolic was elected president and the Progressives formed a government with the new Socialist Party, SPS.

In 2012, Serbia attained candidate status for EU membership and signed a normalization agreement with Kosovo<sup>186</sup>. This does not amount to any recognition of independence, which is unlikely to happen, but does provide a platform for a pacific and tolerant relationship, and will very likely lead to faster European integration. John O'Brennan (2013: 43) perceives this as “a template for neutralising the worst elements of inter-ethnic and inter-state conflict in the Western Balkans. The decisive break with more than a decade of tension and periodic confrontation came in December 2012 when Kosovo and Serbia began to implement a key agreement on border control, opening joint posts at crossings” where there had been frequent acts of violence and barricades had once been set up. Furthermore, the Brussels April Agreement (BAA) goes still further by “establishing a power-sharing arrangement in northern Kosovo [north of the Ibar river, in Mitrovica] with authorities acceptable to both sides”.

On 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013, European Union leaders decided to open accession negotiations with Serbia, which started formally in January 2014, “subject to progress in implementing” (ibid.) the BAA. The European Council President, Herman van Rompuy, said that it was “a historic moment for the Balkans - not only because Croatia becomes a member of the European family, but also because Serbia and Kosovo made a big step in European integrations.” “The last two decisions are made as a direct result of the courageous agreement

---

<sup>183</sup> <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr128.pdf>. Published in November 2004. Accessed on 03.04.2016.

<sup>184</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/may/22/balkans>. Published on 22.05.2006. Accessed on 03.04.2016.

<sup>185</sup> As happened with most of the incumbent candidates and political forces in European countries who held elections in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis.

<sup>186</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2016/579079/EPRS\\_ATA\(2016\)579079\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2016/579079/EPRS_ATA(2016)579079_EN.pdf). Published March 2016. Accessed on 03.04.2016. Author: Velina Lilyanova, European Parliamentary Research Service.

between Belgrade and Priština,<sup>187</sup> stressed Van Rompuy, referring to the landmark agreement on the normalization of relations reached on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

On December 16<sup>th</sup>, the former High Representative for EU Foreign Policy, Catherine Ashton, in her report to the European Council, recommended that the EU started accession talks with Serbia<sup>188</sup>, taking good note of what the country had done since the previous April following the negotiations between Ivica Dacic and Hashim Thaçi about the final status of Kosovo. But there were also some remaining problems as well as setbacks, as some issues related to the judiciary. Lady Ashton, the EU High Representative, recognized that “normalization does not happen overnight and agreements of the magnitude of the April Agreement take time to digest”<sup>189</sup>. Nevertheless, Serbia must reach an agreement with Kosovo, leading to a “comprehensive normalization of relations between the two sides”<sup>190</sup>, as proposed by Lithuania.

In the case of BiH, a multi-ethnic state, mostly inhabited by Muslim Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats, this constituted a central republic in the former Yugoslavia, with a system of governance in which ethnic concerns and consensus on decision-making processes formed permanent benchmarks. This all came about following the first democratic elections in the former Yugoslavia in 1990, when the Communist Party lost to the nationalist parties. Each of them, the Serb SDS (Serbian Democratic Party), the SDA (Democratic Action Party, led by Muslim Bosniak Alija Izetbegovic) and the HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union, the Bosnian twin party of the ruling Croatian nationalist party), held different visions for Bosnia. Keeping it within Yugoslavia was the objective of the Serbs while the others demanded secession: the Croats wanted the most-Croatian inhabited municipalities connected up to an independent Croatia, while the Bosnians Muslim or Bosniaks were in favour of a multi-ethnic but unitarian independent state, with a strong central government.

As Florian Bieber explains, “the coalition between the three national parties, however, proved to be inherently unstable due to the diametrically opposed visions of Bosnia and its place in Yugoslavia” (Bieber, 2006: 24).

A combination of factors, some of them aforementioned, such as the lack of understanding between political leaders and the strong manipulation of religious beliefs by all warring parties, led to the civil war breaking out in 1992, which lasted almost four years and resulting in some of the worst massacres in Europe after World War Two: Srebrenica in June 1995 and the siege of Sarajevo (1992-1995). More than one hundred thousand persons were

---

<sup>187</sup> Available from [www.b92.net](http://www.b92.net). Accessed on 17.12.2013.

<sup>188</sup> [http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub\\_4716\\_eu\\_integration\\_and\\_party\\_politics\\_in\\_the\\_balkans.pdf](http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_4716_eu_integration_and_party_politics_in_the_balkans.pdf). Published in September 2014; accessed on 09.07.16.

<sup>189</sup> Idem.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

killed<sup>191</sup> and 1.3 million were displaced<sup>192</sup>.

More than twenty years after the war, Bosnia still remains pretty much ethnically divided, with the political elites either unable or unwillingly to reach across those ethnic lines, even in times of deep crisis, as duly detailed in the sixth chapter about Bosnia and Herzegovina. A country with two entities, the FBiH and the RS, the former divided into ten cantons, the latter more interested in its relationship with Serbia proper than in the success of a state most Bosnian Serbs never wished for. With just two cities with populations of over 100,000<sup>193</sup>, four million inhabitants,<sup>194</sup> according to the most recent available data<sup>195</sup> - the 2013 census final results are yet to be published due to political quarrels<sup>196</sup> - and unemployment of over 43 per cent, the country seems still faced by a rather complex political and institutional deadlock. It is a highly difficult job to try to make them (Bosnjaks, Serbs and Croats in Bosnia) work together. Sulejman Tihic, in 2005 Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (in fact, the Bosniak member of the presidency), told the author of this dissertation in an interview at his office in Sarajevo: “the overwhelming majority of the blockades (to the political system in Bosnia) came from an entity of this country: Republica Srpska. That is, the blockages to the necessary reforms for the country come from the political successors of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. It is as inconceivable as it may seem to us, it is as if after World War II somebody came and told the Americans and the Allies that they would have to build a new Germany, of course not with Hitler but with his political apes. And they will only be able to implement what they come to terms with Hitler's coreligionists”. The discrepancies are all over: “We do not have a police that functions at the level of the state, as a single structure, but rather as a police officer in the spirit of the entity in which operates. We have a huge contradiction in this country: some people are treated in this entity, Federation, as war criminals, while in the other half of the country they are treated as national heroes”.

In the next section, we focus our attentions on the impact the financial and economic crisis in the Eurozone has been playing on the enlargement process in the Western Balkans.

---

<sup>191</sup> Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6228152.stm>.

<sup>192</sup> Available from [http://fas.org/irp/cia/product/bosnia\\_handout.html](http://fas.org/irp/cia/product/bosnia_handout.html).

<sup>193</sup> Sarajevo, the capital is home to over 300,000 persons with Banja Luka, capital of the Serb entity, contains over 120,000.

<sup>194</sup> Bosniaks compose 48 per cent of the population, Serbs 37 per cent and Croats 14 per cent although there are as yet no conclusive results from the census that took place in October 2013.

<sup>195</sup> <http://www.popis2013.ba>. Accessed on 03.04.2016.

<sup>196</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/disputes-delay-publication-of-bosnia-census-11-04-2015>. Published 05.11.2015. Accessed on 03.04.2016.

### 3.4. Europe: From dream to nightmare (approaching the European crisis)

The deep crisis in the Eurozone since 2008 has cast many shadows over the merits of the European project. Euro-sceptical political parties on the left<sup>197</sup> and those on the far-right, the latter with xenophobic and populist discourses<sup>198</sup> are on the rise among national electorates, both in western and in eastern European countries. Such a scenario reinforces doubts about the validity of the enlargement process itself.

Less than ten years ago, however, EU enlargement seemed set to be nothing but a success story. The former Yugoslav economies, starting with Croatia, but also Serbia and Montenegro as well as Macedonia, Bosnia and Kosovo, even though to a lesser extent, the cases of due to structural and especially political problems, reported strong economic growth: “Businesses throughout the region showed resilience, adaptability to new circumstances, and a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Governments and other state authorities generally accepted the need for a thorough reform agenda and, to varying degrees, have pushed through and began to implement difficult reforms” (Civic, 2010: 123-124). The standards of living were on the rise in conjunction with “records in investment flows” (2010: 124). Indicators of macroeconomic stability, inflation and the general government deficit were low, “some at levels that would be the envy of a number of EU members” (2010: 140). Money was flowing into those countries, from the ERBD and WB, and by early 2009, “the combination of progress in reforms and high GDP growth rates had transformed South-Eastern Europe into one of the most dynamic emerging markets regions” (2010: 124). However, when the economy took a turn for the worse and the results started appearing, it seemed as though a prevalent regional sense of nostalgia had regained its strong shape and for the worse. One should not forget that the events in the 1990s had left the region with a serious image problem: “for many potential foreign investors, the mention of the word ‘Balkans’ conjures up troubled images of war and conflict, rather than investment opportunities and economic potential” (ibid.).

John O’Brennan, in his paper “Enlargement Fatigue and its Impact on the Enlargement Process in the Western Balkans”<sup>199</sup>, recalls that “The EU is now not only a direct neighbour of the Western Balkans, but also the most important economic, political and geopolitical actor in South Eastern Europe” (2013: 36). It has now been more than a decade since the EU publicly committed to the integration of the former Yugoslav republics into its political and economic space: “The EU-Western Balkans Summit meeting at Thessaloniki in June 2003 affirmed that ‘the EU reiterates its unequivocal support to the European

---

<sup>197</sup> Die... in Germany, Syriza in Greece, Bloco de Esquerda in Portugal, Podemos in Spain.

<sup>198</sup> Like UKIP in the United Kingdom, Fidezs and Jobik in Hungary, Freedom Party in Austria, Law and Justice Party in Poland, are some examples.

<sup>199</sup> <http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR018/OBrennan.pdf>. Accessed on 03.04.2016.

perspective of the Western Balkan countries. The future of the Balkans is within the European Union'. This 'European Perspective' is thus meant to lead to membership and full incorporation in the institutional and policy regimes of the EU" (ibid.)<sup>200</sup>. And that prospect of EU integration has been, ever since, a strong driver in the Yugoslav successor states, to recover from their recent past and restructure their economies, as O'Brennan states: "the EU's gravitational pull has proven key in the reconstitution of the economic, political and civic life of the Western Balkan region over the past decade (...) and progressively connect it to the mainstream landscape of EU politics and the norms of European integration" (ibid.).

The burden emerges from how the crisis in the Eurozone, the economic recession in the EU and worldwide, added to the endemic problems of these Balkan societies, with a reluctance in public opinion towards the European Union, correspondingly, rising. Moreover, there was increasing criticism by existing member states of potential new members"<sup>201</sup> (O'Brennan, 2009: 38). More importantly, as something of a structural factor, these countries from the Western Balkans, from the former Yugoslavia to be more specific, "suffer from their geographical proximity to Bulgaria and Romania and from an intellectual understanding of the Balkans as a unified region thought to have a distinct 'cultural mentality', one that demonstrates an uncommon attachment to corruption and rent-seeking behaviour amongst highly clientelistic networks of local power" (O'Brennan, 2009: 39). If Bulgaria and Romania proved not to be ready for full membership, what could the 'old' EU countries expect from the less developed Balkan states? This is another important question posed by this "variant of the enlargement fatigue argument" (ibid.). The former Yugoslavia countries, candidates or on the road to be formal candidates to the EU, face what Dimitar Bechev (2012)<sup>202</sup> calls a crisis of the "periphery of the periphery", a sort of an outer ring of that marginalised and discredited zone of governance failure – as in Greece, Portugal or Spain, and "viewed through similar lenses in Brussels and the 'north'" (O'Brennan, 2013: 37). According to Bechev (2012: 1), "The EU is now faced with what Timothy Garton Ash calls a 'damned if you do, damned if you don't' situation: if the Eurozone sorts out its problems, the price might well be introversion and no appetite for enlargement; if it doesn't, the Balkans will be left out in the cold with little external support for their modernisation and democratic consolidation".

The Western Balkans' region is, in many ways, from trade to tourism, relatively well integrated into the European space, and into what we might call a western European way of life, with problems which "are largely identical to those faced by many member states, not

---

<sup>200</sup> See also the European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: the Western Balkans and European Integration, Brussels: 21 May 2003, COM (2003) 285.

<sup>201</sup> Something that was resolved – at least, tried – with the Lisbon Treaty, providing "the institutional means to cope with additional members.

<sup>202</sup> [http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR60\\_WESTERN\\_BALKANS\\_BRIEF\\_AW.pdf](http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR60_WESTERN_BALKANS_BRIEF_AW.pdf). Accessed on 03.04.2016.

least those in Central and Eastern Europe”; nevertheless, more “susceptible to exogenous economic shocks” (O’Brennan, 2013: 40) and, foremost, being on the EU’s periphery, “exceptionally vulnerable to the economic turbulence originating from within its confines” (2012: 2). Moreover, there is also the regional interdependence with Greece (except for Croatia and Slovenia), a country which has been on the forefront of the European crisis since 2008. In fact, taking the example of Greek investment in Serbia, this varied from €336 million in 2007 alone to €46 million in both 2008 and 2009 combined (O’Brenan, 2013: 41). Greece is no longer in a position to champion EU enlargement into the Western Balkans.

Prejudices, stereotypes and myths are not at all easy to dismantle or even to mitigate and, in fact, “in the popular European consciousness, the Balkans remains a region of great fragility, defined by inter-ethnic contestation for territory and power, mutually antagonistic nationalisms, incomplete state formation, deep and pervasive patterns of corruption and endemic economic mismanagement” (O’Brennan, 2013: 40). Additionally, even while the EU still remains perceived, internally by politicians and analysts in the region, and by Brussels as well, as the panacea to all the problems of these problematic countries, there is an increasing sentiment among national public opinions, “that rather than acting as an agent of stability and practical reform, the EU now represents an arc of instability – and the Western Balkan states, like others on the periphery of Europe, have got caught in the crossfire” (ibid.).

The EU’s unfinished business in the Balkans, and the decrease of economic incentives to membership, opens the door political, economic and security alternatives, as the influence of Russia on Serbia and on Montenegro; of Turkey, Saudi Arabia and some other Gulf monarchies on Kosovo and especially, on BiH. The emphasis placed in the past few years on conditionality, which, in the Balkans, closely interrelates with “an increased focus on ‘good governance’ criteria, particularly the maintenance of the rule of law, an independent judiciary and an efficient public governance” (2015: 13), should be counterbalanced by relying “more on soft mechanisms, such as civil society promotion and interaction” (Civic, 2010: 5). Clear to those who have long followed and studied the Balkans, “the empowerment of democratic forces in the region is crucial in order to increase the accountability of the elites and the transparency of the reform processes” (ibid.).

Much of the policy-making of modern life is based on perception, and on public perceptions about policy-making and especially on decision-making processes. Civic (2010: 155) points out that “self-reported life satisfaction is significantly lower in South-Eastern Europe than in Central Europe and Baltic states (...). And when people feel themselves “already miserable it can become impossible for policy makers to push through further reforms, whatever the applause and encouragement from foreign institutions and investors on the sidelines”. Besides, people hope with some understandable patience for better times:

“those who grew up in the former Yugoslavia remember a time when they lived well and could travel freely abroad” (2010: 156-157).

### **3.5. The EU Enlargement policy and challenges ahead**

Enlargement fatigue; this was the jargon that entered into the EU lexicon after referendums in France and the Netherlands failed to approve a European Constitution in 2005.

The enlargement advocacy ranks could benefit from the fact that most of the actual EU member states, about three quarters of the 28-countries club, are former ‘enlargement’ countries, but the discouraging fact stems from how “enlargement is no longer narrated as a EU success story. It is instead more often presented as a bridge too far for a European project beset by crisis and incapable of repeating previous geopolitical triumphs” (O’Brennan, 2013: 43). Furthermore, we should not forget that one of the European project’s main pillars, solidarity, is not so abundant currently, as is the understanding of this author and as the refugee crisis has so vividly and dramatically been proving.

Although Croatian accession provides some ground for optimism to all the other former Yugoslav republics (in addition to Slovenia, a member-state since the largest EU enlargement in 2004) “the previously successful ‘external incentives model’ has run aground on the rocks of growing mistrust and pervasive uncertainty about the endpoint of the process” (ibid.). Institutionally, the European Commission, led by Jean Claude Juncker, after the Portuguese José Manuel Durão Barroso, “remains the ‘best friend’ of the candidate and potential candidate states in Brussels, but it has been decisively weakened within the institutional architecture by the economic crisis and increasingly acts as the mere ‘agent’ of the Council, where ‘creeping nationalisation’ has resulted in an unprecedented politicisation of the enlargement process” (ibid). O’Brennan points out the challenge is whether it reinvigorates “the spirit of earlier enlargement rounds, or it can succumb to enlargement fatigue. Either way, the region’s future hangs in the balance” (ibid.). Authors such as Cive and Sanfey (2010:160), at least at the time of their writings, shared an optimistic vision of the future of the Western Balkans recovery and recalled that the “EU has an unparalleled success rate in promoting prosperity among its members”.

Should we look “at the very strong impact of the global economic crisis on the Serbian economy”, as explained to this author<sup>203</sup> by Milica Uvalic<sup>204</sup>, a former Serbian

---

<sup>203</sup> Audio recorded exclusive interview at the School of International and Public Affairs, the University of Columbia, May 2015.

<sup>204</sup> <http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/biepag/node/91>. Accessed on 03.04.2016, “Milica Uvalić is Professor of Economics at the University of Perugia, Italy (since 1992). Formerly she was a member of the UN Committee for Development Policy (2008-12), Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Centre, Washington DC (2009) and Assistant Minister in the Federal government of the FR



government official working with the late Premier Zoran Djindjic and Professor of Economy at the University of Perugia, Italy, one can see three years of negative growth between 2009 and 2011, positive growth afterwards, but again returning to negative growth in 2015 when there was a precautionary “agreement with the IMF that the government has signed, which will provide resources for fiscal consolidation. But the conditions are rather tough”. The usual IMF recipe: “cutting pensions, cutting wages, cutting public employment, so there is no doubt that this new arrangement with the IMF plus the program that the government has adopted in the meantime, will have further recessionary effects”.

The unemployment rate stands at over 23 percent, and thus, “something must be done to handle the structural problems of the Serbian economy which have not been sufficiently taken into account”. With 32 percent of the EU-28 GDP average, Serbia faces an intrinsically intertwined relationship between politics and economics since the pending issues related to the final status and negotiations with Kosovo generate a major impact on the country’s situation. Uvalic agrees: “it is extremely important that the BAA was signed, in 2013, because it has delayed the integration process with the EU; it has been a big burden that now has been recognized. The question is: on the one hand, how does a country renounce to part of its territory?” But, on the other hand, “Kosovo is, *de facto*, independent. It’s an independent state, trying to build its democratic institutions, and to go in the right direction”, and it happens to be “supported by very important organizations”. Uvalic understands that, contrary to Bosnia and Herzegovina – “unfortunately” – in Kosovo<sup>205</sup> there is “a very good energy to make things move forward”. Very critical of the Vučić’s government, she acknowledges however, that the BAA 2013, “was a fantastic thing for Serbia. It really opened many doors that previously were closed”.

### **3.6 Prospects for a new generation**

The survey developed under the auspices of this dissertation, distributed and completed by students from universities – public and private – across Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, produced some interesting results or indications, despite the assumed lack of representation of the sample and even the lack of proportionality between the countries studied, taking into account the respective populations (the responses from Croatia are over-represented, comparatively). A total of 274 students responded.

---

Yugoslavia (2001). Recent publications include “FDI into transition economies: Are the Balkans different?” (with S. Estrin, 2014); *The Social Consequences of the Global Economic Crisis in South East Europe* (edited with W. Bartlett, 2013); *Serbia’s Transition – Towards a Better Future* (2010), Palgrave Macmillan; *Western Balkans’ Accession to the European Union* (edited with B. Cerovic, 2010).

<sup>205</sup> The SAA was concluded in 2015.

When asked about the European Union, positive opinions towards the EU still outweigh the negative perspectives: 55.8 percent (8.02 percent excellent; 24.45 percent very good; 23.35 percent good) against 12.76 percent (6.56 percent bad, 6.2 percent very bad), though a significant proportion of respondents, 27.3 percent, held neither a good nor a bad opinion about the EU. One thing is to ask an opinion about someone, something, an institution, be it regional, national, or supranational; another perhaps different facet might stem from a personal or collective involvement with that object or institution. However, in keeping with opinions about the EU, when asked about their own country's accession process, positive perceptions significantly surpass the negative. 60.1 percent returned an overall positive opinion about their countries joining the EU: as an excellent thing for 13.1 percent, very good for 22.6 percent and good for 24.8 percent. The negative perceptions accounted for almost twenty percent (19.33 percent - 12.04 percent bad and 7.29 percent very bad). One in each five respondents thinks their country joining the EU is neither good nor bad.

In a regional context with high unemployment rates, especially among the youth, it is not surprising that many people think about leaving the countries of the former Yugoslavia: emigration is an option to more than two thirds of respondents. 28.83 percent state they are actively planning it with 44.1 percent stating that such represents a possibility, which effectively means 72.93 percent of the respondents are open to the idea. Emigration is, however, rejected by 22.6 percent of respondents. The willingness to emigrate decreases slightly when people are asked if they would migrate to a country outside the European Union even while the Eurozone crisis is very likely to have increased the proportion of those planning to emigrate to a country outside the EU, 64.59 percent, which means almost two thirds are at least open to that option. Less than one out of five, 19.34 percent reject the idea. The prospect of emigration turns out to look less attractive when questioned about leaving for another former Yugoslav republic: the results of this dissertation's questionnaire survey report how a rather high proportion of respondents are not open to emigrating to another former Yugoslav country, 57.2 percent, a clear half of all respondents. Only 9.12 percent would consider emigrating to a country from the former Yugoslavia.

Plans to leave one's country mostly arise out of expectations of a better life, in particular finding a job compatible with one's qualifications. From the totality of the students responding to this survey, almost 42 percent of them have high and /or sufficient expectations of finding a job compatible with his/her qualifications and/or area of expertise. However, that expectation proves low for a significant minority (35.4 percent), almost none for 10.94 percent and none for 4.74 percent, an overall proportion of negative expectations amounting to 51 percent, which is both of concern and somehow justifying the broad reception of the idea of emigration and accompanies the trends of high brain-drain in the Balkans. At this

point, the author understands the importance and relevance to interrelating these data and results with those from other sources, more extensive, and admittedly more accurate and more credible studies, taking into account the limitations and obstacles – detailed in chapter 1, of the methodological approach – underpinning this study.

The 2015 Eurobarometer asked: “what are the European Union’s most positive results? (...) Do Europeans see themselves as European citizens? (...) What values do Europeans most readily associate with the European Union? What values create a feeling of community within the EU? Are citizens familiar with the European flag? What does it evoke for them?” (2015: 2). The answer to the first question is interesting for those – such as this researcher – who advocate cosmopolitan citizenship and welcoming and mutual learning (more than the outdated concept of integration itself) with migrants and refugees: “the free movement of people, goods and services within the EU” has returned to the top of the list of the EU’s most positive results (57 percent, +2 percentage points since autumn 2014), ahead of ‘peace among Member States of the EU’ (55 percent, -1), ranked in first place in autumn 2014”. On the other side, there was no significant increase among those who have negative perceptions about the EU: “Nine percent (+1 percentage point) of respondents spontaneously said that there were ‘no’ positive results of the EU” (2015: 4). According to this Barometer, Europeans prove pretty “divided on the contribution of immigrants to society: a slim majority agree that ‘immigrants contribute a lot to (our country)’ (46 percent, -2 percentage points than in the previous survey, in autumn 2014), while 44 percent (-1 than before) take the opposite view and 10 percent (+3) express no opinion” (2015: 70). The Eurobarometer findings reveal a huge discrepancy between countries on this issue, varying from the highest positive perception about the contribution of immigrants, which are reported – by far and away - in Sweden (88 percent), followed by Luxembourg (78 percent), “to only 12 percent in Latvia (the lowest score) and 13 percent in Estonia and the Czech Republic”. With an ongoing “refugee crisis”, the view that immigrants make a “significant contribution to national society has increased considerably in Romania (55 percent, +11 percentage points), but has fallen sharply in Finland (60 percent, -10), Lithuania (31 percent, -10) and Slovenia (30 percent, -10)” (2015: 72).

Taking into account the different levels of citizenship, the Eurobarometer 2015 concludes that a stable majority of Europeans (60 percent) “see themselves as European citizens” (+1 percentage point since autumn 2014). It is also important and telling that “four in ten respondents define themselves solely by their nationality” (38 percent in autumn 2014). An absolute majority of Europeans “define themselves first by their nationality and then as Europeans (52 percent, +1 percentage point); the respondents who define themselves first as European citizens and then by their nationality remain in a minority (6 percent, unchanged); lastly, only 2 percent of Europeans see themselves as “European only” (2015: 21). The socio-

demographic data (2015: 23) conveys how men (64 percent) are more likely than women (57 percent) to feel European citizens, older people tend to feel less Europeans than the younger generations. The feeling of European citizenship is more widespread among those who have studied longer: “up to the age of 20 and beyond (72 percent)”, while just a “minority of those who left school at the age of 15 or earlier (42 percent versus 56 percent) define themselves as European”. Once again, the economic factor is present: “the most privileged classes of the population are more likely to see themselves as European citizens: 84 percent of Europeans who see themselves as upper middle class do so, compared with only 44 percent of those who describe themselves as working class (compared with 54 percent who answered “nationality only”)”.

The EU report proposes something that has yet to be accepted and this dissertation’s author finds both a rather positive as a goal but difficult to actually achieve, which is, the “immediate opening of Chapter 23 on Judiciary and Fundamental Rights and Chapter 24 on Justice, Freedom and Security with all Western Balkan countries at once could serve not only as proof of the credibility of the EU promise, but would likely also replicate the success of healthy regional competition created within the recent visa liberalisation process. This scenario would move the region closer to the EU, as well as maintain the vigour of much needed reforms” (Kmezcic, 2015: 5).

At the time of writing, August 2016, public opinion remains pretty much divided over the benefits people experience in Croatia for having joined the EU. As the author of *The Death of Yugoslavia*, Laura Silber, told this author in the aforementioned interview referred to in Chapter 2, people are not “so sure if the experience so far has proved so positive”, regarding their conditions of living and economic situations.

The fundamental importance of economic recovery, complexities regarding compliance with minority rights and human rights, as well as the rule of law and the functioning of the judiciary systems stand out as the top priorities for the enlargement processes. European integration stands as a common goal, ethnic reconciliation should be considered as a common task because hate speech is a common and persistent obstacle; the role played by the civil society sector in each of the countries forming the objects of this research a common strategy to overcome it. These issues shall be the backbone of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IV - FROM THE EU'S NEWEST MEMBER-STATE TO THE CLUB OF DREAMERS

### 4.1. Politics, the Economy and European Integration

*"No society has ever won a war. Societies always lose."*<sup>206</sup>

Vesna Pusic, former Foreign Affairs Minister of Croatia, the country's candidate to the position of UN Secretary-General and author of the sentence above, asserts: "it is important to attract people with a certain mindset, people who want reforms and institutions to function in a decent way. The first assumption that it is everybody, is completely wrong"<sup>207</sup>, admits the sociologist who, at the time of the interview with the author, was also deputy Prime Minister in the Croatian government. Some elites, she noted, "find it easier when there are no rules".

As one leading Croatian security analyst puts it<sup>208</sup>, "one of the most important threats to Croatia is organized crime and corruption and all sorts of illegal trafficking". A question of "defending ourselves from ourselves", as one high-ranking Zagreb official<sup>209</sup> refers to the problem. In any post-conflict society, there are always people with rational interests in a dysfunctional state and generalized chaos. However, they are nevertheless far from dominant in Croatian (or any other Balkan) society. Nevertheless, trust in institutions comes with stability and stability is something that these countries have been lacking.

While in the late 1990s, Western Balkans public opinions were significantly focused on historical and thus more emotional issues, such as who was and was not guilty for the war, refugees and internal displaced people, cooperation with The Hague and its prosecutions of war crimes, in the last few years none of those issues have survived as priorities. Current public debates revolve much more around issues to do with taxes, jobs, salaries, and the standards of living, generally speaking.

We can therefore state that the EU accession process has been of great assistance in changing the political culture and the way people perceive politics, especially in Croatia. This moved on from "a very emotional and extremely dangerous" perception, as Pusic refers to it,

---

<sup>206</sup> Available from <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/pbc95.doc.htm>. Vesna Pusic at the Peace building Commission in the United Nations General Assembly. Published on 26.09.2013. Accessed on 24.04.2014.

<sup>207</sup> Vesna Pusic, interview with the author and a group of participants in the Transatlantic Leadership Seminar, organized by the German Marshall Fund of the U.S.A., in Zagreb, on 28.05.2013.

<sup>208</sup> Anonymity requested.

<sup>209</sup> Anonymity requested.

“to boring, as dealing with small things but that affect your daily life”<sup>210</sup>.

In 2004, in Croatia, there was already a very broad political consensus about European integration. The “Yes” to the EU received 66.3 percent in the January 2012 referendum. The great majority of Croatians thinks that Croatia’s neighbours in the Balkans should go through the same process and join the EU, because “no one wants to have a dysfunctional state on its borders”, says Pusic. Croatia applied in 2003, began negotiations in 2005 that eventually ended in 2011 before then signing the Accession Treaty. The truth is that Croatia went through a process different to that of any other country: more and different chapters, more benchmarks and monitoring, five concrete obstacles raised by Slovenia, the first former Yugoslav republic to join the EU. The EU did not want to repeat mistakes committed with the Romanian and Bulgarian accessions, especially in areas such as the judiciary and rule of law. And Croatia also did not want to get perceived as a new Romania or Bulgaria<sup>211</sup>. The same model is being applied with the accession of Serbia. Competitiveness is Croatia’s current major challenge. Croatia needs to attract new investments, which, in turn require higher degrees of efficiency in the public sector and administration, making them more accountable to the public and providing a safe legal environment for potential investors, as well as more opportunities for its qualified citizens so that they are able to continue living in the country.

Independent by default since Montenegro’s own independence in 2006, Serbia achieved candidate status for membership in the EU in 2012 and signed a normalization agreement with Kosovo, known as the Brussels Agreement, on 17 April 2013. This does not amount to Serbian recognition of the independence of its former province and the birthplace of Serbian national identity, but establishes a real basis for a pacific and tolerant relationship, and will very likely lead to faster Serbian EU integration. In 2007, then vice-Prime Minister Bozidar Djelic told the author of this dissertation, in an interview in Belgrade, that the major challenges to his country were “improving infrastructures, upgrading the functioning of institutions, and above all, to improve the competitiveness of our economy”.

On 28th June 2013, European Union leaders decided to open accession negotiations with Serbia to begin in January 2014. There was no great celebration and excitement over this political victory in Serbia where, on the other hand, defeats are seldom celebrated, most likely because, ahead, the country has hard and difficult work to undertake. Chapters 23 and 24 of the accession framework, which relate to the rule of law and human rights, are vital and the

---

<sup>210</sup> Vesna Pusic, in interview with the author and a group of participants in the Transatlantic Leadership Seminar, organized by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, in Zagreb, on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2013.

<sup>211</sup> [http://binghamcentre.biiicl.org/ruleoflawexchange/documents/190\\_180216\\_mendelski.pdf?showdocument=1](http://binghamcentre.biiicl.org/ruleoflawexchange/documents/190_180216_mendelski.pdf?showdocument=1). Accessed on 12.04.2016. See also Pavlina Nikolova, “Negotiating for EU Membership? The case of Bulgaria and Romania”, *Croatian Yearbook of European Law and Policy*, CYELP 2 [2006], pp. 393-412. <http://www.cyelp.com/index.php/cyelp/issue/view/2>.

first to be opened and the last to be closed. In late 2014, the government wanted to open negotiations by opening Chapter 32 on control of public finances. However, the EU argued then that Chapter 35, which deals with Kosovo, was a priority at that point. In fact, in the membership process, Serbia faces 35 chapters, which must be negotiated and closed by the foreign ministers of all 28-member states<sup>212</sup> before the country attains full-fledged membership. From tax policy to fishing regulation, from security to culture and education, some can be closed relatively swiftly, others will take much more time, as the EU wants to actively assure that the rules and standards (*acquis*) are strictly respected.

The European Commission (EC) is putting a strong emphasis on the rule of law and the capacity of the Serbian judiciary to bring about justice to emblematic cases, first and foremost the political background of the assassination of a former Prime Minister.

Zoran Djindjic<sup>213</sup> was killed in front of the government building in Belgrade in March 2003. Many years later, there is still uncertainty about the political background to his death, although Milorad Ulemek, *aka* Legija, the former commander of the interior ministry's Special Operations Unit, was found guilty of organizing the group that conspired to kill Djindjic. Tanja Miscevic, head of European integration, said that "revealing who was behind the assassination was a precondition within negotiations over Chapter 23 of the body of EU legislation that Serbia has to comply with before accession".

Authors such as Eric Gordy, when confronting the downturn in popular support for the EU in Serbia in the past few years, argue that the reasons are, in the first place, the fact that EU is seen as "economic instrumentality", a way to get access to markets, funds, and benefits. The second reason is political: "they see the EU as a guarantee that democratic structures and practices will be permanent". But the truth is that the EU "has weakened its economic appeal a great deal. What remains is the sense that Europe is the only available alternative, but this is a fairly weak argument". The EU's credibility as a guarantor of democracy, "has been seriously weakened by its tolerance of authoritarianism in places like

---

<sup>212</sup> Or 27, if, in the meantime, the UK effectively leaves the EU.

<sup>213</sup> In 1999, in an interview with the author of this dissertation accompanied by fellow Portuguese journalist Pedro Rosa Mendes, in Herceg Novi, Montenegro, while hiding from Milošević's secret services who had put him on an assassination hit list, Djindjic explained how the problem of Yugoslavia was not only Milošević: "Since the beginning of the twentieth century, our political life is sick, radicalized, involved in some sort of messianic view and easily manipulated" (Alexandre, 2002: 77). Calling for the end of the NATO bombardments, "bombing the country until people throw down Milošević is a completely idiotic idea" (Alexandre, 2002: 80), demanded a plan from the international community to make an agreement for peace but afterwards keep the pressure on at such a level that this would enable the removal of Milošević in six months. As the pressure Djindjic demanded was never applied, Milošević remained in power until 5th October, 2000. Author Laura Silber, who knew him well, asserts "he was by far the smartest, the most astute and the most progressive politician that I've met not only in Serbia, not only in Yugoslavia, but that I have come across in the world. He was one of the most intelligent and quick thinkers and could have brought Serbia to a different place had he survived".

Hungary, Poland and Croatia”. There are as well more regional factors: the EU’s wretched mismanagement of the refugee crisis, (...) have made it look incompetent and a little bit dangerous. Basically, the EU has not made a very good case for itself recently”.

On the other hand, probably the most important factor in Serbia since 2000 is that all the changes in political power have been peaceful, as is also the case in the other countries we are focusing on in this work: Croatia and Bosnia, as well as Kosovo. Regarding the ruling coalition in Serbia, while the Progressive Party (SNS) derived both from Serbian Radical Party (SRS) of the ultranationalist and then inmate at The Hague Vojislav Šešelj and from the SPS, the Socialists, led by Ivica Dacic, the party of Slobodan Milošević, what seems to have started out as an opportunistic shift towards Europe appears to be a rational strategy to lead the country into the future. The SNS, led by Aleksandar Vučić, deriving from the SRS and becoming a pro-European party, constitutes one of the most significant achievements in Serbian politics in the last decade.

On 17 January 2016, Vučić called for early elections to be held on April 24, based on arguments about the need for stability “so that Serbia is ready to join the EU” and claiming: “I don’t want to endanger the future of Serbia”. Critics say his goal was to consolidate power in a Putin-style move, and that his shift to being liberal after his ultra-nationalist stance was more about pragmatism than ideology. However, he told AFP in late 2012: “I do not hide that I have changed. I am proud of that” (ibid.). He perceives himself as “a tireless worker, the only person capable of attracting foreign investment and implementing the economic reforms called for by the EU and the IMF” (ibid.).

The calling of early elections without any particularly strong reason did not make SNS reach 50 percent of votes, as Vučić hoped. SNS scored 48.2 per cent, even less than the 49.3 victory obtained in 2014. There was undisguised disillusionment in the party ranks. To worsen things, the radicals SRS were the third party with 8 percent of the votes and 22 MPs in the assembly where they had had none before. They may have a say at a moment when the country is trying to stick to its EU accession commitments, something the SRS completely opposes. SPS, the party founded by Milošević, held onto second position with 12 percent and the DS, Democratic Party, lagged in fourth place, with 6 percent<sup>214</sup>. This comeback by Šešelj’s SRS several weeks after his acquittal by the ICTY, conveys how Serbian nationalism is still alive and emerges when moderate forces cannot fulfil people’s expectations and move the economy forward.

---

<sup>214</sup> DS will have to work in the parliament with a socio-liberal coalition [16 seats] led by experienced politicians, [Boris] Tadić (former president of Serbia) and [Cedomir] Jovanovic, who won 5% of the popular vote, bordering the parliamentary threshold. Joining them in this bloc is Dosta je Bilo [It’s not enough, 13 seats], a citizens’ movement gathered around an ex-Minister of Economy – Sasa Radulovic, also 6%, that will enter parliament for the first time”. This bloc takes the exclusivity of a pro-EU stance away from Vucic.



Anyway, there is a broad and positive consensus in Serbian society about the EU integration process and, on behalf of the European institutions, that consensus also exists. In April 2016, Franco Frattini, former vice-president of the European Commission and former Italian foreign minister, said “he is convinced the EU will not allow any state, Croatia included, to block the opening of Serbia's negotiation chapters over a bilateral dispute” and considers Serbia's goal of joining the EU by 2020 as realistic.

But Serbia also knows that the road ahead towards EU integration has not been cleared of problems, particularly concerning the opening of chapter 23, related to the rule of law and the judiciary. In April 2016, Croatia sent a letter to other EU member-states “setting out the requirements it wishes to turn into EU measures towards Serbia”, namely the treatment of the Croat minority in Serbia, Serbia's cooperation with The Hague, and “Serbia's jurisdiction over war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia”.

“It's the economy, stupid”. Serbia is a country with unstructured public companies<sup>215</sup> and a huge public administration, employing over 800,000 people<sup>216</sup>, and the environment for investors, as in Croatia and even worse in BiH, still faces certain obstacles and constraints although there have been some important foreign investment projects in the country in the last decade, such as US Steel in 2003 and FIAT, more recently, with a symbolic importance as FIAT Chrysler Automobiles Serbia took over the jewel of the socialist Yugoslav car-industry: Zastava<sup>217</sup>, the beloved and familiar car to many Yugoslavs, built by Zastava Car Automobiles, privatized in 2008 and based in Kragujevac.

The World Bank (WB) approved a new financial arrangement with Serbia for USD 200 million in 2014, and reported that the Serbian economy, in 2015, “moved out of recession in the first quarter”, growing by “1 percent year-on-year (y/y) following five consecutive quarters of decline in economic activity”<sup>218</sup>. But the business environment is still not very appealing. The WB report (2015: 6) informs us that, “despite improvements, the private sector in Serbia is still relatively underdeveloped and uncompetitive. Less than one-quarter of the working-age population has a job in the formal private sector. Exports have recently been growing rapidly but still remain at less than 40 percent of GDP, while in more successful new EU member states this ratio is twice as high. *Doing Business 2015* ranked Serbia 91st out of 189 economies in terms of the ease of doing business, well below most regional peers. This represents a drop of 14 places compared to the previous report”.

---

<sup>215</sup> Available from <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbian-companies-in-restructuring-owe-1-5-billion-euro-world-bank>. Published on 17.04.2014. Accessed on 21.07.2014.

<sup>216</sup> Available from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/539ea59b8.html>. Nations in transit 2014 - Serbia. Published on 10.06.2014. Accessed on 21.06.2014.

<sup>217</sup> Jason Vuic (2009), *The Yugo: The Rise and Fall of the Worst Car in History*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

<sup>218</sup> <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/pubdocs/publicdoc/2015/10/727741445092592205/Serbia-Snapshot-AMs-2015-web.pdf>. Published in October 2015, accessed on 19.04.2016.

We must not forget that economic interdependence in the region may play a crucial role in political reconciliation. In fact, “economic interdependence and cooperation not only promote peace by discouraging future armed conflict but also help reconciliation after past conflicts” (Mailey-Morrison, 2013: 612)<sup>219</sup>.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country in a deadlock, with its complex political structure. A multi-ethnic country, recognized as an independent state in April 1992, mostly inhabited by Bosniaks (Muslims), Serbs and Croats, Bosnia and Herzegovina formally requested admission to the EU in 2016.

Bosnia was a central republic in the former Yugoslavia, with a system of governance that incorporated ethnic concerns and consensus around decision-making processes as permanent benchmarks. All this came to an end after the first democratic elections in November and December 1990, when the Communist Party lost to the nationalist parties: the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), the Democratic Action Party, led by Muslim Bosniak Aljia Izetbegovic (SDA) and the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), the Bosnian twin party of the ruling Croatian nationalist party. Among them, they held three different and competing visions for Bosnia. Keeping it within Yugoslavia was the objective of the Serbs; whilst the others clambered for secession: the Croats wanted to have the most-Croatian inhabited municipalities connected with an independent Croatia, the Bosnians Muslim or Bosniaks were in favour of a multi-ethnic but unitary independent state with a strong central government. This lack of understanding among political leaders and the widespread manipulation of religious beliefs, led to civil war in 1992, which lasted for almost four years and included some of the worst massacres to take place in Europe since World War Two, as was the case in July 1995 with the massacre of eight thousand Bosnian men in Srebrenica and the siege of Sarajevo. By the time war ended, around one hundred thousand had been killed and many more displaced, in total approximately half of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s population<sup>220</sup>.

With four million inhabitants and unemployment of over 40 percent, more than twenty years after the war ended, the country pretty much still remains ethnically divided with the political elites either unable or unwilling to reach across those ethnic lines. A country with two entities, the Muslim Croat Federation (now, more commonly referred to as the Bosnian Federation) and the Republika Srpska (Serb Republic, RS)<sup>221</sup>; the former divided into

---

<sup>219</sup>Malley-Morrison, Kathleen, Mercurio, Andrea, Twose, Gabriel (editors), (2013) *International handbook of peace and reconciliation*, New York, Springer, p. 612.

<sup>220</sup>[http://www.icty.org/x/file/About/OTP/War\\_Demographics/en/bih\\_casualty\\_undercount\\_conf\\_paper\\_100201.pdf](http://www.icty.org/x/file/About/OTP/War_Demographics/en/bih_casualty_undercount_conf_paper_100201.pdf). Published on 02.02.2010, accessed on 29.05.2016.

<sup>221</sup>The Dayton (Ohio)/Paris Peace Accords established a state composed of the Bosniak-Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Federation) and the Serb Republika Srpska. The final status of the Brčko district was decided in 1999 by a special arbitration council that defined it as a self-governing administrative unit formally part of both entities.

ten cantons, the latter more interested in the relationship with Serbia proper than in the success of a state the Serbs never wished for.

Milorad Dodik, president of RS, has stated that he “has no faith in Bosnia-Herzegovina”<sup>222</sup> - a formation which, he said, “cannot live.” In an interview for the Belgrade-based daily Blic, he said that he “feels” that the period between 2014 and 2017 will prove to be crucial as to whether Bosnia-Herzegovina continues to exist. Dodik noted that the Serb entity “is capable of overcoming delicate political processes.” The Serb political leadership in Bosnia wants the country to become a confederation of two or three entities, while the Bosniak leadership (in the majority in the country), wants Bosnia to be an unitarian state and believes the country is in the midst of an institutional deadlock due to the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords, which stipulates the constitutional framework in effect in Bosnia since 1996.

Dayton awarded significant powers to international civilian agencies such as the Office of the High Representative (OHR), including the so-called Bonn powers, which allow the High Representative (HR) to remove local political leaders from office should they violate the fundamental principles of the peace agreement. Despite the unprecedented international financial and political support, the political, social, and economic life in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH, Bosna I Hercegovina) remains divided along ethnic lines. Despite these tensions, mainly between Serbs and Bosniaks, the EU and BiH signed a SAA in June 2008, a crucial step towards EU membership.

The entire political structure of Bosnia proves far too complex to paint any black and white scenarios. The BiH state-level government is led by a Prime Minister, while the head of state role is performed by a three-member presidency composed of one Bosniak, one Serb, and one Croat. The Parliamentary Assembly is a bicameral body with a 15-seat upper house, the House of Peoples, consisting of five members from each of the three main ethnic groups, elected by the Federation and Republika Srpska legislatures for four-year terms; while the lower house, the House of Representatives, contains 42 elected members serving four-year terms, with 28 representatives from the Federation and 14 seats for Republika Srpska representatives. Both entities have their own presidents, parliaments, and other governing bodies, which are responsible for policymaking at the entity level<sup>223</sup>.

How can a country survive when the president of one of its two constituent entities does not believe in the country itself, stating he has “has no faith in Bosnia-Herzegovina”, as Milorad Dodik, president of Serb Republic (RS) said? One of the most decisive politicians in

---

<sup>222</sup> [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=10&nav\\_id=86904](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=10&nav_id=86904). 10.07.2013. “Dodik ‘has no faith’ in Bosnia-Herzegovina’s survival”. Sources: BLIC, TANJUG. Accessed on 22.03.2014.

<sup>223</sup> [http://cps.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/POLITICAL-SYSTEM-OF-BiH\\_FINAL.pdf](http://cps.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/POLITICAL-SYSTEM-OF-BiH_FINAL.pdf). *The political System of Bosnia and Herzegovina: institutions, actors, processes*. Edition BH politika/BH politics, Editor Saša Gavrić Sarajevo Open Centre; Authors: Saša Gavrić, Damir Banović, Mariña Barreiro, Sarajevo Open Centre, Sarajevo 2013.

the country estimating that the next four years will determine whether BiH continues to exist was seen as an implicit threat of secession. Nevertheless, the fact remains that this opinion is not just held by Milorad Dodik and the Serbs in RS. The leader of HDZ Tomislav Karamarko, declared Bosnia's European future depends in part on ensuring greater equality for Bosnia's "marginalized Croats"<sup>224</sup> and, he argues, the only way for BiH to be a member of the EU. To sum up, one could say that the Bosniak leadership is still the only group representative highly committed to a unitarian or unified state, preferably with a strong central government, something that the ruling elites from the other two major communities are simply not willing to accept.

Speaking with the analyst and researcher Kurt Bassuener, on June, 2, 2015, the day after Bosnia signed the SAA with the European Institutions<sup>225</sup>, the author of this dissertation, came to understand that a lot of the near future of Bosnia "is going to depend on the new EU Special Representative and head of delegation"<sup>226</sup>, Swedish diplomat Lars-Gunnar Wigemark". Because of the complex Bosnian political landscape, there is no clarity as to how the vague socio-economic changes that have been committed to by the Bosnian political elite are actually going to be introduced. There is supposed to be a rapprochement between the three Prime Ministers, two from the entities and one from the State, and the EU head of delegation, and representatives from IMF, WB and EBRD. Furthermore, what is also not clear is whether or not the western governments and institutions "are going to arrive with a common platform to present to the Bosnians, saying: 'that's what you have to do, and this is what happens if you do it or if you don't do it', and whether this will prove the key. Hitherto, this has been an empty vessel. This has meant a declaration of progress with nothing actual having happened other than the original promise. Without enforcement they are not going to get anything" (ibid.). Additionally, the fact is that the Bonn powers<sup>227</sup>, which allow the High Representative to remove local politicians from office for failing to comply with that agreed and determined by the international community, have never been used at any important level: "For a decade the HR has been only an actor of last resort, and quite often it has been restrained, mostly by the continental members of the EU. And that's the big difference with this initiative started in November 2014 [sponsored by Berlin, which defined it, and London, which started it], is that the British decided to go along with the rest of the Europeans for a change; the difference is not between the Americans and the British and the rest of the Europeans, but between the Americans and all the Europeans", as US have been trying to "figure out what their policy

---

<sup>224</sup> Balkan Insight, July 17, 2013.

<sup>225</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-5086\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5086_en.htm). Published on 01.06.2015; accessed on 15.08.2016.

<sup>226</sup> <http://www.politico.eu/article/swede-becomes-eu-envoy-to-bosnia/>. Published on 21.01.2015; accessed on 15.08.2016.

<sup>227</sup> [http://www.gojil.eu/issues/62/62\\_article\\_banning.pdf](http://www.gojil.eu/issues/62/62_article_banning.pdf). Accessed on 15.08.2016.

should be, partly because of a certain unwillingness to look that we're at odds with Europe in Europe. But I can tell you with absolute honesty that there is no happiness in the State Department with the announcement or content" of this European initiative.

More importantly, some of the most prominent Bosnian politicians, such as Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik and Bosnian Croat Dragan Covic, do not want Bosnia and Herzegovina to succeed as a country. Bassuener agrees with the author of this dissertation and adds the following to the discussion: "Of course they don't, but it's not an ethnically driven issue. The Bosniaks play exactly by the same rules. That's the incentives in the Dayton system; it was designed as an oligarquichal system and works as an oligarquichal system. It was not designed for citizens, or to promote political accountability".

The problem derives from the country living and (mal) functioning according to an agreement, which turned-out-to-be a constitution, designed to stop a war but not to build a country. One can agree with Bassuener when he states that in order "to change the rules, you need the consent of the people who presently rule, and they do not have a reason to give that. Without external pressure, nothing is going to change, but external pressure alone is not enough".

In some way, the EU is a victim of its own success in the enlargement, in the way it deals with Bosnia, and the wider Western Balkans. But if foreigners cannot make Bosnia and Herzegovina work, they can certainly help to create an environment, which is conducive to those Bosnians who want to make the country work getting traction and moving forward.

Bosnia has a transitional economy with limited market reforms, especially when compared to its neighbours Croatia and Serbia, excessively relying on foreign aid. The Bosnian GDP, \$18.29 billion US dollars in 2014<sup>228</sup> is far lower than its neighbours Croatia (\$57.11 billion)<sup>229</sup> and Serbia (\$43.87 billion)<sup>230</sup> coupled with lower GDP per capita: \$4,851 (against \$6,152 in Serbia, \$13,475 in Croatia)<sup>231</sup>. Bosnia does have its own national currency, the convertible mark (KM), but in each of the two constituent entities of the country, we find different national heroes printed on the banknotes.

The bureaucracy is immense, reflecting a rather negative climate for foreign investment. Foreign investment has dropped since 2007. As the country is so politically divided along ethnic lines, foreign investors cannot afford – in human resources, money and time – to invent strategies to penetrate in what remains three separate markets dividing one small state. The privatization of state companies has also been slow, especially at the

---

<sup>228</sup> Available from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/bosnia-and-herzegovina/gdp>. Accessed on 30.05.2016.

<sup>229</sup> Available from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/croatia/gdp>. Accessed on 30.05.2016.

<sup>230</sup> Available from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/serbia/gdp>. Accessed on 30.05.2016.

<sup>231</sup> Available from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD/countries/IW-RS-PT-US?display=default>. Accessed on 24.07.2014.

Federation level where divisions among ethnic-based parties hinder potential agreements on economic policy. Separating the political issues and the way society is healing the wounds of the war from the current economic situation also proves very difficult. High unemployment represents the most serious macroeconomic problem with an unemployment rate of close to 42.36 percent in March 2016,<sup>232</sup> with youth unemployment around 57.2 percent in March 2016<sup>233</sup>.

However, one can also embrace the optimistic language of the World Bank in its 2016 Country At a Glance report: “Bosnia and Herzegovina is an EU potential candidate country and is now embarking on a new growth model amid a period of slow growth amid the global financial crisis”<sup>234</sup>. Nevertheless, the same WB report recommends: “Significant progress in implementing structural reforms will be needed if the country is to achieve faster economic growth than what is currently foreseen”.

#### **4.2. Minorities and Human Rights**

“We offer everything to our minorities, much more than any European country, we ensure that they have the greatest possible space and stay at Kosovo”. These are words from Ulpiana Lama, high official at the Kosovo Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in conversation with the author, in Pristina, in February 2007. But, throughout the region, what goes beyond political speech?

After independence in 1991, during the rule of Franjo Tudjman and HDZ in Croatia, there was mass discrimination against Serbs and against some of the newly established minorities, people who belonged to major communities in the former Yugoslavia who had suddenly become minorities in the new state of Croatia. 6,000 Serbs were then living in Croatia but only one third in late 2013. In 2015, according to Amnesty International<sup>235</sup>, “the town council of Vukovar passed a motion to remove public signs in the Cyrillic (Serb) alphabet, and to require a special request and the payment of a fee for the receipt of official communications in Cyrillic, despite the fact that 34 percent of the town’s population were ethnic Serbs. Besides, the Croatian law on minority rights entitles minorities amounting to one third of the municipal population to official usage of their languages and scripts. Discrimination against Croatian Serbs in public sector employment and in the restitution of tenancy rights to social housing vacated during the 1991-1995 war, persisted. Social

---

<sup>232</sup> <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/bosnia-and-herzegovina/unemployment-rate>. Published and accessed in May 2016.

<sup>233</sup> Available from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS>. Accessed on 30.05.2016.

<sup>234</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/bosniaandherzegovina>. Published in 2016. Accessed on 30.05.2016.

<sup>235</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/europe-and-central-asia/croatia/report-croatia/>. Accessed on 12.04.2016.

exclusion of and discrimination against Roma remained widespread, particularly in accessing adequate housing and employment opportunities”.

During the so-called Operation Storm in August 1995 (Tanner, 2001: 297), about 200,000 Serbs were forced to leave and it still remains an open issue whether it was a direct result of the ethnic cleansing efforts of the Croatian military forces, police and administration, or this was an organized exodus. Croatian analysts and historians in Zagreb admitted to the author<sup>236</sup> that probably the truth probably lies somewhere in-between.

However, another 200,000 ethnic Serbs left their homes in areas that were not directly afflicted by conflict: under pressure, fear from violence, because their lives were made impossible, or because they were fired from their jobs, especially in the public sector<sup>237</sup>. As one could observe in 2014, there are still many totally empty villages in Croatia: destroyed and without people. The recent past still shadowing the newest EU member state.

Problems with democracy and human rights in Croatia, throughout the 1990s, might best be summarized as an ethnic-dominated-state with the arbitrary exercise of power across all of society: in culture, education, military, police, the judiciary. “It was all based on the dominant authoritarian policy”, according to Srdjan Dvornik, a renowned political analyst in Zagreb<sup>238</sup>. To activists, “it was nonetheless a time when everything was clear, horrific but clear. If people are arbitrarily expelled from their apartments, put under immense pressure, threatened, killed, with total impunity from those who were the material or moral perpetrators, the picture is clear”<sup>239</sup>.

1999 was a watershed year in Croatia. Public opinion was experiencing a widespread sense of exhaustion in the Tudjman regime, especially due to the broad perception of impunity of the political class involved in corruption; it was also a very ineffective government in dealing with the economy with unemployment on the rise. All the governments that came after 1999, the social-democrat led coalition and then, after 2003, even the HDZ when it returned to office, were perceived as something opposite to Tudjman’s rule: in particular, they were pro-western and open to reforms. However, violations of human rights were still taking place, discrimination continued even if now with less violence.

Currently, the country runs a well-developed system of human rights protection through the General Ombudsperson, and three ombudspersons specialized in different areas: gender equality, people with disabilities and children’s rights. One of the most burning issues

---

<sup>236</sup> Interviews with the author, on the grounds of anonymity, in late May 2013.

<sup>237</sup> See <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/469cbf902.pdf>. A self-called “micro study” by Ljubomir Mikic, “Croatia: Challenges for Sustainable Return of Ethnic Serb Refugees”, published by the Center for Peace, Legal Advice and Psychosocial Assistance, Vukovar, Croatia, and Minority Rights Group International (MRG), London, UK, in October 2005. Accessed on 13.04.2016.

<sup>238</sup> Interview with the author, 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2013.

<sup>239</sup> See Srdjan Popovic, *Actors Without Society, The role of civil actors in the postcommunist transformation*, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin, 2009.

of the 1990s and the first decade of this millennium was the return of refugees, since through paying attention to some individual stories, one could realize the systemic obstructions still in place. Srdjan Dvornik<sup>240</sup> tells the author that the official figures inform of 115,000 returnees, “but actually it may mean half of that, because the other half is people who are registered as returnees but who cannot live in Croatia, because at best what they got was the reconstruction of their houses and return of their property in terms of land, but not equipment”. No jobs, no infrastructures, houses<sup>241</sup> rebuilt but left without a connection to the national grid. And those cases which are still open, which the Ombudsperson<sup>242</sup> office is dealing with, “show how those people are treated, most of them old people, not educated, and in the end, experiencing all kinds of abuses from the system”<sup>243</sup>.

In Vukovar, Croatia, the children are segregated in education as from kindergarten, with Croatian and Serbian children completely separated, in a situation that can continue through primary and secondary schooling. The curricula may be the same but the content differs according to the books they decide to use. Serb children study from the books used in Serbia and local representatives of the Serb minority vote against integrated education. They thus wanted and chose to retain ethnic separation<sup>244</sup>.

Do they get access to public jobs outside of their hometowns? For instance, in public positions in Zagreb? The Constitutional Law<sup>245</sup> of Croatia states that authorities should employ a certain percentage, in proportion, of ethnic minorities<sup>246</sup>, but there are no fines or

---

<sup>240</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serb-refugees-called-to-return-to-croatia-bosnia>. Published on 08.08.2013. Accessed on 13.04.2016.

<sup>241</sup> <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/croatian-serbs-await-return-lost-homes>. Published on 15.02.2010, accessed on 13.04.2016.

<sup>242</sup> To acknowledge the importance and the role of these Ombudspersons, the institution itself and its relationship with the quality of democracy, see the lecture held on the inauguration of the Graduate School in Political Science, University of Siena, Academic Year 2006/2007, given on October 17, 2006, by Professor P. □Ikiforos Diamandouros, the European Ombudsman. <http://www.circap.org/uploads/1/8/1/6/18163511/diamanduros.pdf>. Accessed on 13.04.2016.

<sup>243</sup> See Popovic, Srdjan (2009), *Actors Without Society, The role of civil actors in the post-communist transformation*, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin.

<sup>244</sup> Available from <http://rs.yihr.org/en/article/222/Youth-from-Serbia-and-Croatia-Pay-Respects-to-Victims-of-War-in-Vukovar>. Published on 5.11.2010. Accessed on 16.07.2014.

<sup>245</sup> See [www.sabor.hr/fgs.axd?id=17074](http://www.sabor.hr/fgs.axd?id=17074). Article 15 states that, “Equal rights for the members of all national minorities in the Republic of Croatia are guaranteed; (...) the right of the members of national minorities to elect their representatives to the Croatian Parliament may be stipulated by law; the freedom of the members of all national minorities to express their nationality, to use their language and script, and to exercise cultural autonomy shall be guaranteed”. Accessed on 13.04.2016.

<sup>246</sup> “The Republic of Croatia is hereby established as the nation state of the Croatian nation and the state of the members of its national minorities: Serbs, Czechs, Slovaks, Italians, Hungarians, Jews, Germans, Austrians, Ukrainians, Russians, Bosniaks, Slovenians, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Russians, Bulgarians, Poles, Roma, Romanians, Turks, Vlachs, Albanians and others who are its citizens and who are guaranteed equality with citizens of Croatian nationality and the exercise of their national rights in compliance with the democratic norms of the United Nations and the countries of the free world”.



sanctions for those failing to comply with the law<sup>247</sup>. Furthermore, governments have encountered justification for not accomplishing this constitutional obligation in the austerity measures and the economic crisis and recession.

The Preševo Valley, an Albanian inhabited territory within Serbia's borders, sits on the Serbian side of the border with Kosovo and resembles the opposite case to North Kosovo. Until the end of Second World War, it was a part of Kosovo. Local Albanians are linked to Albanians in the former southern province just as the Serbs in Northern Kosovo are linked with those in Serbia proper. In early July 2013, the Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić stated that the government is ready to talk with everyone about the minority rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the highest international standards, assuring, however, that there will be "no talks about any changes to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country".<sup>248</sup>

Serbia has a government Coordination Body for the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, which form the region known as Preševo Valley (the author was there for the second time in August 2015 and had visited this part of Serbia during the clashes in 2001), facing a difficult economic situation, high unemployment rates and, more recently, pressure from a large influx of mostly Syrian refugees<sup>249</sup>. In June 2013, Belgrade adopted a seven-point platform, focusing on the participation of Albanians in state-owned institutions, economic recovery, official usage of the language spoken and written by the minority and of its national symbols, the decentralization of the judiciary, and other crucial issues for everyday life, such as education, culture and media, healthcare and social protection, and security. The Belgrade authorities and Albanian representatives in the Preševo Valley are, above all, making some considerable efforts to nurture confidence, building measures to improve mutual trust in this also complex area of the former Yugoslavia<sup>250</sup>.

Another sensitive issue to Serbian society regarding minority rights is the situation of LGBT<sup>251</sup> citizens. In March 2009, the parliament adopted the first anti-discrimination law – Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination 2009, prohibiting discrimination on a number of grounds, including sexual orientation. Feeling obviously encouraged, the Serbian LGBT community announced the second Pride Parade on 20th September, in Belgrade. However, the organizers came up against strong resistance and not only from far-right groups. Political

---

<sup>247</sup> Article 4 of the Constitutional Act of the National Minorities declares that "every kind of discrimination on the basis of membership to a national minority is prohibited. Equality before the law and equal legal protection is guaranteed to members of national minorities".  
<http://www.regione.taa.it/biblioteca/minoranze/croazia2.pdf>. Accessed on 14.04.2016.

<sup>248</sup> Available from  
[http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=02&nav\\_id=86823](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=02&nav_id=86823). Published on 02.07.2013. Accessed on 23.04.2014.

<sup>249</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/former-balkan-refugees-help-syrian-migrants-09-11-2015>. Published on 11.09.2015, accessed on 24.04.2016.

<sup>250</sup> See also <http://ejls.euser.org/issues/may-august-2015/Veton.pdf> Accessed on 24.04.2016.

<sup>251</sup> Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual.

parties and the Serbian Orthodox Church were also among the critics of the Pride Parade. The event was eventually cancelled “due to a lack of security assurances”, which motivated harsh criticism from some Serbian NGOs, becoming “evident that Serbia would not be able to make any further progress in European integration without substantial changes to its LGBT rights policy”.

A shift in police behaviour was clearly noticed when LGBT activists announced a Pride march in the following year: “the 2010 Parade was finally held on 10 October 2010. However, during the Parade, thousands of police officers sealed off the parade venues, repeatedly clashing with far-right extremists who tried to burst through the security cordons, while chanting ‘Death to fags!’”, at the same time reflecting what Isdora Stakic understands as the deeply “ingrained homophobia” in Serbian society. It is a clear fact that the legal standing of the LGBT population in Serbia has improved since 2012, according to the Lesbian Human Right Organization Labris. The law now contemplates aggravating verdicts in hate crimes inspired by discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. In 2012 and 2013, however, the Belgrade Pride Parade did not take place due to safety and security reasons after violent threats from hooligans, in a clear violation of the right to freedom of assembly.

In 2014, the parade took place without any incidents, which conveys considerable progress, but amidst strong security measures, “including special forces and armoured vehicles”, which makes one wonder whether there would have been the will to deploy them were Serbia not so eager to fulfil its candidacy to EU membership<sup>252</sup>. According to the BBC reports, “keeping Brussels [the European institutions] happy is undoubtedly the motivation for allowing” the 2014 Gay Pride march “to go ahead”.

The Pride parade took place again in 2015, without major incidents, but still only after “riot police shut down the city centre to ensure security and senior officials warned that violence would not be tolerated”.

Jelisaveta Blagojevic, a professor and gender rights activist, claims that the need for protection in order to carry out the march amounts to evidence that “progress still needs to be made”, and that the “huge police presence indicates that the event is still not what it supposed to be,” Blagojevic told BIRN. However, we understand that there is a significant political effort to change policies, and probably even more importantly, mentalities. “Serbia’s European integration minister Jadranka Joksimovic, culture minister – who sent a letter of support to Belgrade’s LGBT community ahead of the march -, Ivan Tasovac and Belgrade mayor Sinisa Mali joined the march” (ibid.), which would have been something impossible just a few years ago. The Serbian politicians were joined by the head of the EU delegation in

---

<sup>252</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29399404>. Published on 28.09.2014. Accessed on 25.04.2016.

Serbia, Michael Davenport, and the US ambassador to Belgrade, Michael Kirby. Two consecutive years in which the march was allowed and went off peacefully represents an important symbolic step on the long road to eliminating discrimination against LGBT people's rights.

On the other hand, the type of language used by the prime minister, while assuring the right to demonstrate and the need for security according to European standards, may also cause a certain degree of apprehension: "I will not attend those parades. It is my right. I was not there last year, I will not attend it next year as well, neither as a prime minister nor as a citizen. I have something else to do at the time. But state institutions must ensure that every citizen feels secure and that is a European standard". A head of government should not dismiss his presence at an event with over a year in advance, arguing that he has "something else to do at the time", an excuse which, to our view, reveals not only some disrespect but also inevitably raises questions over the sincerity of the policy change embraced by the country concerning LGBT rights.

However, the most pressing issue for Serbian authorities is the non-solved question of the final status of its former southern province, Kosovo.

### **4.3. Kosovo: the new country in the Balkans**

Kosovo never belonged to Serbia and "will never belong to it". These words from Kosovo Prime Minister Isa Mustafa were proclaimed a week ahead of the Serbian early parliamentary elections on 24 April 2016<sup>253</sup>. A completely conflicting and contradictory approach to that produced in Belgrade. As many years before, in 1999, in Belgrade under NATO bombing, the BCHR Vojin Dimitrijevic would tell the author, "the biggest problem in Kosovo since an early moment was that there was always a permute of domination, but never consensus or agreement; whether the Albanians dominating Serbs, or Serbs dominating the Albanians. Only the so-called middle-class bourgeois would live together well, for instance in Prizren" (Alexandre, 2002: 73).

Today, on the one hand, Kosovo's viability as an independent state continues to raise questions whenever taking into account dimensions such as organized crime and endemic corruption, and the country would easily get ranked in the category of 'failed state'; on the other hand, authors such as José Manuel Pureza (2000), David Chandler (2002) and Mark Duffield (2001) make a critical reading of this current, denouncing what could be understood as a historical revenge against anti-colonialism. It also reveals the lack of capacity of researchers and theorists to articulate, and consequently bear in mind, the context of fragility

---

<sup>253</sup> Quoted from Tanjug. Available from [www.b92.net](http://www.b92.net). "Mustafa says 'Kosovo never belonged to Serbia'", published on 22.04.2016, accessed on 24.04.2016.

of new states coupled with the very fragility of the international economic system in which we live, and with the complex management of expectations - and unfulfilled promises – made by those who do not take long, soon after promises of aid and development, besides unquestionable political support, to classify those same new states as “failed”.

The political situation and the EU integration prospects for Serbia are still considerably dependent on the evolution of its relationship with Kosovo. So as Kosovo’s prospects are, as well. It is not likely to ever happen what once Ramush Haradinaj hoped for, as he told this author: “We want to join Europe. We want to offer Kosovo to Europe. As fast as we reach it, the happiest we’ll be. But what we want to assure right from now is that we do not have to go through Belgrade to get to Brussels because that is not our way” (Alexandre, 2002: 149).

Kosovo is considered by Serbs the cradle of the Serbian nation, where the sovereign Serbia was born, where there are historical monuments preserved as material proof of a medieval empire that for a century – until 1389 – was the strongest empire in the region. Dragnich (1995) argues that “we can only speculate on what there was in Kosovo prior to the coming of the Serbs in about the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.”<sup>254</sup>. This is not the vision of multiple Albanian sources.

The Serbian government reached a historical agreement with its southern former province in April 2013. Belgrade considers that a seat for Kosovo in the UN will not be a precondition to the start of Serbia’s EU accession negotiations<sup>255</sup>. The former EU High Representative Catherine Ashton said in Belgrade at that time that Serbia's leaders had shown vision and courage in making hard decisions. Serbian president Tomislav Nikolic said Serbia would continue to fulfil its obligations towards the EU at the same pace but also towards its own people when it comes to providing a better life; at the same time, reiterating they had told the EU High Commissioner Catherine Ashton once again that Serbia would never recognize Kosovo. Lady Ashton had replied that no one was asking Serbia to recognize Kosovo. Spain, Cyprus, Greece, Romania and Slovakia are the EU countries which have not recognized Kosovo’s independence, besides big countries such as Russia, China and Brazil<sup>256</sup>

Prior to the aforementioned outstanding victory in the Serbian parliamentary elections, in 2014 and 2016<sup>257</sup>, the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) also won the municipal elections in Mitrovica, the city on the north bank of the Ibar River, with four municipalities

---

<sup>254</sup> Dragnich, Alex N. (1995), *Yugoslavia’s Disintegration and the Struggle for Truth*, East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 33.

<sup>255</sup> Available from

[http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=01&dd=24&nav\\_id=84321](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=01&dd=24&nav_id=84321). Published 24-01-2013. Accessed on 21-07-2014.

<sup>256</sup> <http://inserbia.info/today/2015/10/countries-that-did-not-recognize-kosovo-under-great-pressure/>. Published on October 13, 2015. Accessed on 24.04.2016.

<sup>257</sup> The elections were held on April 24, 2016.

mostly inhabited by Serbs, in what was considered as a victory for the policy implemented by the party in the territory that Belgrade still considers as Serbia's southern province.

The former Prime Minister Ivica Dacic said that "Serbia's positions have not changed," but the country is taking into account the Kosovo Albanians' "right to decide where they want to live,"<sup>258</sup> but that Serbs should also have "the same right." In an interview published in July 2013 in *Nezavisne Novine*, a Bosnian Banja Luka based daily, Dacic added that "there's been enough hate and violence during these centuries from the Kosovo Battle onwards and it is very hard to come up with a solution that is acceptable to both Serbs and Albanians".<sup>259</sup> The ultranationalist politicians who won both parliamentary and presidential elections in Serbia for the first time in 2012, turned into pragmatic 'europeanists'.

Catherine Ashton focused both parties on the need for normalizing everyday relations, agreeing on broad principles and letting those principles drive normalization on the ground. The deal was reached on April 19, 2013. That enabled Belgrade to withdraw the security structures<sup>260</sup> it had maintained in northern Kosovo since 1999, as well as accepting, at least in principle, that the laws approved in Pristina are applied to the whole Kosovo territory. This raised huge protests among the Serbs living north of the Ibar River and from senior members of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

There are still frequent incidents between Albanians and Serbs in the former province declared independent state. Several Serbs, at least three children among them, suffered injuries on 28th June 2013 when the buses they were travelling in, were attacked with stones. The victims were returning from the ceremonies marking St. Vitus Day (Vidovdan) at Gazimestan, near Pristina<sup>261</sup>.

In the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, some progress has happened, but many open issues remain. In early 2014, the USA and the EU started putting some considerable pressure on Kosovo authorities in order to create a special tribunal to deal with war crimes committed after the war ended in June 1999. The president of Kosovo is in favour of the creation of such a tribunal and the then Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi – President of the

---

<sup>258</sup> Available from [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=12&nav\\_id=86934](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=12&nav_id=86934). Published on 12-07-2013. Accessed on 21-07-2014.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> "Illegal security, paramilitary and police Serbian State structures that still today are led, controlled and financed by Belgrade". Intervention by Enver Hoxhaj, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo, at the United Nations Security Council, Sixty-seventh year, 6,713th meeting, 8 February 2012, New York. Available from <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Kos%20S%20PV%206713.pdf>.

<sup>261</sup> Available from [http://www.b92.net/mobilni/eng/index.php?nav\\_id=86789](http://www.b92.net/mobilni/eng/index.php?nav_id=86789). Published on 28.06.2013. Accessed on 21.07.2014. St. Vitus Day is a Serbian religious holiday, on June 28. It is also a memorial day to Saint Prince Lazar who gave his life fighting during the epic Battle of Kosovo against the Ottoman Empire on June 28, 1389.

Republic of Kosovo at the time of writing - called on parliament to approve its establishment although he still publicly considered it “completely unjustified and an insult to Kosovo” Albanians<sup>262</sup>, who could, in some cases, be considered the criminals and not the war victims as they are commonly portrayed.

That new tribunal, with both local and international judges and prosecutors, holds its sessions in Pristina and in The Hague (the Dutch judicial bodies were asked for assistance, due to their experience in high standard international law) and could be dealing with cases such as human organs trafficking, that may prove to involve the current – as of writing - President of Kosovo himself, Hashim Thaçi as one of the alleged masterminds of a criminal organization<sup>263</sup>, according to a report by Dick Marty from the Council of Europe. The report, published in 2010<sup>264</sup>, “alleged that former commanders of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), from the so-called Drenica group (...) ran organised criminal enterprises including an ad-hoc network of detention facilities in Albania”.<sup>265</sup> Kosovo rejected the conclusions and allegations of the Dick Marty report, and the EU officials in “both Brussels and Pristina have challenged the author of the report to come up with his evidence”, arguing that “the ball is in Mr Marty's court now”, according to BBC’s Pristina source<sup>266</sup>. In late September 2016, as of writing, the first indictments were expected, which could give rise to protests in Kosovo.

Local NGOs, such as the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms, from the very outset urged parliament not to approve the court’s establishment, stating it “would be biased because it will not address Serbian wartime crimes”<sup>267</sup>. The nationalist movement Vetvendosje (Self-Determination) is also against the creation of such tribunal, which, in fact, can be set up by the United Nations Security Council, according to its 1244 resolution, that came into force in June 1999, establishing the terms for peace following NATO intervention in the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Although there are ongoing negotiations to clarify the final status of Kosovo, whose independence has been recognized by over one hundred countries, while many others have not done so<sup>268</sup>, the Serbian president Tomislav Nikolic, in an interview published in the

---

<sup>262</sup> Available from [www.b92.net](http://www.b92.net). “Court is insult to Kosovo, but vote to establish it”. Source: Beta. Published on 22-04-2014. Accessed on 24.04.2014.

<sup>263</sup> <https://www.welt.de/english-news/article2806537/German-spy-affair-might-have-been-revenge.html>. Published on 30.11.2008; accessed on 02.10.2016.

<sup>264</sup> [http://assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2010/20101218\\_ajdoc462010provamended.pdf](http://assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2010/20101218_ajdoc462010provamended.pdf). Published on 12.12.2010, accessed on 24.04.2016.

<sup>265</sup> Available from <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/kosovo-urged-to-approve-war-crime-tribunal>. Published on 22.04.2014. Accessed on 23.04.2014.

<sup>266</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-12006948>. Published on 16.12.2010, accessed on 24.04.2016.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> This remains the case for Spain, Greece, Romania and Slovakia among the EU members states. Despite prior objections, in April 2013, following a resolution by the European Parliament which

Austrian daily Die Press on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2014, insists on the idea that “If the EU decided to admit Serbia without Kosovo, this would mean that it would not want Serbia at all. (...) We allowed our diplomats to take part in conferences to which Kosovo Albanians are also invited. We are ready to give Kosovo a broad autonomy, but not more. We cannot recognize the independence of Kosovo, regardless of all possible repercussions”.<sup>269</sup>

In an interview to RTP<sup>270</sup> with the author of this dissertation, the then president of Serbia, commenting on the fact that the first train to resume journeys from Belgrade to Kosovska Mitrovica carried the inscription, done by Serbian authorities, “Kosovo is Serbia”, questioned “why shouldn’t we do it if on a daily basis we are told exactly the contrary? They have just recently told that in Brussels, that they are sovereign, independent, that they have their territory. My answer is that this is a provocation. I understand their will, but they should understand ours as well. Who is violating international law? The one who seeks secession or the one who seeks to oppose it?” Establishing a parallel with a more recent case, Nikolic questioned once again: “why do the same people who stand for the independence of Kosovo do not want the independence of the Crimea? Is not the same thing? We do not recognize either because we know what it costs to separate a territory”.

To sum up, the author would say that there is an effective need to build sustainable political bridges to shorten the gap between these completely conflicting and contradictory approaches produced in Belgrade and Pristina.

#### **4.4. Rule of law, judiciary and cooperation with the ICTY**

According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), “despite progress, the justice system in Kosovo remains weak, with inadequate security for judges, court staff, prosecutors, and plaintiffs”<sup>271</sup>. HRW EU director Lotte Leicht expressed how “Kosovo has come a long way in the 15 years since the war. But when international judges there say the justice system is not ready to handle sensitive cases, Kosovo’s parliament needs to listen and to act on behalf of Kosovo’s people to advance protection and justice”<sup>272</sup>.

Croatia, despite its EU membership, as every country in the region, needs to further consolidate the independence of the judiciary, both the judges and the prosecutors. After the

---

urged all EU member states which had not recognised Kosovo to do so, Romania's Prime Minister Victor Ponta stated that his country must follow the EU's lead.

<sup>269</sup> Available from [www.b92.net](http://www.b92.net). Published on 10.04.2014. Accessed on 23.04.2014.

<sup>270</sup> 30.01.2017. Available at [https://www.rtp.pt/noticias/mundo/presidente-da-servia-rejeita-independencia-do-kosovo\\_v979537#](https://www.rtp.pt/noticias/mundo/presidente-da-servia-rejeita-independencia-do-kosovo_v979537#).

<sup>271</sup> Available from <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/hrw-backs-new-kosovo-war-crimes-tribunal>. Balkan Insight, published on 11.04.2014. Accessed on 24.04.2014.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

accession processes of Bulgaria and Romania, there was, among the EU institutions, a widespread priority need to address issues related to the rule of law.

In the countries studied, there is still a huge gap to fill between the formal reforms and their impact on everyday life. Moreover, those responsible for the implementation of laws, regulations and reforms are not held accountable for the results<sup>273</sup>.

In the judiciary, Croatia has started to implement disciplinary measures for judges who work ineffectively but there is still a lack of disciplinary measures for judges who misuse their authority. Officials from a Zagreb based NGOs told the author, in a meeting in the Croatian capital in May 2013, about the case of a judge in Lika, a region severely affected by the war in the so called Serb Krajina, who had told an ethnic Serb being tried for war crimes: “You Serbs and Turks are collectively responsible for the atrocities committed against Croats in the last five hundred years”. This was directly stated in the court decision, signed by Judge Branko Milanovic<sup>274</sup>. There was no legal possibility of judging him for political misuse of his function even though he did eventually get dismissed as more than 80 per cent of his decisions were annulled by the higher tribunals. The National Judicial Council is the only body with competences for holding judges accountable.

On the other hand, the interventions of the Ombudsperson are effective only insofar as the authorities are willing to cooperate as this entity lacks the legal powers to force authorities to comply and may only request that they are checked by internal inspections. Furthermore, the Ombudsperson cannot do what an NGO can: when the system does not respond, NGOs go public<sup>275</sup>. Another problem, the same sources argue, is that the three specialized Ombudspersons get automatically dismissed should their Annual report not be accepted by Parliament, which reflects a very weak democracy and an easy way for the ruling party to get rid of the Ombudspersons, when and if they tend to be non-cooperative<sup>276</sup> with their interests.

Corruption features as a rather serious problem in BiH and has been a major priority to Vucic’s government in Serbia as well. BiH does not have any strong legislation in place to combat corruption, lacks effective independent anticorruption agencies and, above all, lacks the political will to address the issue seriously. The country was ranked 76 among 168

---

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> *The Freedom House* reported another case from this judge in its 2008 Annual Report. Available from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2008/croatia>, Croatia’s newspaper *Nacional* had done it before in another controversial ruling from this judge, ruling not guilty in the case of a US basketball player allegedly raped by a Croat man. Available from <http://www.nacional.hr/en/clanak/22768/milanovic-previously-acquitted-rapists>.

<sup>275</sup> <http://ombudsman.hr/en/about-us/ombudsman-mandates>. Created on 04.04.2014. Accessed on 14.04.2016.

<sup>276</sup> Law on Ombudsperson in Croatia available at <http://www.osce.org/zagreb/21433?download=true>. Article 3 “The ombudsman is chosen and dismissed by the House of Representatives of the Sabor of the Republic of Croatia”. Accessed on 14.04.2016.



countries in Transparency International's 2015 Corruption Perceptions Index. Not a good performance for a country aiming for EU membership. Croatia is in 50<sup>th</sup> position, Serbia 71<sup>st</sup> and only Kosovo, from the cases studied, performs worse than BiH, ranking 103<sup>rd</sup><sup>277</sup>.

According to a Freedom House report, despite growing independence, in BiH "the judiciary remains susceptible to influence by nationalist political parties, and faces pressure from the executive" power. "The lack of a single, supreme judicial body and the existence of four separate court systems—for the central state, Republika Srpska, the Federation, and the Brčko district— contribute to overall inefficiency". Meanwhile, wounds of the war are still reflected in the judiciary and the "results of the 2013 census, whose release has been delayed, are expected to formally display the extent of wartime ethnic cleansing".

In December 2009, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruled that the Bosnian constitution is discriminatory<sup>278</sup>. It allows only Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs to run for the presidency or serve in the upper house of parliament, excluding candidates from the Jewish, Roma, and other smaller minorities. The implementation of the ECHR decision remains as one of the top priorities in order for Bosnia Herzegovina to apply for EU membership.

Dervo Sejdic is a prominent Bosnian Roma activist and Vice President of the Roma Information Centre in Sarajevo. Working for two decades as a civic activist, Sejdic has made an extensive contribution to Roma<sup>279</sup> empowerment, housing, employment, and access to healthcare across BiH. But, fundamentally, he has managed to set into motion changes to electoral law that would allow for the greater representation of minorities at the local level. This happened in 2006 when he joined a leader of the Bosnian Jewish community (of a few thousand in BiH), Jakob Finci, and they launched a discrimination lawsuit against Bosnia and Herzegovina before the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg<sup>280</sup>. Three years later, the two won the suit and Bosnia was ordered to amend its constitution to allow for minority representation in all branches of government. They are not allowed, for instance, to run for presidency (as Finci tried to in the 2006 presidential elections). The amendments were however never introduced, and Bosnia continues to elect its officials according to national

---

<sup>277</sup> Available from <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2015/#results-table>. Accessed on 30.05.2016.

<sup>278</sup> Available from [http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-96491#{"itemid":\["001-96491"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-96491#{). Published on 22.12.2009. Accessed on 23.07.2014.

<sup>279</sup> Available from <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/04/04/bosnia-and-herzegovina-roma-jews-face-political-discrimination-0>. Roma population's living conditions are well below the poverty line with more than 95 percent of Roma unemployed and with 65 percent excluded from the educational process. Life expectancy is much lower than the average for the overall BiH population. Additionally, their participation in the country's political life is null. Published on 04.04.2012. Accessed on 24.07.2014.

<sup>280</sup> Available from <http://www.gmfus.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/TLS-Final-Program-Program-Book-Balkans-2013.pdf>. Accessed on 24.05.2013.

quotas that only allow for the representation of the three main nationalities, Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs.

Doris Pack, a German MP, proposed in the April 2013 Council of Europe meeting, that BiH should be either expelled or have its rights suspended at the Council, a move that raised deep discontent from Bosnian state officials<sup>281</sup>. The proposal was given short shrift. Of course, were Bosnia suspended, Sejdic & Finci would have no place to try and defend their rights, as a Swedish MP claimed. It is worth remembering that without the implementation of the Sejdic & Finci amendments, or at least some efforts to achieve this, the BiH application for EU membership will not get accepted. However, in March 2015, EU member states foreign ministers approved a “recommendation by Federica Mogherini, the EU’s foreign policy chief, that a pre-accession Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) signed in 2008 should take effect.”<sup>282</sup>

Was there a turning point in the EU’s demands? Not precisely. The point instead stems from the overwhelming awareness in Brussels that the Bosnian political elites “feel comfortable in a dysfunctional state whose laws and constitution guarantee them the power of patronage and of a never-ending stream of finance from public and semi-public enterprises, without any sort of accountability”. Bearing this in mind, the EU “re-defined its own conditionality, on German insistence. No longer did it demand a ‘credible effort’ to resolve Sejdic-Finci; a mere declaration to that effect would be enough. In January, the party leaders obliged, with a declaration in which they ‘irrevocably commit’ to improve the functionality of government institutions, to undertake economic and social reform, and to strengthen the rule of law”. In order to attain the development of such proposed reforms, the governmental institutions (without any mention of the national or entity level) “would devote ‘special attention’ to Sejdic-Finci” (ibid.).

However, the problem of discrimination was not at all solved by redefining conditionality. In a meeting with both Sejdic and Finci in Sarajevo<sup>283</sup>, Mr. Sejdic explained to the author how they had been fighting for political rights. For the position of the three members of Presidency, Sejdic and Finci proposed (and the idea was well received by the Serb entity authorities) that one member of the Presidency should be elected from Republika Srpska with two from the Federation but without any conditionality on their nationalities, which would allow everyone to participate instead of the current ethnic election which only allows those who are from the “constituent peoples” as stated in Dayton (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs; excluding the... “others”) to run for the highest positions. In the preceding peace

---

<sup>281</sup> Available from [http://www.europeanforum.net/news/1691/newsflash\\_11](http://www.europeanforum.net/news/1691/newsflash_11). Published on 30.10.2009. Accessed on 24.07.2014.

<sup>282</sup> <https://euobserver.com/beyond-brussels/127867>. Published on 05.03.2015, accessed on 30.05.2016.

<sup>283</sup> The author participated in a working lunch, with the group of participants from the TLS – Transatlantic Leadership Seminar of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, on 27.05.2013.

negotiations, “a civic view of the political system was never taken into account”, regrets Sejdic although he understood that “there was a greater need of stopping the war”<sup>284</sup>. Nevertheless, the point remains that even today national minority representatives are not engaged in the political discourse.

Dino Abazovic, Professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo, argues that in Bosnia “religious officials are privileged where the members of their religion and nationality is in the majority, while in areas where their people are in the minority they do not have any privileges and share the destiny of that nation. This is the paradox of BiH. Such as Bosnians, Serbs Croats who are both privileged and disadvantaged, depending on the environment in which they live, so the clergy is privileged or absolutely underprivileged depending on where they perform a religious service. (...) In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the secular character of the state every now and then is questioned, but on the other hand animosity is growing among the traditional believers towards the politicization of religion”<sup>285</sup>.

While the international community calls for independence in the judiciary sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is nevertheless worthwhile remembering the revolt in Zlatan Begic<sup>286</sup>’s “War, Peace and the Protests” article (Arsenijevic, 2014: 43): “The judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina is indeed ‘independent’—‘independent of any connection to legality and completely untouchable in its idleness, corruption and servicing of the interest of the criminalized political elites and the structures they have built. It is not ‘independent’ in anything else”.

In early July 2013, Serbian MPs adopted the 2013-2018 national strategies for justice system reform and the fight against corruption<sup>287</sup>. The strategy stipulates five crucial principles and priorities for the reform of the justice system in Serbia - independence, impartiality and the quality of justice, proficiency, responsibility and efficiency<sup>288</sup>. There does seem to be a very strong commitment to tackle corruption from the Serbian authorities. Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić claims “zero tolerance” in that struggle and claims that, through regional cooperation, efforts have been successful and former Yugoslavia is no longer a safe haven for organized crime. However, there were objections that the battle was somehow

---

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> <http://www.interfaithkosovo.org/blogs/117/why-religions-do-not-reconcile-balkan-people/?lang=En>. Accessed on 06.06.16.

<sup>286</sup> Assistant Professor of Constitutional Law at the Faculty of Law, Tuzla University, was deeply involved in the reforming project Proposed Recommendations for Amendments to the Constitution of the FBiH.

<sup>287</sup> Available from [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=02&nav\\_id=86814](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=02&nav_id=86814). Published on 02.07.2013. Accessed on 22.04.2014.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

“selective”<sup>289</sup>, which means directed at political opponents or, at least, at potential political opponents<sup>290</sup>. Some criticism was also made because it was the powerful Aleksandar Vučić who had himself been announcing most of the arrests rather than the prosecutors. Alternatively, when not Vučić, the pretty much government controlled tabloid newspapers took the lead in speaking out about corruption related arrests.

Experts in Serbia tend to say that the fight against corruption is irreversible, that there is no way back, but the Transparency Serbia Program Director, Nemanja Nenadić, says “a system is yet to be established which would make the fight independent of anyone's political will”<sup>291</sup>.

International Transparency's annual Global Corruption Barometer, published on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2013<sup>292</sup>, conveys how citizens tend to believe that their politicians and public institutions are increasingly prone to bribery. The perceived level of corruption has worsened in most Balkan countries with Serbia the only state registering progress while Croatia and Bosnia are treading water. The judiciary, medical and health services, parliament and political parties are perceived as some of the most corrupt public institutions in the region<sup>293</sup>. Nearly 50 percent in Kosovo believe that corruption increased significantly. Respondents in BiH also report worsening corruption with 34 percent saying that it increased a lot. Nearly half of the Croatians also believe that the war against corruption has been fruitless. Serbia was the only country in the region where people saw signs of progress in fighting corruption, with 55 percent believing things are better, and 34 percent responding that corruption has decreased a lot in the country. However, it is worth mentioning that when the survey was carried out in Serbia several important investigations had just been opened.

The general public opinion perception is that politics falls under the influence of powerful people acting behind the scenes. The survey also shows the number of bribery cases in all fields continues to rise, 50 percent of the citizens paid bribes in order to speed up procedures while in 15 percent of cases the bribe was the only way to get the service done<sup>294</sup>.

Also important to acknowledge, because of the impact on the processes of coming to

---

<sup>289</sup> Available from <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?ord538=grp1&lng=en&id=107952>. Published on 19.01.2006. Accessed on 22.07.2014.

<sup>290</sup> Available from <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/serbias-top-tycoon-trial-embezzlement>. Published on 14.11.2013. Accessed on 22.07.2014.

<sup>291</sup> Available from [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=08&nav\\_id=86871](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=08&nav_id=86871). "No going back in fight against corruption". Source: TANJUG. Published on 08-07-2013. Accessed on 21.04.2014.

<sup>292</sup> Available from [http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/global\\_corruption\\_barometer\\_2013](http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/global_corruption_barometer_2013). Accessed on 24.03.2014. The 2015-2016 Global Corruption Barometer, in its regional survey about Europe, is still forthcoming. In 2014, it was not published.

<sup>293</sup> The survey was conducted in Serbia in September 2012 with a sample of over 1,000 citizens.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

terms with the past, transitional justice and reconciliation in broad sense, is the cooperation of these countries with the ICTY. A turning point in terms of co-operation between Croatia and the ICTY came with the election of Croatia's new president, Stjepan Mesic. On the same day General Tomas [Tihomir] Blaskic was condemned, the new President of the Republic of Croatia, in a move unthinkable just a couple of years earlier, “puts the whole responsibility for Croatia's role on the conflict on the shoulders of Tudjman” (ibid.). On April 15, “Croatia's parliament adopts a declaration recognizing the jurisdiction of the ICTY for eventual war crimes committed in the 1991-95 Serbo-Croat conflict”. Blaskic<sup>295</sup> was sentenced to 45 years in prison (March, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2000) and Dario Kordic<sup>296</sup>, the political leader of Croats in Central Bosnia to 25 years in prison, mostly for the ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims in Ahmici. Subsequent evidence proved that “the Ahmici killers were clandestine Croatian forces under Tudjman’s command” (ibid.). The Ahmici massacre, the worst page in the Lašva Valley ethnic cleansing, was as well the single biggest atrocity committed against Bosniak civilians in the Bosnian-Croatian war in the spring of 1993.

The 1996 trial of Blaskic, after he handed himself in on April 1<sup>st</sup>, accused of war crimes, was a first moment of co-operation between Zagreb and The Hague. But, by the following year, the Hague based Tribunal was already criticizing the Croat government for a “lack of cooperation in handing over war criminals”<sup>297</sup>.

However, Croatia wanted to join EU and succumbing to the financial pressures proved inevitable: in April, Croatia transferred to The Hague “Zlatko Aleksovski, a former chief of the Croatian army internment camp in Bosnia (HVO) at Kaonik”, which was “hailed as the first stage in Croatia's cooperation with the ICTY”. He would have had his trial start on May 7th, 1999. At that time, NATO was already intervening militarily in Serbia, bombing the country for 78 days, due to the Serb offensive in Kosovo, in retaliation for the attacks of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK/KLA). The pressure over Croatia about cooperation with The Hague continued throughout the year and, in June, the USA delayed the “unblocking of a 30-million-dollar World Bank loan to Croatia. Croatia accused the ICTY both of partiality and of applying ‘unacceptable’ pressure” (ibid) but did deliver Dario Kordic to The Hague.

On July 7 2001, Zagreb announced the transfer to The Hague of Rahim Ademi and the – already by then – highly popular among his fellow-citizens, General Ante Gotovina, “who are regarded as nationalist ‘heroes’, though suspected of being responsible for the massacre of hundreds of Serb civilians during the conflict between Croatia and ethnic

---

<sup>295</sup> <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/blaskic/acjug/en/bla-aj040729e.pdf>. See also <http://www.internationalcrimesdatabase.org/Case/88>, about the early release of Blaskic in 2004. Accessed on 02.09.2016.

<sup>296</sup> [http://www.icty.org/x/cases/kordic\\_cerkez/tjug/en/kor-tj010226e.pdf](http://www.icty.org/x/cases/kordic_cerkez/tjug/en/kor-tj010226e.pdf). Accessed on 02.09.2016.

<sup>297</sup> <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/163/28769.html>. Agence France Presse. Published on 16.07.2001.

Serbs”<sup>298</sup>. The decision sparked a political conflict and four ministers of the government resigned. However, the EU accession process ongoing in the background set the tone.

The arrest of those Serbian citizens internationally held responsible for what happened in the 1990s was a crucial issue for Serbia in order to bring an end to international isolation and to recover a deprived economy. The country sent more than fifty indicted persons to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Eventually, after some years of compromising delay, even Ratko Mladić and Radovan Karadžić, the Bosnian Serb military and political leaders, indicted for genocide and crimes against humanity, were handed over and tried and even not helping each other in the court room, which came as some surprise<sup>299</sup>.

Recent decisions from the tribunal have seen the acquittals of some wartime commanders, which led to a show of public disappointment by its chief prosecutor, Serge Brammertz. Such proved the case of the Croatian generals Ante Gotovina and Mladen Markac, the Yugoslav general Momcilo Perisic and the Serbian security officials Jovica Stanisic and Franko Simatovic. On the twentieth anniversary of the ICTY, Presiding Judge Theodor Meron stated that the first international criminal tribunal since the Nuremberg and Tokyo courts which followed World War II “has faced and continues to face significant challenges. Nonetheless, through its trials and appeals, its jurisprudence, and its assistance to national jurisdictions, the Tribunal has made profound contributions to global efforts to battle impunity, to international law, and to the rule of law in the former Yugoslavia”<sup>300</sup>.

Up so far, 161 individuals have been indicted, including top politician and high ranking military; there is one case – Ratko Mladić, precisely – currently on trial, with proceedings concluded for 154 of the accused, with 83 sentenced, 56 having served their sentences with a case of appeal to be heard by the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT), Radovan Karadžić; and 19 acquitted, including the Croat general Ante Gotovina, the Bosniak Sefer Halilović, the Kosovars Ramush Haradinaj and Fatmir Limaj, the Serbs Milan Milutinović, Momčilo Perišić, Vojislav Šešelj and the Bosnian Naser Orić, among others. 7 people passed away following their transfer to the Tribunal, among them Goran Hadžić and... Slobodan Milošević.

A true landmark in the work of the ICTY was the trial and conviction of the former RS leader Radovan Karadžić, interviewed by the author in Pale, BiH in April 1996, who had been indicted in late July 1995 on the grounds he was “individually criminally responsible

---

<sup>298</sup> <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/163/28769.html>. Agence France Presse. Published on 16.07.2001.

<sup>299</sup> Available from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/serbia/10601233/Ratko-Mladić-walks-out-of-Radovan-Karadžić-war-crimes-trial.html>. Published on 28.01.2014. Accessed on 22-07-2014.

<sup>300</sup> Available from <http://www.icty.org/sid/11319>. ICTY’s 20th Anniversary – Statement by President Judge Theodor Meron. Accessed on 24.03.2014.

pursuant to Article 7(1) of the Tribunal's Statute for the counts set out above, inter alia, through his participation in a number of Joint Criminal Enterprises (JCEs).

It was correspondingly alleged that, from at least October 1991 until 30 November 1995, Karadžić participated in a JCE to permanently remove Bosnian Muslim and Bosnian Croat inhabitants from those areas of BiH claimed as Bosnian Serb territory. It is further alleged that Karadžić participated in a JCE to establish and carry out a campaign of sniping and shelling against the civilian population of Sarajevo, aimed at spreading terror amongst them. In addition, it was alleged that, "during the period immediately preceding 11 July and until 1 November 1995, Karadžić participated in a JCE to eliminate Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica by killing men and boys and forcibly removing women, young children and the elderly from the area". Lastly, the indictment alleged that "during May and June 1995, Karadžić participated in a JCE to take United Nations personnel hostage in order to compel NATO to abstain from conducting air strikes against Bosnian Serb military targets"<sup>301</sup>. Radovan Karadžić was also charged for "knowing or having reason to know that crimes were about to be committed or had been committed by forces under his effective control and failing to prevent the crimes or punish the perpetrators" (ibid.).

Laura Silber, who interviewed him on several occasions, whether in Pale or in Belgrade, Sarajevo and Geneva, doubts whether "Karadžić was in fact in control of the army", but is sure about "his control of the people [in Republica Srpska]; he was adored". She remembers "waking him up during the Bosnia peace talks, because we had set an interview and it was eleven o'clock in the morning and he was still in bed because he had been out gambling. He was that kind of person with his pockets full of cash. He was the pyramid of corruption and some sort of the banality of evil, in a sense that he was having a good time as people were being killed in his country".

Karadžić, in early March 2010, made his opening statement, claiming his innocence and repeating what he had said in an interview with the author. In that historical interview with the Portuguese media outlets Antena 1 and RTP, in the spring of 1996, Karadžić said: "The Republic of Srpska is a child of the European Community, of the European Union, because our republic has been proposed to us by Lord [Peter] Carrington and Ambassador [José] Cutileiro, and before the war all the sides had accepted the concepts of Lisbon [Peace Conference] and then the Muslims abandoned it and we had a war for three and a half years; then we had Dayton [Peace Agreement] and Dayton is very similar to Lisbon, so why we fought for three and a half years? We could have avoided this war". With the Cutileiro Plan? the author asked Mr. Karadžić. "Yes, with the Cutileiro Plan, because Dayton is very similar to the Cutileiro Plan". In the same interview in Pale, in April 1996, Karadžić assured the

---

<sup>301</sup> [http://www.icty.org/x/cases/Karadzic/cis/en/cis\\_Karadzic\\_en.pdf](http://www.icty.org/x/cases/Karadzic/cis/en/cis_Karadzic_en.pdf). Published on February 2014. Accessed on 27.04.2016.

author [working for the Portuguese public radio Antena 1] and two other Portuguese colleagues<sup>302</sup> that he was not “responsible or guilty, particularly when concerned to this war [the war in Bosnia, 1992-1995]”, claiming the lack of legitimacy of the ICTY, and, above all, saying. “I have done what I had to do for my people, I prevented, by my order, any atrocities”. Fourteen years later, Karadžić was on trial. Regarding the length of the war, the author asked a similar question to Sir David Owen, peacebroker with the US negotiator Cyrus Vance: “fundamentally because the incoming Clinton administration in 1993 did not support the Vance-owen peace plan and, above all, said publicly that they would never enforce it”, Mr. Owen claimed in an interview with this author in Lisbon in 2011, adding that the stand from the Clinton administration gave green light to General to “continuing suppressing the Muslim Bosnians and keep fighting the Bosnian Croats, safe that his power would never be challenged. I personally believe that if we had enforced the Vance-Owen Peace Plan in May 1993, which itself owed a great deal to the plan that Cutileiro had put down beforehand, then we would have had peace and Bosnia and Herzegovina would be together”.

In the Karadzic trial, the closing arguments took place from 29 September until 7 October 2014. The judgment was pronounced on 24 March 2016. Radovan Karadžić was found guilty of genocide, crimes against humanity and violations of the laws or customs of war committed by Serb forces during the armed conflict in BiH, from 1992 until 1995. He was convicted of genocide in the area of Srebrenica in 1995, of persecution, extermination, murder, deportation, inhumane acts (forcible transfer), terror, unlawful attacks on civilians and hostage-taking. He was acquitted of the charge of genocide in other municipalities in BiH in 1992 (ibid.).

One must also not forget some of the criticisms made of the ICTY, mostly from the nations “affected” by each of the most controversial decisions or those with the greatest impact, claiming political motivations had been behind the decisions of the judges.

Even in books about art such as the one by Rakic (2014: 10), we can find notes of the Serbian discontent about the functioning of the ICTY: “In the 20 years of the ICTY’s existence, 96.8% of all those found guilty have been Serbs and 68% of the indictments have been filed against either Serbs or Montenegrins”; “the alleged instigators of the three most serious mass crimes against Serbian civilians in Croatia, BiH and Kosovo – General Ante Gotovina, Brigadier-General Naser Oric and Commander Ramush Haradinaj<sup>303</sup> – were all cleared of charges by the ICTY”.

Meanwhile, Croatia’s conservative President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic wrote to the UN Secretary-General, expressing deep disappointment over the acquittal of Serbian SRS leader Vojislav Šešelj by the ICTY, noting that the verdict “will have a negative effect on

---

<sup>302</sup> Isabel Magalhães and Helder Oliveira from RTP television.

<sup>303</sup> Interviewed by this author in Pristina, Kosovo, in June 2000.



peace, reconciliation and good-neighbourly relations in the wider southeast European region," Serbian Tanjug news agency reported. "The verdict is a dangerous precedent for all other armed conflicts in which military objectives are sought to be achieved through genocide and ethnic cleansing", she wrote<sup>304</sup>.

It is worth mentioning that the ICTY, almost at the end of its mandate, is still trying to "reach out to young generations across the region and stimulate their interest in the Tribunal's mandate and wider issues of transitional justice and post-conflict recovery"<sup>305</sup>. The Tribunal's Outreach Programme launched the third round of its Youth Project with high school and university presentations in the countries of the former Yugoslavia to stimulate interest in the Tribunal's mandate and wider issues of transitional justice and post-conflict recovery among young generations across the region<sup>306</sup>. Students of the Fifth Gymnasium in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) attended the launch presentation of this phase of the programme. Students were presented with information regarding the prosecution of individuals accused of committing crimes during the siege of Sarajevo and encouraged to discuss the importance of the rule of law in dealing with the past: "the aim of the Outreach Programme is to foster critical thinking on issues of criminal law and transitional justice throughout the former Yugoslavia, and working with young people is a crucial part of this effort", as explained on the ICTY webpage<sup>307</sup>. Building respect for the rule of law among the young generation is crucial for the fulfilment of the Tribunal's mandate of contributing to peace and security in the region<sup>308</sup>. As many as 6,000 students from across the region have benefited from the Youth Outreach Programme which was launched in December 2011. The Outreach Programme receives support from the European Union and its work with the youth of the former Yugoslavia is supported by the Finnish government.

Lena Pelić, "Legal Advisor at the Office of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT), delivered two lectures in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kiseljak and Sarajevo) about the Tribunal's jurisprudence on defining and prosecuting wartime sexual violence."<sup>309</sup> This ICTY representative acknowledged the students' "sensitivity to gender-related crimes, especially in light of the fact that a large majority of the crimes of rape and other forms of sexual violence perpetrated during the 1990s conflict were committed in BiH". The Tribunal claims to have generated "a rich legacy on the topic of

---

<sup>304</sup> [http://www.tanjug.rs/full-view\\_en.aspx?izb=242204](http://www.tanjug.rs/full-view_en.aspx?izb=242204). Published on 20.04.2016. Accessed on 02.05.2016.

<sup>305</sup> Available from <http://www.icty.org/sid/11458>. Published on 06.03.2014. Accessed on 22.04.2014.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Available from <http://www.icty.org/sections/Outreach/OutreachProgramme>. Accessed on 25-07-2014.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

<sup>309</sup> <http://www.icty.org/en/outreach/activities/bosnian-students-learn-about-prosecution-of-sexual-violence-before-the-icty>. "Bosnian students learn about prosecution of sexual violence before the ICTY". Published on 25.05.16, accessed on 06.06.16.

wartime sexual violence, for which BiH students expressed interest in learning more about, as part of their regular university curriculum” (ibid.).

One important scholar on Balkan studies and transitional justice, Jelena Subotic<sup>310</sup>, (researching on human rights, post-conflict reconciliation, Europeanization and the Balkans),<sup>311</sup> in “Perspectives for Transitional Justice and Reconciliation”, studies the acquittals produced by the ICTY and puts forward three principal arguments. First, “in the absence of a broader transitional justice framework in the former Yugoslavia, the ICTY has become the principal instrument of both retributive and restorative justice, which places undue burdens on an institution with a narrow and technical mandate. Second, the ICTY has in no small part brought this unrealistic expectation onto itself by legitimizing its work to hostile domestic publics as a path to reconciliation and creation of a historical transcript, promises a court is not equipped to either make or keep. Third, the human rights community in the region has long relied on the ICTY to be its ‘force multiplier’ in building transitional justice efforts.”<sup>312</sup> She makes, through analysis of two specific case verdicts (Gotovina and Haradinaj), an additional “claim about the contradictions of the ICTY as a procedural place of justice and an institutional foundation for reconciliation” (ibid.).

The author of this dissertation follows Subotic when arguing about the “depth of emotion with which the Gotovina, Haradinaj and Perišić verdicts were met in Serbia, Croatia, Kosovo, and Bosnia”. The contrasting public reactions to the acquittals across the region point to the “remarkable incompatibility of public narratives about the war of the 1990s and indicate a cognitive impossibility that any ICTY verdict – a conviction or an acquittal – would be able to change the public memory of the violence”.

Let us take the case of the Croat general Ante Gotovina, significantly responsible for Operation Storm in the summer of 1995, which led to the expulsion of nearly 300,000 Serbs from Serb held territories in Croatia (where those Serbs had been born and ever since lived) under heavy bombardment, whose November 2012<sup>313</sup> acquittal sparked anger in Belgrade. Operation Storm, whatever its disputable figures (Zagreb claims fewer people were expelled and, moreover, they were not forced to leave but instead convinced to do so by local Serb political authorities and the Belgrade leadership, *alias*, Slobodan Milošević), in any case had a huge impact in Serbia and, in a certain way, helped Serbs show the world, right after Srebrenica, that they were not the only perpetrators of ethnic violence and, above all, they

---

<sup>310</sup> Associate Professor at Georgia State University, a PhD in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and author of *Hijacked Justice: Dealing with the Past in the Balkans* (Cornell University Press, 2009), “which examined ways in which political elites in the Western Balkans used of post-conflict justice for local political purposes in the aftermath of the Yugoslav wars”.

<sup>311</sup> <http://shared.cas.gsu.edu/profile/jelena-subotic-2/>. Accessed on 05.06.16.

<sup>312</sup> Available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/170007/pfpc\\_26\\_rssee.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/170007/pfpc_26_rssee.pdf). Accessed on 06.06.16.

<sup>313</sup> Available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/croatia/9682855/Croatian-hero-Ante-Gotovina-acquitted-of-war-crimes.html>. Accessed on 06.06.16.

were also the victims. Subotic argues that, “the ICTY indictment of Croatian Army leadership (...) allowed Serbian political actors across the political spectrum to use the Gotovina case as an exercise in ‘crime equality’ – if there is Srebrenica, there is also Operation Storm. This false equivalence became the founding bloc of the Serbian understanding of what ‘reconciliation’ entails – the acknowledgment of responsibility for crimes of all sides, as the only path to Serbian acknowledgment of its own culpability for mass atrocity”.

As one might imagine, the reaction in Croatia would be completely the opposite from the one in Serbia, with thousands gathering in Zagreb’s central square and newspapers exulting over an overall collectivization of the individual innocence. Furthermore, the Prime Minister, Zoran Milanović “dispatched two ministers on a government plane to The Hague to accompany” General Gotovina back home. Croats saw it, as a confirmation that Croatia did not become an independent state “on the heels of ethnic cleansing of its minorities, and that whatever attacks by the Croatian army on majority Serbian cities occurred, were within the legal parameters of defence against armed Serb rebels and broader Serbian aggression”<sup>314</sup>. However, former Croatian president Ivo Josipović acknowledged that war crimes did occur in the aftermath of Operation Storm and pledged that Croatia “had to do everything to prosecute those crimes.”<sup>315</sup>

Serbia also threatened to cancel cooperation with the ICTY when the tribunal released the verdict of the Ramush Haradinaj’s case, a former minister and KLA Commander<sup>316</sup>; Vuk Jeremić, Serbia’s former foreign minister and then president of the United Nations General Assembly, scheduled a debate in April 2013 at the UN about the existence, functioning and funding of *ad hoc* tribunals, a move that was rather criticized by some countries, including the USA<sup>317</sup>, which considered it a “serious breach of protocol and outside the president’s regular mandate”.

As expected, the reaction in Kosovo to Haradinaj’s verdict was completely different and Kosovo Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi said the following: “this verdict is the most powerful proof that the Kosovo Liberation Army fought a just war for freedom.”

The public perception in the region about the three verdicts headed in the direction of labelling the ICTY as “responsible for ending reconciliation, strengthening nationalism, delegitimizing ongoing trials in front of domestic courts, impeding EU integration” (ibidem).

---

<sup>314</sup> Available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/170007/pfpc\\_26\\_rssee.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/170007/pfpc_26_rssee.pdf). Page 21. Accessed on 06.06.16.

<sup>315</sup> <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14754835.2013.824290?journalCode=cjhr20>. Accessed on 09.07.16.

<sup>316</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/hague-ruling-spat-in-serbia-s-face-says-belgrade>. Published on 29.11.2012; accessed on 09.07.16. See also <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/hague-acquits-kosovo-s-haradinaj>.

<sup>317</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/un-debate-turns-as-criticism-of-the-icty>. Published on 11.04.2013, accessed on 09.07.2016.

This indeed constitutes an interesting line of research: reflecting on the impact of this sort of criticism of the ICTY and whether there is any kind of influence over the regional transitional justice processes.

Refik Hodzic is a justice activist from the Bosnian city of Prijedor and a former ICTY spokesman, now working with the International Centre for Transitional Justice<sup>318</sup>. Publishing an article in *Balkan Insight* (2013) entitled “Accepting a Difficult Truth: ICTY is Not Our Court,”<sup>319</sup> Hodzic claims the UNSC resolution through which the ICTY was created “does not mention any broader social or political responsibility of the tribunal other than that its operations would ‘contribute to the restoration and maintenance of peace’”. There were no specifications on how a tribunal might contribute to peace but, especially “among scholars and human rights advocates”, the idea spread that the ICTY “would provide a much broader benefit to the region other than just administer justice to a select few defendants”.

In the opinion of the author of this dissertation, to some extent alongside authors such as Hodzic, there was huge idealism in the way the ICTY was commonly perceived. From contributing to peace building, the ICTY was already supposed to be establishing the grounds for achieving reconciliation. Hodzic tells us that several studies, with empirical approaches, “that have tried to measure whether the ICTY has produced reconciliation have come up with negligible effects, if any, simply because operationalizing and measuring a concept as fluid as ‘reconciliation’ is very difficult to do with the current social scientific toolkit”. Besides, there is neither any collective nor any national accountability. The guilty and the verdicts are not about Serbia or Croatia, for instance, but about Milošević or Gotovina or Haradinaj or Mladić. As Hodzic puts it, those countries “have been incredibly reluctant and very late in adopting any domestic transitional justice mechanisms. Even when finally adopted, domestic transitional justice efforts have been largely either controlled or ignored by the state, making them ineffective, delegitimized, or perceived as irrelevant by the public” (ibidem).

The role of the international actors, particularly the EU or the USA, should not, according to Hodzic, be neglected, since both “focused almost exclusively on state cooperation with the ICTY as a condition for international benefits, and ignored other local transitional justice needs and actors”.

What has been said about the role of justice in relation to war crimes, and cooperation between local courts and the ICTY lacks an important dimension to understanding the

---

<sup>318</sup> <https://www.ictj.org/about/refik-hodzic>. Hodzic joined the NGO International Centre for Transitional Justice as director of communications in March 2011 and has been working “in transitional justice as a journalist, filmmaker as well as an expert in public information and outreach campaigns for international and national courts seeking justice for war crimes. He has focused on post-war justice and media primarily in the former Yugoslavia, Lebanon, and Timor-Leste. Accessed on 10.07.16.

<sup>319</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/accepting-a-difficult-truth-icty-is-not-our-court>. Published on 06.03.2013; accessed on 10.07.16.

complexity of the societies in the countries from the former Yugoslavia: the hate speech and the hate crimes, still all too present in Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo today. And their impact on reconciliation processes. This constitutes the focus of the next section of this chapter.

#### 4.5. Hate Speech and Reconciliation

The hate speech is still a big regional problem in Western Balkans. The Croatian Constitution states, in article 39, that “any call for or incitement to war, or resort to violence, national, racial or religious hatred, or any form of intolerance shall be prohibited and punishable by law”<sup>320</sup>.

The Constitution is a guarantee of the freedom of expression and the country’s criminal code punishes, in compliance with article 20, “anyone violating the provisions of this Constitution concerning the basic freedoms and rights of man and the citizen shall be held personally responsible and may not exculpate himself from invoking a higher order.” The criminal code<sup>321</sup>, in point one of article 174, punishes by imprisonment for six months to five years, “whoever, on the basis of a difference in race, religion, political or other belief, property, birth, education, social position or other characteristics, or on the basis of gender, colour, national or ethnic origin, violates fundamental human rights and freedoms recognized by the international community shall be punished by imprisonment.” Point 3 of the same article states punishments are handed down to “whoever publicly states or disseminates ideas on the superiority or subordination of one race, ethnic or religious community, gender, ethnicity or ideas on superiority or subordination on the basis of colour for the purpose of spreading racial, religious, sexual, national and ethnic hatred or hatred based on colour or for the purpose of disparagement”.

Nevertheless, there is still too much hate speech in the media and especially in sports events such as football<sup>322</sup>. For example, Croatian football player Josip Simunic was banned for 10 matches by FIFA, for using hate speech.<sup>323</sup>

Hooligans chanting “Kill the Serbs, kill the Serbs” is very often heard in stadiums, even when there is no Serb team playing. The same happens in Serbia, when hooligans chant,

---

<sup>320</sup> Available from [http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file\\_id=191140](http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=191140). Accessed on 21.04.14.

<sup>321</sup> Available from [http://www.vsrh.hr/CustomPages/Static/HRV/Files/Legislation\\_Criminal-Code.pdf](http://www.vsrh.hr/CustomPages/Static/HRV/Files/Legislation_Criminal-Code.pdf). Accessed on 25.03.2014.

<sup>322</sup> Available from [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society.php?yyyy=2013&mm=03&dd=18&nav\\_id=85233](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society.php?yyyy=2013&mm=03&dd=18&nav_id=85233). Published on 18.03.2013. Accessed on 26.07.2014.

<sup>323</sup> Available from [http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/setimes/features/2014/06/17/feature-01](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2014/06/17/feature-01). Published on 17-06-2014. Accessed on 26-07-2014.

“Kill the Croats” or “Kill the Turks”, referring to Bosnian Muslims. Hooligan groups are quite well identified, but never has a match been stopped with the hooligans retaining a kind of political patronage.

Examples of ‘hate speech’ in Croatia are also encountered in its music: in April 2016 “the Serbian MFA expressed particular concern over the participation of Croatian singer Marko Perkovic aka Thompson in a religious forum organized for young people in a Catholic school in Croatia's town of Sibenik, where Perkovic delivered a lecture to elementary and high school students, along with the songs 'Cavoglava' and 'Jasenovac and Gradiska Stara', which glorify Ustashism and send threats to Serbs.”<sup>324</sup>

In 2015, on September 18<sup>th</sup>, the Croatian Journalists’ Association (CJA) felt the need to urge “journalists and all other persons in charge in public and private media to be careful and professional when reporting about refugees entering Croatia”. The CJA also urged journalists “to avoid hate speech and not to publish unverified information”, besides calling on “editors of Internet portals not to publish readers’ comments that might provoke intolerance, xenophobia and hate speech”<sup>325</sup>.

Gerstenfeld (2013: 279)<sup>326</sup> acknowledges that, “the Croatian hate crime law is very similar to those found in most of the United States. It also suffers from the same shortcomings: low reporting rates and problems with prosecutions”. Moreover, this author argues “antigay violence appears to be commonplace – and rarely punished – in both nations” (Serbia and Croatia).

The study “The European legal framework on hate speech, blasphemy and its interaction with freedom of expression”<sup>327</sup>, published in 2015 on the request of LIBE, the European Union’s Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, “provides an overview of the legal framework applicable to hate speech and hate crime on the one hand and to blasphemy and religious insult on the other hand”. There was no Croat participation in this European Parliament study, as demonstrated (page 2) by the names of the authors as well as by the list of authors of national studies on hate speech and hate crime; and of national studies on blasphemy and religious insult. Despite the extensive explaining of the selection of cases given in that study, including the selection of “Member States where hate speech and hate crime as well as blasphemy and/or religious insult incidents are more present or where the national context is such that incidents are more likely to occur”, the author of this dissertation questions LIBE’s lack of interest (as well as the apparent Croat lack of interest in

---

<sup>324</sup> From [www.b92.net](http://www.b92.net). Published on 22.04.2016. Accessed on 24.04.2016.

<sup>325</sup> <http://europeanjournalists.org/blog/2015/09/18/croatian-journalists-association-do-not-publish-unverified-information-and-hate-speech/>. Published on 18.09.2015 and accessed on 21.04.2016.

<sup>326</sup> Gerstenfeld, Phyllis B. (2013) *Hate Crimes: Causes, Controls, and Controversies*, California State University, Stanislaus, London, UK, Sage.

<sup>327</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/536460/IPOL\\_STU\(2015\)536460\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/536460/IPOL_STU(2015)536460_EN.pdf). Accessed on 16.04.2016.

contributing to) in relation to a country whose sovereignty and independence was constructed out of the spoils of a war that was very much based on and caused by hate speech and its derivatives.

The situation in Croatia regarding hate speech has considerably improved from the moment the country began its accession process to the European Union, somehow contributing to a change in social practice and the national Criminal Code reflects that eventually<sup>328</sup>. However, in Croatia “it is worth noting that Article 89 was introduced in the Criminal Code (in 2006), after some advocacy initiated by a coalition of civic organizations” (2015:17)<sup>329</sup>. Moreover, the anti-discrimination law (Anti-Discrimination Act)<sup>330</sup>, although containing “strict provisions related to combating discrimination based on any ground”, does not punish hate speech separately and “assigns responsibility for combating discrimination to the Ombudsman”.

Similar to the Croatian, the Serbian Constitution also stands for the freedom of expression but also declares that this may be submitted to restrictions in order to protect not only privacy and respectability but also human rights. Due to the conflicts in which the country was involved and the respective international isolation, Serbia takes a serious approach to questions related to ‘hate speech’ motivated by ethnic, racial and/or religious motivations. The criminal charge of “provoking ethnic, racial and religion based animosity and intolerance” carries a minimum “six months prison term and a maximum of ten years”, according to the Serbian Penal code, section 317.

However, as we have also seen with Croatia, much still remains to be done in Serbia regarding hate speech. In April 2016, the Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs complained to his Croatian counterpart Miro Kovac because of his statement that the application of Serbia's laws were “a historical perversion”, implying that Serbia was “the state from which came the plans for the 1990s wars.” The Serbian note of protest considered “such qualifications were inappropriate” and took the opportunity to “point out to the almost daily nationalist outbursts and hate speech in the Republic of Croatia, which creates a sense of insecurity among the members of the Serb national minority.”<sup>331</sup>

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) acknowledges that the Serbian government “adopted the Action Plan for the Implementation

---

<sup>328</sup> Its Article 89 defines hate crime as “any crime committed out of hatred for someone’s race, skin colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other belief, national or social background, asset, birth, education, social condition, age, health condition or other attribute”.

<sup>329</sup> <http://discursfaradiscriminare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Comparative-Study.pdf>. Published in 2015 and accessed on 16.04.2016.

<sup>330</sup> <http://www.ombudsman.hr/index.php/en/documents-3/legislation/finish/16-legislation/40-the-anti-discrimination-act>. Accessed on 16.04.2016.

<sup>331</sup> [www.b92.net](http://www.b92.net). 22.04.2016. Serbia’s Foreign Ministry Delivers Protest Note to Croatia. Accessed on 23.04.2016.

of Strategies for the Prevention and Protection against Discrimination for the period 2014–2018”, but even if properly dealt with, the institutional and formal procedures do not prevent incidents from happening, lest those related to hate speech and hate crimes. The Regional Centre for Minorities and the OSCE Mission to Serbia “reported 13 incidents of damage to property in connection with a football match between Serbia and Albania in October [2014], during which an Albanian flag was towed behind a drone as it flew over the stadium. All of the targets were businesses associated with the Albanian community. The Regional Centre for Minorities also reported a further arson attack on a mosque in connection with the same football match, as well as two assaults causing serious injury, including one assault against three members of an Ashkali family” (ibid.). And these kinds of crimes do not occur just in or in the aftermath of the national team’s main football matches. In March 2014, a “friendly football match between the junior national teams of Bosnia and Serbia was stopped after fans cheering the Serbian team chanted offensive slogans in support of the Srebrenica massacre”<sup>332</sup>. The radical fans were chanting slogans such as “Noz, zica, Srebrenica”, which means in English, “Knife, Wire, Srebrenica”, media reports said. Another was “kill the Turk”, an insulting term for Bosniaks. Moreover, slogans in support of Ratko Mladić, the Bosnian Serb commander being charged at the ICTY as the mastermind of the Srebrenica massacre, were also chanted. All this makes reconciliation much more difficult to happen.

Reconciliation may seem a only vague and distant concept when taken against merely the big picture of regional politics, but some steps have already been taken and are detailed in the chapter about reconciliation, in the final section of this dissertation.

Several years ago, a regional commission was established advocating for a truth and reconciliation commission to deal with crimes and political violence in the ex-Yugoslav region in the 1990s. Part of that coalition comprises 1,800 individuals from human rights and other civil society organizations. They organized a regional campaign, signed a petition for which about 500,000 signatures were collected. The goal was to get the support of governments. The outcome was far from achieved<sup>333</sup>.

It is certain not an easy-going task to talk about trustworthy paths towards reconciliation when countries like Croatia and Serbia have exchanged lawsuits at the ICJ over accusations of genocide. On the one hand, Croatia presented its charges of genocide in 1999<sup>334</sup>, demanding financial compensation in the amount determined by the court, punishment for all war criminals, information about missing persons and the return of stolen

---

<sup>332</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-serbia-match-stopped-over-nationalistic-slogans>.  
Published on 12.03.2014, accessed on 27.05.2016.

<sup>333</sup> See <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/balkan-states-must-back-truth-commission-now>.  
Published on 20.05.2013, accessed on 14.04.2016.

<sup>334</sup> On 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 1999.



Croatian cultural heritage. On the other hand, Serbia filed its countersuit in 2010<sup>335</sup>: the state of Croatia was then accused of genocide and ethnic cleansing that affected 230,000 Serbs during Operation Storm, which took place in August 1995. Serbia wants those responsible to be punished, “pay compensation to Croatian Serbs for their losses and provide legal conditions for a safe return of Serb refugees to their homes and normal life”<sup>336</sup>.

Jelena Subotic<sup>337</sup> says that, “by stubbornly pursuing doomed genocide lawsuits against each other, Croatia and Serbia entered a legal suicide pact that cost taxpayers millions and perpetuated pernicious narratives about the past”<sup>338</sup>. This shows how both Serbian and Croatian politicians view their own policies of the 1990s. As Subotic puts it, “the lawsuits also conveniently replace the discussion of each state’s responsibility for atrocities they themselves committed with a story of their unique suffering”. In favor of the withdrawal of the genocide lawsuits, Subotic concludes that “the political explanations given for their continuing pursuit are that politicians are afraid of the public backlash caused by a withdrawal, after years invested in hyping up the cases”<sup>339</sup>.

The official Croatian policy is to support Serbia in joining the EU, but in mid-2016, there was some controversy between the two countries, extending also to Bosnia, after statements made by the former Croatian prime minister and SDP leader, Zoran Milanovic<sup>340</sup>, leaked to the press, to Zagreb-based newspaper Jutarnji List, in which he described “Bosnia as a failed state and accusing the Serbian government of being ‘arrogant’.

‘Bosnia is not a [real] country... you don't have anybody to talk with there,’ Milanovic said on the tape, recorded during a conversation with two representatives of Croatian war veterans, Josip Klemm and Drazimir Jukic”. In a statement that would surprise only those who are not aware of the complex reality of Bosnia, Milanovic “also said that if Bosnia's Serb-dominated entity Republika Srpska secedes from the country, Bosnian Croats will be left in a country mostly inhabited by Bosniaks, implying that Zagreb should act if this happens”. About Serbia he said the following: “Chetniks have arrived” [in government in Belgrade], he alleged, insisting that Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic should have been indicted for his wartime actions, when he was a member of the nationalist Serbian Radical Party. He also accused the Serbian government of being ‘arrogant’ and wanting ‘to

---

<sup>335</sup> On 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2010.

<sup>336</sup> Available from [www.b92.net](http://www.b92.net), 25-02-2014, “Mutual Genocide Lawsuits Won’t be Withdrawn”, Source: RTS, Tanjug Sources: Tanjug, Beta.

<sup>337</sup> Associate Professor of Political Science at Georgia State University in Atlanta, author of ‘Hijacked Justice: Dealing with the Past in the Balkans’.

<sup>338</sup> Available from <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/the-cynicism-of-the-croatia-serbia-atrocity-olympics>. “The Cynicism of the Croatia-Serbia ‘Atrocity Olympics’”. Published on 04.04.14. Accessed on 24.04.2014.

<sup>339</sup> Idem.

<sup>340</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatia-ex-pm-s-leaked-insults-anger-bosnia-serbia-08-25-2016#sthash.GytM6QcP.dpuf>. Published on 25.08.2016; accessed on 04.09.2016.

rule half the Balkans'. His statements provoked harsh reactions in Serbia, including a letter from Prime Minister Vucic to the European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker. Milanovic is alleged to have said that Serbs are a "handful of miserable people"<sup>341</sup>, keeping the aspiration of being masters of the Balkans.

From Sarajevo, Bosnian Foreign Minister Igor Crnadak told the news agency HINA<sup>342</sup>, that Zoran Milanovic "has really stepped out of line", adding that "someone contending to become Croatia's next prime minister should show more respect and tact when commenting on neighbouring countries".

From Belgrade, Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic, said that the relationship between both countries was on a good track; "we'll do everything to avoid a repeat of 1990s" and Serbia-Croatia relations "will be significantly better in the future as there are no substantial barriers to such a development of the situation in the Balkans."<sup>343</sup>

The most difficult issues are those left pending from the war years. There are still 1,700 missing persons in Croatia, for instance<sup>344</sup>. But, even on these issues, some progress is taking place: aerial photographs taken by the Yugoslav army were finally handed over to Croatia thus enabling the identification of mass graves. The importance of this political fact was assessed by Foreign Minister Vesna Pusic in a meeting with the author<sup>345</sup>. Both countries established relations in which "what is agreed is actually done or delivered. It is something extremely important to promote reconciliation and to build or rebuild trust" as the Croatian Foreign Minister and 2016 candidate to United Nations Secretary-General mentioned in the same meeting.

In an essay published by the Wilson Center's Global Europe Program, back in 2011, Nicole Lindstrom argued that, "the EU should invite religious leaders to play a role not only in reconciliation, but involving them as important societal actors in the EU accession process. Javier Solana, High Representative for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, began such a process. In a meeting with a group of religious leaders from Belgrade, Sarajevo, Ljubljana and Zagreb, he declared that religious leaders have an important role to play in enhancing regional co-operation, stability and development in the whole region"<sup>346</sup>.

---

<sup>341</sup> <http://www.balkan.eu.com/croatian-election-campaign-overruns-serbia/>. Published on 26.08.2016; accessed on 04.09.2016.

<sup>342</sup> <https://aboutcroatia.net/news/balkan/bosnian-fm-milanovic-has-really-stepped-out-line-time-34566>. Published on 25.08.2017, accessed on 04.09.2016.

<sup>343</sup> [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2016&mm=09&dd=02&nav\\_id=99086](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2016&mm=09&dd=02&nav_id=99086). Published on 01.09.16; accessed on 04.09.16.

<sup>344</sup> <http://www.documenta.hr/en/presentation-of-the-book-of-missing-persons-on-the-republic-of-croatia.html>. Accessed on 15.04.2016.

<sup>345</sup> In Zagreb, Croatia, on 28.05.2013.

<sup>346</sup> See more at: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/295-european-integration-and-ethnic-reconciliation-croatia-and-serbia#sthash.FcPOPzpg.dpuf>. Published on 07.07.2011, accessed on 14.04.2016.

In February 2015, academic Nikolina Zidek<sup>347</sup> argued that “the specificity of transitional justice efforts in Croatia and Serbia lies in the fact that after the war ended the victims and the perpetrators stayed on the other side of the border”, pointed out the difficulties of the process: “reconciliation in Serbia and among Serbs has already been achieved and therefore their reconciliation with others will be more difficult, Croats have also created their homogenous mainstream narrative of a heroic and innocent nation that was a victim of aggression (and never a victimizer). This narrative, embedded in two parliamentary declarations (Declaration on Homeland War and Declaration on Operation Storm), is supported even by the liberal forces, because they do not want to lose votes”. These are two examples of the practicalities that the process of reconciliation may involve; or, in other words, we may argue that while the road is hard, there are things that can and ought to be done.

“Milošević, basically, left a criminalized state and a criminalized society”, states Ivan Vejvoda, a Serb political analyst who is the Vice-President of the American-based think-tank the German Marshall Fund of the United States<sup>348</sup>. When former PM Zoran Djindjic, after the civic society coup that made Milošević's regime step down, tried to work out a solution with Montenegro and Kosovo, “he was not allowed to do it at his pace”<sup>349</sup>. He was eventually killed in 2003 and Serbia entered into a slower mode of resolving its past, especially political and border issues.

But not only. As journalist Stevan Nikšić told the author in Belgrade, in 2005, “all of those who lived the dramatic days in 2000 are now disillusioned. They hoped that this country would change much more and they may even say that this country goes in the wrong direction and that is somehow regressing, which is not true! It is not so easy to change a country. We replaced Milosevic but he was not the only one. It was a system. Whatever Milosevic represented was deeply imbued with this society. And to change it takes time. Time, money, and I do not want to be dramatic, but it also requires blood, sweat and tears”. Nikšić explains that “this country, this part of Europe, has been constantly changing. Even if we had not had what we had, there would be a need to change self-managed socialism that did not work perfectly, for something different. This is a country that is between the West and the East, it belonged to the Non-Aligned Movement, and that whole context has changed. Consequently, this country would have to change even if there had been no conflicts and wars in the 1990s. All around us, everything is changing as well. And when your neighborhood changes, you have to change even if you do not want to. And we must ask ourselves: are we changing fast

---

<sup>347</sup> See more at <http://www.e-ir.info/2015/02/25/peace-and-reconciliation-in-the-balkans-croatia-vs-serbia/>. “Peace and Reconciliation in the Balkans: Croatia vs. Serbia”, E-International Relations, Published on 25.02.2015, accessed on 14.04.2016.

<sup>348</sup> Interview with the author in Belgrade, 01-06-2013.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

enough?”, Memory of previous conversations: “I remember well our conversation in 2000. You asked me if this had been a revolution and I said no, because before those events in October there had been elections and a group of political parties had won those elections. Now, I tell you, it's a pity that we did not have a revolution, which is something completely different. It was a Revolution that we needed, but it was not what happened. That was the biggest problem, there was not been a deeper change of society, a revolutionary transformation of society. We had only a few political parties to take power instead of others, successful in initiating some of the reforms, but it was not enough. We lost several years without the reforms being made. The question is whether we can still catch the train. Probably, but it will be even more difficult. Many opportunities have been lost since 2000, which is unfortunate”.

Former Serbian PM Ivica Dacic said in a July 2013 interview with *Nezavisne Novine*, a Banja Luka based daily newspaper, that “the time for arguments and stories about who is more to blame is over” and what was then important was “to get everyone in the region to commit to the future, because we all share the same problems and goals; (...) we can influence the future so that we do not repeat the past. This is my message and the logic to which I subscribe,”<sup>350</sup> said Dačić.

However, Serbia, as well as its neighbours, still faces many problems; and as well as setbacks. The Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) has reported about the hundreds or even thousands war memorials that have been built since the Balkan conflicts ended, but some governments exert no control over how much public money is spent or whether the new monuments provoke ethnic tensions. The overall cost is estimated as running into several hundred million Euros or perhaps even more and in countries struggling to provide adequate public services from their state budgets or fund decent welfare benefits for war victims and workers in general, especially those from recently privatized companies.

The BIRN investigation has established that some governments in the region simply have no idea of what has been built or where, or what has been the cost to the public coffers. Moreover, these war memorials may end up proving dramatically good weapons for the reification and reinforcement of the ethnic divisions that led to the war in the first place. As BIRN states, “the monuments usually commemorate fallen fighters, conflict victims, historical heroes, foreign allies or, in some cases, men considered by other countries to be war criminals. Very few attempt to promote reconciliation or an ethnically inclusive view of peace”<sup>351</sup>. On the other hand, they further foster and exacerbate tensions and divisiveness, and

---

<sup>350</sup> Available from <http://www.nezavisne.com/novosti/intervju/Ivica-Dacic-za-Nezavisne-Zajedno-mozemo-vise-nego-podijeljeni-200197.html>. Published on 12.07.2013. Accessed on 21.04.2014.

<sup>351</sup> Available from <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/selective-memory>. Published in 22.11.2013

monuments have been the focus of both attacks and protests. In Serbia<sup>352</sup>, as well as in Bosnia, Croatia or Kosovo, there is no official record of the number of monuments built from 2008 to 2013.

The lack of oversight on public spending and over what kinds of monuments were or are built is also worrying when one deals with post-conflict reconciliation issues. This helps only in producing stigmatizing narratives with selective views of recent history, ethnically or politically inflammatory speeches and statements and may even celebrate wartime killers and ethnic cleansers. The challenge to Serbia, as well to every country in the region, involves spending far less than was spent in the past on this kind of memorial or, alternatively, to build memorials that are somehow able to promote a culture of tolerance and reflecting the reality of how different ethnic groups suffered during the conflicts, thus constructing what may end up reflecting a sincere process of apologizing or what one might call a *positive memorialization*. In fact, in *Taking Wrongs Seriously, Apologies and Reconciliation* (Barkan, 2006:7), Elazar Barkan<sup>353</sup> and Alexander Karn argue that, “a sincere expression of contrition, offered at the right pitch and tenor, can pave the way for atonement and reconciliation by promoting mutual understanding and by highlighting the possibilities for peaceful coexistence. Practiced within its limits, apology can create a new framework in which groups may rehearse their past(s) and reconsider the present”.

In 2013, Serbia was urged to hold a Srebrenica Remembrance Day. Human rights groups rallied in front of the Serbian presidency in Belgrade, asking for the authorities to declare July 11 as a day of remembrance for Srebrenica victims. The Women in Black, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights and the Youth Initiative for Human Rights said they had already sent letters to the president, parliament and the government but had not received any response.<sup>354</sup> The Serbian parliament declared its respect for the Srebrenica massacre victims but lawmakers have continued squabbling over whether the 1995 killings should be

---

“Selective Memory - Bosnia’s post-war divisions are played out in the fight to build memorials at the sites of notorious wartime prisons”. Katarina Panic, BIRN Prijedor, Sarajevo and Belfast. Accessed on 24.03.2014.

<sup>352</sup> At the state level, Serbia has not built any war-related monuments from 2011-2016, although there are plans to build a memorial complex dedicated to all the victims of the 1990s conflict.

<sup>353</sup> Interviewed by the author of this dissertation at Columbia University in New York in 2015, Barkan recalled that “a lot of conflicts are instigated by conflicting narratives of historical memories, memory of violence; and this lets nationalists very much in order to incite conflicts, so the goal of including historical perspective into conflict resolution, is the first target” of the project Barkan was leading of conflict resolution by bringing together scholars from different sides of a conflict and employ historical methodologies to create shared narratives across the political divide. Another project of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights was the Alliance for the Historical Dialogue and Accountability, seen by Elazar Barkan as important to acknowledge a “global comparative perspective”, citing in the same interview the “really impressive work” done in Colombia by the government and the FARC side, but are unaware of comparable work in other parts of the world; the idea is to “bring advocates and to create a network”.

<sup>354</sup> Available from <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbian-rightists-call-for-srebrenica-memory-day>. Published on 10.07.2013. Accessed on 21.01.2014.

labelled genocide.

The Srebrenica massacre is classified as genocide by the ICTY itself<sup>355</sup>. In April 2004, in the Radislav Krstic case<sup>356</sup>, the Appeals Chamber Judgement unanimously found that “genocide was committed in Srebrenica in 1995”, arguing that, “...Bosnia Serb forces carried out genocide against the Bosnian Muslims (...). Those who devise and implement genocide seek to deprive humanity of the manifold richness its nationalities, races, ethnicities and religions provide. This is a crime against all humankind, its harm being felt not only by the group targeted for destruction, but by all of humanity.” The conclusion is derived from Article 4 of the Tribunal’s Statute, “like the Genocide Convention, covers certain acts done with ‘intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such.’ The targeted group identified in the Indictment, and accepted by the Trial Chamber, was that of the Bosnian Muslims. The Trial Chamber determined that the Bosnian Muslims were a specific, distinct national group, and therefore covered by Article 4. This conclusion is not challenged on appeal”<sup>357</sup>.

On another front of discussion, Serbs in Croatia still complain about mistreatment. Milorad Pupovac, the President of the Serb National Council in Croatia, accuses Zagreb of not meeting expectations about the rights of the Serb community. This could “soon turn into a European problem,” Pupovac believes. “Giving up on the policy of tolerance towards minorities, renewal of animosity, war rhetoric, and requests for annulment of the rights that have been acquired are seriously hindering the processes in the region,”<sup>358</sup> he said.

Throughout the years, “numerous initiatives have been launched by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), informal groups and individual activists related to the prevention of hate speech and discrimination in Bosnia”<sup>359</sup>,, such as the “Supergrađani/Supergrađanke (Supercitizens) initiative” launched “by the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013. It brings together 19 coalitions that fight against hate speech, prejudice, intolerance, discrimination and other forms of offensive behaviour. The initiative’s website provides the space to report perceived instances of hate speech, offensive graffiti, physical violence or damage to property”.

Another important initiative came in June 2013 from the municipal Youth Council of

---

<sup>355</sup> <http://www.icty.org/specials/srebrenica20/?q=srebrenica20/>. Accessed on 25.04.2016.

<sup>356</sup> The Hague, 19 April 2004, CC/P.I.S./839e.

<sup>357</sup> <http://www.icty.org/en/press/appeals-chamber-judgement-case-prosecutor-v-radislav-krstic>. Published on 19.04.2004, accessed on 25.04.2016.

<sup>358</sup> Available from

[http://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=08&nav\\_id=86877](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=08&nav_id=86877). The article “Taking a Stand Against Hate Speech”, published in March 2016, assumes that “hate speech and discrimination are common in BiH, “in the media, schools and among the public” – jeopardising the progress it has made in overcoming prejudice. But NGOs and individuals are fighting back”. Published on 08.07.2013. Accessed on 21.04.2014.

<sup>359</sup> <http://www.transconflict.com/2016/04/taking-stand-hate-speech-bosnia-herzegovina-134/>. Published on 17.03.2016, accessed on 05.06.2016.

Novo Sarajevo, setting up the Zanemari razlike (Ignore Differences) Coalition, “with the goal of fighting hate speech and creating a society without prejudice”. Its work focuses on “preventive measures in response to negative phenomena occurring within the community, such as offensive graffiti or incidents derived from hate, which they publicly condemn, as well as calling on others to do the same”, stated Mirela Geko, from the organization.

Attacks by extreme right wing parties targeting NGOs activists have occurred throughout the past few years: “Members of our organisations were victims of hate speech and attacks from radical right wing parties”, according to the student Eldar Komar, an activist for the Youth Initiative for Human Rights in BiH.

One of the biggest problems relating to hate speech is the lack of popular awareness as to its consequences for the communication and relations between members of different ethnicities or nationalities: “it is not possible to solve this problem without the full inclusion and participation of citizens and their awareness of this problem’s existence,” Komar acknowledged.

The Coalition to Combat Hate Speech and Hate Crime, established in BiH in 2013, has been working to improve “the legal framework surrounding hate speech and hate crimes. The coalition is also committed to improving the implementation of existing laws. It has brought together 10 NGOs from across Bosnia that deal with promoting human rights and tolerance, as well as fighting hate speech and hate crime. The Center for Youth in Prijedor, KVART, in Prijedor can be credited for the successful work of this coalition. KVART has run a range of initiatives to remove graffiti and hate speech from public spaces over the past two years”. The organization’s executive director, Goran Zorić openly assumed that the “motivation behind dealing with these problems is primarily due to the fact that members of our organisations were, at one time or another, victims of hate speech and attacks from radical right wing parties and political representatives in our city”.

The visit of the Serbian president Boris Tadić to Vukovar in October 2010, where he was met by the Croatian president Ivo Josipovic,<sup>360</sup> was the first time a Serbian president had expressed profound regret at the destruction of the Croatian town by the JNA (Yugoslav National Army) and Serbian paramilitary forces in the autumn of 1991. By apologizing at the Ovcara mass grave, Tadić demonstrated his willingness to deal responsibly with the past – a remarkable gesture for a Balkan politician. Tadić would do the same in Srebrenica. Josipovic visited the village of Paulin Dvor, where the Croatian paramilitaries killed eighteen imprisoned Serbian civilians and one Hungarian in December 1991<sup>361</sup>. A few days later, the Bosnian tripartite presidency joined in by calling for reconciliation. The new member of the

---

<sup>360</sup> Available from <http://balticworlds.com/towards-reconciliation/>. Published on 13-05-2011. Accessed on 25-07-2014.

<sup>361</sup> Ibid.

presidency, Bakir Izetbegovic, said he apologised “for every innocent person killed by the BH army”<sup>362</sup>. Ivan Vejvoda, former vice-president of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, founder of the Balkan Trust for Democracy and organizer of the Transatlantic Leadership Seminar the author participated in the Balkans, says that “it is important that we don’t neglect this. Is it enough? No, leaders have to do more”<sup>363</sup>.

In June 2015, Pope Francis visited BiH, “a country whose national anthem has no lyrics because its bickering ethnic groups cannot agree on them”, as Rick Lyman reported in *The New York Times*<sup>364</sup>. The Pope “called for greater religious reconciliation and an end to the sectarian conflicts that still threaten Bosnia” as well as proliferate around the world, in what the leader of the Roman Catholic Church understands as “a kind of third world war being fought piecemeal”(ibid). Before shouting to the crowd in Sarajevo at the 1984 Winter Olympics Stadium, “War never again”, the Pope voiced out loud his concern, as if told by any very knowledgeable Balkanist: “Some in Bosnia and around the world continue to foment ‘conflict between different cultures and societies’ for their own political purposes, others to make profits on arms sales”. Nevertheless, Francis also mentioned the progress made by the country since the last Pope’s visit to Bosnia, when John Paul II was in Sarajevo<sup>365</sup>, amidst higher religious, political and ethnic tensions, as the author witnessed as a reporter at the time.

Bosnia and Herzegovina established the Council of Interreligious Dialogue to bring together the country’s clerics, and this is working well, according to the papal nuncio, Archbishop Luigi Pezzuto, the Vatican’s ambassador to Bosnia. One should emphasize that if some sort of constructive dialogue has not yet been conveyed to the common people, this stems from – at least in part – the notorious lack of political will, an effect of a political system organized totally along ethnic lines.

If reconciliation has been achieved among religious elites at the highest level, and, according to the then UN High Representative to Bosnia, the Austrian diplomat Valentin Inzko, is “also excellent at the bottom, the neighbor-to-neighbor level”, the dissonance remains “at the political level and at the level of lower clergy” (ibid).

The evidence is clear that, as Cardinal Vinko Puljic, archbishop of the diocese that includes Sarajevo, put it in the same article, “those political leaders who continue to emphasize religious differences and press ethnic nationalism were the chief obstacles to Bosnian progress. (...) The country is divided. Ethnic groups have separate schools, separate

---

<sup>362</sup> Available from <http://balticworlds.com/towards-reconciliation/>. “A few easy steps towards reconciliation”. Published on 13.05.2011. Accessed on 22.04.2014.

<sup>363</sup> Interview with the author, in Belgrade during the Transatlantic Leadership Seminar in June, 2013.

<sup>364</sup> June 6, 2015.

<sup>365</sup> The author covered the Pope’s visit to Sarajevo in the spring of 1998 for the Portuguese public radio station, Antena1.



territories, even separate histories. There are not equal rights for everyone. We have criminal activities and corruption.”

In chapter six, the results about prospects for reconciliation, from the survey conducted under this dissertation, are set out and analyzed, and accordingly detailing how but the overall perceptions among university students in Bosnia, as well as in Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo, are fairly optimistic about the future and reconciliation in the region where once there was a country called Yugoslavia. For now, we focus on the role of civil society, in the studied cases.

#### **4.6. Civil Society**

OTPOR, a non-violent resistance movement from the Serbian civil society of the late 1990s, led mostly by students, played a key role in overthrowing the Slobodan Milošević’s regime. Working across ideological lines under a democratic umbrella, they exerted a huge pressure on the regime from the moment it became clear that Milošević was ready to steal the election results as he had done in the local elections of 1998, after he was defeated by Vojislav Kostunica<sup>366</sup> in the presidential elections that took place in September 24th, 2000.

Above all, OTPOR, standing for democracy but not running for office, something which helped bring people together, understood that the opposition needed to win the elections (there was a specific campaign to make young people go out and vote), managed to unite the country (municipalities run by the opposition and their local radio stations were of great importance), got people involved (giving them skills and information), and setting up a social atmosphere that led Milošević to try to steal the elections. “We will win elections and we will wait for him to say he won”, recalled Srdja Popovic, one of OTPOR leaders<sup>367</sup>. They called on international donors to help the free media and the mobilization campaign, and... it worked. Serbia had the biggest turnout ever in presidential elections, Milošević lost (the elections were being internationally monitored) and committed political suicide when he decided to claim he had won. OTPOR had everything ready and they knew fairly well what to do. OTPOR planned for a broad emotional reaction. People felt robbed by Milošević. It was the people against Milošević. OTPOR gave the regime eight days to admit it had lost. But the student’s movement was not about sitting down and waiting.

They mobilized people to join a general strike; shops closed their doors and put

---

<sup>366</sup> Hosting the author at his office in downtown Belgrade, on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2000, the eve of Milošević’s fall, the president-to-be Kostunica would reply, when asked if he considered himself a nationalist: “Yes, certainly. In a sense of democratic orientation, as any other German, French or British, with this kind of nationalist attitude that is not directed against the other peoples and nations, but who stands for something like national identity, tradition, in the most common sense.” (Alexandre, 2002: 198).

<sup>367</sup> Interview with the author in Belgrade, 31-05-2013.

stickers on the windows, “closed due to robbery”, by then a message with clear content; garbage containers were thrown into the middle of the tracks if a tram driver was striking, and so forth. People were given the tools and the skills to participate and they did participate.

As a result of the efforts of OTPOR with the democratic opposition, the regime fell when a mass demonstration resulted in the invasion of both the federal parliament and RTS facilities (Radio and Television of Serbia<sup>368</sup>). It was on a Thursday, October 5th, 2000 and the author of this dissertation was there reporting for the Portuguese public radio station Antena1. Afterwards, the student’s movement kept up the pressure and managed to hold politicians, the new democratic regime, accountable. There were big billboards in downtown Belgrade with the OTPOR symbol and the bulldozer that came from Central Serbia and was one of the main “characters” in the 5th October Revolution, with the slogan: “we are watching you”<sup>369</sup>. There was very high pressure for the first eight or ten months, Popovic admits. “This made them aware that they had to become accountable”. The important achievements could not be reversed, not even with the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic in Belgrade on 12th March, 2003.

OTPOR has since become an example throughout the world. From what the author heard from Srdja Popovic (one of the movement’s main leaders), since 2000 onwards, forty-eight movements have followed the Serbian movement’s line or the “same methodology, or symbols, or the same kind of message”<sup>370</sup>. Popovic served as advisor to Zoran Djindjic and after the first democratic Prime Minister in Serbia was assassinated in 2003<sup>371</sup>, he decided to learn how OTPOR had done it successfully and teach other movements. This happened in Lithuania, in Egypt<sup>372</sup>, in Ukraine, in Iran, in Myanmar, in many other places, as Popovic told the author and the group of participants in the Transatlantic Leadership Seminar organized by the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

One of the lessons we may take from the OTPOR movement is that the difference between non-violent change and war is enormous. They decisively helped in changing a country with a non-violent strategy. Popovic suggests us that we “should not look only for the last moment of the show. You don’t go to Broadway just to see the last moment of the show;

---

<sup>368</sup> Less than a year before, the same facilities had been bombed by NATO with several people killed. By then, Captain Dragan, convicted for war crimes in 2017 for crimes committed in Croatia in the early 1990s, would tell the author in an interview in Belgrade in May 1999, condemning the US-led attacks: “no dictatorship has ever used these censorship methods, using sophisticated bombs to shut down TV broadcastings. It’s so rude that there cannot be any honest journalist in this world who is not worried with it. Because from now on, if you write something that I do not like, I have the right to kill you. The Americans gave me that right. NATO gave me that right” (Alexandre, 2002: 37).

<sup>369</sup> The author arrived in Belgrade on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2000 and was witnessing, observing and reporting for Portuguese public radio station, Antena1, about these historical events.

<sup>370</sup> Interview with the author in Belgrade, 31.05.2013.

<sup>371</sup> BIRN, Balkan Insight. Available from [www.balkaninsight.org](http://www.balkaninsight.org), Accessed on 25.02.2014.

<sup>372</sup> Available from <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2011/02/27/egypt-serbia-protesters-trained-by-otpor/#>. Published on 27.02.2011. Accessed on 22.07.2014.

if you do that, you won't understand what the play is about"<sup>373</sup>.

CANVAS, Centre for Applied Nonviolent Action and Strategies was established in Belgrade in 2004. Its founding members, Slobodan DjinoVIC and Srdja Popovic, were leaders in the Serbian youth resistance movement OTPOR. They became professionals, funded by donors such as The Hoover Institute, Freedom House, the International Republican Institute, the Institute for Open Society<sup>374</sup>, USAID and the American Institute for Peace<sup>375</sup>. Popovic assures that the organization is not funded by governments, in order to preserve its independence and another OTPOR founder, Ivan Marovic<sup>376</sup>, who did not join Popovic's organization after OTPOR, assumes the foreign funding, "OTPOR did receive foreign support in the end, from the US, but also from Europeans and others. In fact, we asked for it. It was a tough choice, but important choices are never easy. These countries bombed us – talking to the representatives of their governments and heads of their foundations was not without discomfort. But the decision to look for support abroad was informed by the understanding that the only people who had money in Serbia at that time were war profiteers and war criminals. All money in the country was bloody. Confronted by that reality, foreign support seemed the lesser evil. Looking back, this turned out to be the correct decision."<sup>377</sup>

Presently, the situation in Serbia is rather different from what OTPOR faced in 2000, for the better. Internet and social media mass consumption are of great help to CSOs. One leading Serbian human rights activist, Natasa Kandic, coordinator of the Regional Commission for Establishing the Facts about War Crimes (REKOM), said that President Tomislav Nikolic "sent the message that he wanted to contribute to the victims (of the war crimes) being respected". Kandić believes he did so "by appointing the Court of Appeal judge (Sinisa Vizic) as a personal representative in an expert group of the REKOM"<sup>378</sup>. In addition

---

<sup>373</sup> Interview with the author in Belgrade, 31.05.2013.

<sup>374</sup> This defense of OTPOR (Resistance) on the Open Democracy website, came from another of its founders, Ivan Marovic, whom the author interviewed in Belgrade in 2000. Published on 6.12.2013. Accessed on 27.04.2016.

<sup>375</sup> See more at <http://1389blog.com/2013/11/20/wikileaks-soros-us-government-funding-for-otporcanvas-activists-who-overthrew-slobodan-Milošević/#sthash.fBj6TJQs.dpuf>. Quoted from newspaper Blic, Ivana Mastilović Jasnčić, 18.11. 2013, accessed on 27.04.2016.

<sup>376</sup> Interviewed by the author in Belgrade in late September 2000, would tell me: "I do not know how a real democratic life looks like" (Alexandre, 2002: 182). In the same line, art historian Balsa Djuric (passed away in 2011) would tell the author in Belgrade in 2005: "The majority of the population does not know or understand the essence of democracy. People do not seem to understand that in democracy there are also obligations and sanctions. (...) Only together we can improve our lives and people here still need to understand this. We are part of a great society, we have our representatives. It does not matter if we agree with everything they do in government. Now the elections are more transparent. If we do not like those who represent us, we can change them. But that is easier than changing people's mindsets, especially inside the countryside".

<sup>377</sup> <https://www.opendemocracy.net/civilresistance/ivan-marovic/in-defense-of-otpor>. Published on 6.12.2013. Accessed on 27.04.2016.

<sup>378</sup> Available from [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=02&nav\\_id=86818](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=02&nav_id=86818). Accessed on 22.04.2014.

to the Serbian President, envoys to REKOM were appointed by the presidents of Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo, and two members of the BIH presidency.

“The NATO intervention (in Serbia) happened at the moment when the Serbian anti-war intellectual elite failed to respond. Many independent intellectuals, worried about their security and safety, decided to join a ‘nationalism-lite’ project. They’re not war-criminals or war propagandists. But they produced a kind of nationalism. They didn’t have a clear mind about the past, about what Serbia did”<sup>379</sup>, says Andrej Nosov, president of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights. “In 2003, we created a project to establish communication between young people in the third sector scene here and in Pristina. We have had some success. At that time there was no bus between the two areas. Now there are five buses. Of course, this is not just our success story. But the point is that the communication has been built up, between Albanian artists and Belgrade, between Serbian journalists and Pristina”<sup>380</sup>.

The Serbian CSO wants to participate in the EU accession process. Milan Antonijevic of the Human Rights and Democracy House, coordinator of the task force for Chapter 23 - Judiciary and Fundamental Rights – argued, in the end of 2014, that a calendar of events should be submitted to CSOs to enable them to prepare for negotiations in 2015<sup>381</sup>.

Everything in this sector still excessively depends on the government and on the political sphere. However, Croatian NGOs also do admit that when talking about the sustainability of civil society, the EU plays an important role. Organizations such as GONG and Documenta are strong watchdogs that deal with good governance, the quality and strength of democracy, which does not happen in many other EU countries. One could also mention an initiative from a network of local intellectuals, who wanted to name some Zagreb streets “after victims of Croatian forces in the 1990s conflict”<sup>382</sup>. In a significant decision, President Ivo Josipovic and former head-of-state Stjepan Mesic have backed the idea. “Among the proposed names are the members of the Zec family from Zagreb, murdered by Croatian soldiers in December 1991, Milan Levar, a Croatian officer believed to have been killed for revealing war crimes committed by his fellow soldiers in August 2000, and Josip Reihl-Kir, a policeman and peace activist, killed in July 1991”. Some of those people “were victims of state terror - non-legitimate use of violence by the state. Later, those people became victims of structural violence, institutional support to the crimes committed against them,” Oliver Frljic, one of the authors of the initiative, told BIRN.

Support for civic actors striving to uphold the rule of law and protect human rights

---

<sup>379</sup> Published 30.04.2008. The Balkans Project. Available from <http://balkansproject.ips-dc.org/?p=9>. Accessed on 22.04.2014.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> [www.b92.net](http://www.b92.net). Published on 25.12.2014. Accessed on 30.12.2014.

<sup>382</sup> Available from <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/zagrebers-campaign-for-naming-streets-by-wartime-casualties-and-peace-fighters>, Ivanovic, Josip, BIRN, Zagreb. Published on 09.04.2014. Accessed on 23.04.2014.

remains necessary both in Croatia and in the region. There is some public mobilization around burning issues but their capacity is limited. Countries do not have neither the financial instruments nor the specific knowledge to help them.

The author considers the region as a whole faces the danger of short attention spans due to other geopolitical priorities prevailing: the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, Central and Southeast Asia.

Irena Đokić and Marijana Sumpor have written about “the role of the Croatian civil society organizations in the EU accession process”. Besides “key stakeholder meetings and interviews undertaken during the research period”, in March 2013, “a Survey on the role of Croatian CSOs in the EU accession process” was conducted<sup>383</sup>. “Targeted by the survey were representatives of CSOs in Croatia and the questionnaire was sent to 1,156 recipients, accessed by 251 of them (or 21.7%)”<sup>384</sup>.

The authors came to the conclusion, based on the results of the aforementioned survey, that the role of CSO was passive, with no significant influence on the accession process. Some CSOs reported (20.2% of the responses) they are still involved in the accession process, although occasionally and upon request from the relevant authorities. Only a low number of CSOs played an active role in the accession process (4.7% of the responses)” (Đokić, 2014: 39).

The Civil Society Organization (CSO) sector in BiH may prove complex but we would not be missing the mark should we argue that, despite the natural complexity of working in a country with two entities and ten cantons based on ethnic divisions, CSOs in Bosnia works far better than the political structures that have been ruling the country since the end of the war in late 1995.

Corrine Parver and Rebecca Wolf, both from the Washington College of Law of the American University, wrote about the “Civil Society’s Involvement in Post-Conflict Peace-building”<sup>385</sup>, arguing that the involvement of CSOs in post-conflict peace-building is necessary even though a difficult task since “armed conflict negatively affects prospects for civil society involvement because conflict destroys physical infrastructure, limiting communication potential and dispersing community members. Further, it weakens state actors’ abilities to govern; disrupts security and creates a sense of lawlessness; suppresses basic human rights and limits activities of civil society; and limits access to media and communication. Finally, conflict erodes trust and destroys communal feelings which existed

---

<sup>383</sup> The authors presented the main findings at the International Conference “Civil Society Transformations on the Way to the European Union”, in April 2013 in Zagreb.

<sup>384</sup> <http://www.tacso.org/doc/Role%20of%20Croatian%20CSOs%20in%20EU%20Accession%20process-final.pdf>. Accessed on 15.04.2016.

<sup>385</sup> Parver, Corrine and Wolf, Rebecca (2008) "Civil Society’s Involvement in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding," *International Journal of Legal Information*: Vol. 36: Iss. 1, Article 5. Available at: <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/ijli/vol36/iss1/5>. Accessed on 05.09.2016.

previously” (Parver, 2008: 52). This is what happened in Bosnia after the war between 1992 and 1995.

The authors of the Washington College of Law quote Darren Kew and Anthony Wanis-St. John, “The Missing Link? Civil Society & Peace Negotiations”<sup>386</sup>, “have found that civil society involvement is one of the most important factors in determining whether post-conflict initiatives will be successful and sustainable” (2008: 53).

Bosnia and Herzegovina has witnessed, throughout the years and despite the huge investments from the international community, some failures and some success stories of CSO developed projects, such as the role played by associations such as Mothers of Srebrenica, or the Associations of Missing Persons or the organizers of the Sarajevo film festival, the Research and Documentation Centre and La Benevolencija, a Jewish Cultural-Educational and Humanitarian Society, to mention just some cases.

As the delegation of the EU to BiH (the biggest EU office outside Brussels) accepts, the country has a “limited history of development of the civil society. Before the war there was a range of public organizations with activities mainly in the areas of culture and sport. After the war there was an ‘explosion’ of NGOs. However, this “explosion” is of quantitative rather than qualitative nature”. BiH does not have a strategy for cooperation between the state government and civil society neither does any of its entities, and federations nor the Republika Srpska. “There are nearly 12,000 organizations registered in BiH. Estimates of active NGOs, however, range anywhere from 500 to 1500. Of these, a significantly smaller number could be described as professional organizations”<sup>387</sup>. The EU delegation also recognizes that domestic funds “are distributed in a non transparent manner” and there is a public opinion “perception of political influence on some CSOs” (ibid.).

The in-depth analysis of the European Parliament published in 2015 under the title “The Western Balkans and EU Enlargement: Lessons learned, ways forward and prospects ahead” accurately states that “Western Balkan countries are predominantly characterised by traditional top-down power structures, whereby governments are at liberty to influence both reforms and EU integration through a set of clientilistic networks and/or methods of more or less open pressure. It is essential to transform these networks so as to increase the influence of horizontally structured civil society on policy making”.

NGOs, civil society organisations, independent investigative journalists, and ombudspersons, are all bodies, groups or institutions that should be the focus of attention and assistance by European institutions within the framework of the enlargement policies. The aforementioned EP report by the Directorate-general for External Policies, recommends that,

---

<sup>386</sup> Paper presented at the 47th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, San Diego, March 23, 2006, available at [http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p100264\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p100264_index.html).

<sup>387</sup> [http://europa.ba/?page\\_id=676](http://europa.ba/?page_id=676). Accessed on 05.09.2016.

“efforts should be made to support constructive grassroots initiatives in the region” (2015: 30), with the Bosnian example given of the Open University as an institution that should be object of empowerment as “a platform for public discussion of social, political and artistic alternatives and non-formal education in Bosnia and Herzegovina” as well as “N1 TV which broadcasts simultaneously in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The report goes farther and states that the “EU should maintain its support for the inclusion of responsible civil society actors in an effort to put pressure on the government to do its job better, both before and during negotiations” (ibid.).

The EU, therefore, recommends transparency in funding CSOs from public budgets, improvement of cooperation between municipal governments and CSOs and among CSOs themselves, including regional cooperation and the “establishment of institutional mechanisms for cooperation with civil society in the governments of the state, entities, and Brcko District” (ibid.).

The author of this dissertation would like to reach further and correspondingly also recommends the need to develop, implement and supervise the implementation of school curricula focused on democracy, citizenship, civic commitment and tolerance; engaging the media in this kind of atmosphere, thus contributing to eliminating hate speech in society; fostering the participation of women in CSOs, particularly in leading roles; facilitating contacts and areas of expertise of these CSOs to the general public, particularly in areas with lower rates of internet access.

Something different happened in Bosnia in the early months of 2014. The ‘plenums’<sup>388</sup> that brought together citizens groups, first in Tuzla and afterwards in different Bosnian cities, from across the ethnic divide in a country where the ethnic key has been prevailing in every private and public sector, in a clear appeal clamouring for radical changes in the country, revealing the considerable strength of civil society, and the transformative potential this might attain if better sustained over time.

In his article “The New Tragedy of the Commons”, posted online on February 14, 2014<sup>389</sup>, the researcher and renowned Balkanist Florian Bieber, from the University of Graz, in Austria, talks about a “perceived failure of political elites to act in the interest of the common good” and gives an example of the protests in Sarajevo, when “protesters blocked

---

<sup>388</sup> “Plenums are public gatherings, open to any citizen, through which collective decisions and demands can be made and action taken, beyond guarantees of leadership. They are open, direct, and transparent democracy in practice. The Plenum, as the form of self-organisation and the method of work, in which citizens come together to articulate demands, is underpinned by the action of the protests. The threat of protests legitimises the plenum. (...) The plenum is a public space where, through calls for a different kind of justice, demands for equality are spoken. This is the ethics of the plenum” (Arsenijevic, 2014: 47, 48).

<sup>389</sup> <http://councilforeuropeanstudies.org/critcom/the-new-tragedy-of-the-commons/>. Published on 14.02.2014; accessed on 05.09.2016.

parliament in June 2013 after it failed to pass a law to exit an impasse over issuing identification numbers that prevented newborns from obtaining identity documents and thus passports to travel – a failure that was live-threatening for babies requiring medical assistance abroad”.

One of the founders of the plenums was Damir Arsenijevic, the Bosnian scholar, psychologist and activist in Tuzla mentioned in chapter 2 on the current scholarly debates about the Balkans. Arsenijevic is the editor of the book *Unbriable Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Fight for the Commons*, where he presents the February 2014 protests and plenums in the country as “the only genuinely novel development in Bosnia and Herzegovina since end of the war in 1995” (Arsenijevic, 2014: 7). Above all, the protests proved that there are feasible alternatives as it is “possible to disperse and dispose of the symbolic guarantee behind the existing ruling structures, (...) methods of making decisions that concern the future of all citizens” (ibid.). In a probably too optimistic vision arguing that, henceforth, “any future protests in Bosnia and Herzegovina can never be the same”.

Arsenijevic understands that “the February 2014 protests and plenums rescued politics itself”, returning “into the public domain as a common concern”. Popular revolt escalated “in response to unprecedented police brutality and the arrogance of complacent ethnic oligarchs, in whose view, citizens are mere disposable bodies. The fight back against the physical violence, which had been directed at protesters, showed that these disposable bodies still matter and cannot be as easily discarded as they were in the carnage of the 1992–1995 war and through their subsequent post-war exhaustion, as the processes of the privatisation of the commons ground on and poverty stared them in the face” (ibid.).

The plenums did not either produce a revolution or ‘the’ revolution some might have wished for or been expecting but did manage to force the political powers to accept, at least – far from implementing – some of the demands of the protesters and their plenums. Such was the case reported in late February 2014<sup>390</sup>: “the cantonal assembly in the Bosnian capital has accepted demands from a ‘citizens’ plenum’ to form a government of experts and to take action to limit officials’ financial privileges”. The assembly agreed that “officials’ wages should be lowered and that ministers in the cantonal authority should not continue getting their salaries for a year after leaving their jobs – a privilege known locally as the ‘white bread’ perk”.

Besides Sarajevo, Bosnian cities such as Zenica, Tuzla, Mostar and a few other towns such as Brcko, Bugojno, Fojnica, Konjic, Orasje and Travnik saw demonstrations and plenums for diverse reasons, but there was a common trend throughout the citizens’ demands:

---

<sup>390</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-protests-continue-as-plenums-voice-demands/2017/4>. Published on 24-02-2014; accessed on 05.09.2016.



“lowering salaries for officials, abolishing additional payments for political office-holders and reviewing privatisations of local companies”.

*Unbribeable Bosnia and Herzegovina—The Fight for the Commons* affirms “an individual and collective refusal to be bribed and coerced into submission and servility”, a collective will to recover the social space and produce politics in its most noble sense, “reclaiming and returning to common use that which has been stolen through privatisation and maintained in privatised units of all kinds” (Arsenijevic, 2014: 9). Past and traditions were not forgotten by this new social activism in Bosnia: “The legacy of previous workers’ rebellions and all anti-fascist struggles, evident in the decisions and symbols of these protests and plenums, is a powerful reminder that we have a tradition that actualises the idea of and the fight for emancipation” (ibid.).

Called *bagra* (scum, nothing), by some politicians, at the start of the protests, what the workers of Dita factory, in Tuzla, for example, had been engaged in since January 2014 amounted to a struggle for the factory’s assets and production. Two years later, the situation somehow remains disillusionment in Bosnia’s relatively multiethnic town. Rudolf Toe has written in BIRN, from Tuzla<sup>391</sup>, that “although it cannot be directly connected with the outcomes of the protests, Dita’s is one of the few positive stories to have emerged in the past two years in the Canton of Tuzla”. In the beginning of 2014, production was collapsing and people were not getting their salaries, so “Dita workers were among the first to hold regular protests, which would later develop into the country-wide uprising of February 2014 and the plenums”. Dita went bankrupt in March 2015 but the workers decided to “continue the production on their own, a move strongly supported by Bosnian public opinion”. They occupied the factory’s facilities, preventing the removal and reselling of the machinery and, while the company was still waiting for a new buyer, the workers started “producing detergents and selling them. In January, they began once again selling the laundry detergent Arix Tenzo, which is their most popular product”. They still hold their jobs, but are aware that they represent “just an exception to the general rule of factories getting closed and abandoned in our canton.”

Arsenijevic champions the plenums and the achievements then made. Nevertheless, it also remains indisputable that the living conditions of people did not change for the better and the same ruling political elite is holding onto its privileges and wrongdoings and even maintaining their non-compliance with that already agreed with the international community over the years and especially after the DPA was signed. The same ethnic oligarchy is getting

---

<sup>391</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/gloom-overshadows-protest-anniversary-in-bosnia-s-tuzla-01-17-2016#sthash.ZSiP9Ig2.dpuf>. Published on 18.01.2016; accessed on 05.09.2016.

ever richer even while the Tuzla born and raised psychologist is (was?) optimistic: “the time of the unquestioned hegemony of the ethno-nationalist elites, who stole the country’s resources, common goods and capital in the blood of war and genocide, is over. Local and international politicians, who in concert have maintained and allowed the parasitisation of the unwieldy and nepotistic ethnic bureaucratic structures, have exhausted the citizens of BiH for almost twenty-two years. Out of rage and despair, the citizens, many left with no choice but to rummage through dustbins to survive, forced to give bribes for basic services, have finally stood up and are demanding an end to the everyday terror of ethnic privatized slavery” (Arsenijevic, 2014: 45,46). Plenums, which happened both in the FBiH and in RS, the two entities making up the country, were perceived by Arsenijevic as a heterogeneous protest: “the disenfranchised workers, the unemployed, war veterans, youth, pensioners, students and academics, all came together to oppose this privatized slavery, underpinned, as it is, by the internationally imposed multiculturalist apartheid that ‘brings’ peace and democracy to BiH”. People refused to occupy the identitarian category to which they have been labeled for over two decades. Protests, claims, Arsenijevic, “at the same time brought together these various groups and brought down these identitarian walls. Against the fetish of difference and reification of ethnicity—enforced by the alliance of ethnic oligarchs and the members of the so-called ‘International Community’—the people in the protests insisted on commonality and joint demands for justice for all” (ibid.).

But, in the end, how can people not accept a forced choice to privatize, when their governments are pressured to do this, whether by the ethnic oligarchs, as Arsenijevic calls them, or by the international institutions themselves which put privatization processes on the table as *sine qua non* conditions of the loans the governments of post-conflict and transition countries are so deeply in need of? Can a Dita modelled-strategy of collective resistance survive in the long term? Those questions remain unanswered but people do feel the need to do something, whether it be on an individual level, as CSOs, or organized in plenums.

Emina Busuladžić, a Dita worker, in her article simply called “Why?” in Arsenijevic’s book, ends by asking her fellow-citizens: “Tomorrow, your child or your grandchild will ask what you did for Tuzla, for the country, in those hard times? And what will you say? Will you tell the truth, that you did nothing, or will you lie and remain what you are now – a living creature, maybe, but with no valid claim to being part of humanity?”. Words count but actions are needed should societies strive to move forward. And that is what Emina Busuladžić is telling Bosnians and all of us.

#### 4.7. The Media Sector: the 1990s and the present

In Udovicki (2000: 110), Milan Milošević<sup>392</sup>, contrary to some debates and stances taken by foreign scholars, assures that “in the former Yugoslavia mutual trust was in ample supply. For the war to become thinkable, trust that had steadily grown since World War II despite some tensions between the ethnic groups had to be rooted out first, and confusion, doubt, and fear implanted in its stead. That is what Belgrade television achieved over three and a half years preceding the war in 1991. TV studios proved to be colossal laboratories of war engineering” (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 110).

The episode of Slobodan Milošević in Kosovo promising that no one would ever dare beat a Serb again happened “on June 28, 1989, St. Vitus Day, an important date in the Serbian religious and historical calendar. The day commemorates the 1389 Battle of Kosovo between the armies of the doomed Serbian empire and the expanding Ottoman Empire” (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 110, 111). Nothing was happening accidentally. The event was held in Gazimestan, the precise “site of the historic battle”. Milošević arrived by helicopter as the crowd was enthusiastically waiting, the TV did the rest: “The cameras focused on his arrival. In some vague way, the commentator placed Milošević at the center of the Serbian ancestral myth of Prince Lazar, the hero and martyr of the Kosovo battle. Exactly six hundred years before, the voice-over told the viewers, on this very soil, Prince Lazar had chosen the kingdom of heaven over his earthly kingdom, the glory of death over survival in defeat” (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 112)

Nationalism was also ramping up in Croatia. Franjo Tuđman, a former Yugoslav partisan in World War II, who gained his doctoral degree in history in the mid-1950s, later an active member of the Croatian spring that called for democratic reforms in Tito's Yugoslavia and sentenced to two years in prison for this participation, would win the first Croatian parliamentary elections in 1990. One year earlier, he had published a book called *Bespuća* (Wilderness), in which he claimed that there had been a clear exaggeration of the World War II crimes attributed to Croats. Zagreb TV insisted it was time to come to terms with the past and from the Croat point of view— and “repeatedly accused the Yugoslav Communist regime of rubbing Croatia's war guilt in the face of its people. Television presented Croats as victims of the Communist conspiracy to brand them with a permanent shameful stigma”. And, additionally, this propaganda went on and on, especially from the moment war broke out in 1991: “Croatian propaganda played more and more on the moral advantage of the victims. (...) Long after the fighting had stopped, in 1992 and 1993, Croatian television still greeted its

---

<sup>392</sup> To the best of the author's knowledge, there is no family connection between Milan Milošević and former Serb and Yugoslav president Slobodan Milošević.

viewers with: ‘Defenders of the homeland, good morning’”(Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 113).

One way of reinforcing the nationalist discourse is to silence dissident voices, and that happened everywhere in the former Yugoslavia. As Sven Balas explains (Udovicki , 2000: 269), the cases of the Zagreb newspapers, “the weekly *Danas* (Today) and the Split daily *Slobodna Dalmacija* (Free Dalmatia)—considered among the highest-quality news media in the former Yugoslavia—are illustrative. ‘Liberated’ from Communist supervision, they came under attack from the HDZ [Croat Democratic Union, the nationalist party led by Franjo Tuđman], whose hard-line wing, based on a layer of ultranationalists from Hercegovina, interpreted any variation from the new party line as treason to the Croatian cause. (...) Experienced, professionally capable reporters and editors were denounced as Chetniks, Yugoslavists, Communists”.

With the hyperinflation of 1992, Yugoslav families were buying fewer and fewer newspapers, the Internet was yet to arrive and so radio and, especially, television, were the only sources of news for most of the population. “The independent media lost ground, (...) TV Studio B, a privately owned progressive Belgrade TV channel, and Radio B-92, an equally progressive small radio station that became world-famous during the 1996–97 protest [in Serbia], had tremendous problems trying to finance basic essentials. (...) The privately owned antiwar print media, *Borba* and *Vreme*, were never sure they would have enough newsprint or paper for the next issue” (ibid.).

As Sasa Mirkovic, fired director of B92 in April 1999 would tell the author, in Belgrade, a month later: “In many places people would just have access to RTS. All the satanization coming from both sides – the Serbs saying it was not possible to work with the Albanians, them saying right the contrary, produced this deadlock situation and, after Rambouillet, the easiest thing to the international community was to start bombing. But the bombs do not bring democracy” (Alexandre, 2002: 54).

Nevertheless, persecutions and intimidation in Serbia, but not only, were served up on a daily basis, recalls Milan Milošević: “several opposition figures, like Obrad Savić, a Belgrade philosopher, were beaten up. In 1991, and again in 1992, the offices of the Belgrade Citizens Association, the most prominent antiwar organization, were demolished and office telephones and computers taken away” (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 117). At the same time that it conducted its campaign of slander against the opposition, Serbian TV contributed widely to the promotion of the most hard-core extremists”, such as Željko Ražnjatović-Arkan and Vojislav Šešelj. (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 118)

The Gulf War had set the example. Now, war could be watched from the sofa and there were no warning signs telling parents to send their children to bed, due to the shocking images they were about to watch every evening: “(...) audacious reporters sent to the scene to

document 'genocide against us.' Most extremely graphic and shocking reports explained nothing: neither why nor in whose name the killing was taking place" (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 120).

However, this strategy of showing everything soon became a problem when Bosnian Serbs started shelling Sarajevo, especially when they opened fire on a peace demonstration from the roof of a Holiday Inn hotel. On this occasion, TV Belgrade merely showed a blank screen with the voice-over stating that there was no certainty about what had happened. For many months, there was no Serb filming of the shelling of Sarajevo. Nevertheless, "the antiwar demonstrations were covered by TV Sarajevo, which ran them live, with a written message on the bottom of the screen saying: 'Nations of Bosnia-Herzegovina unite, don't shoot!'" (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 120).

Only on the last day of May 1992 did the majority of Serbs see, for the first time on state television what was actually happening in Sarajevo. On that day, at 6pm, the government issued a resolution "condemning the shelling of Sarajevo by [Bosnian] Serbian forces. The condemnation was issued two hours before the UN Security Council was to meet and vote on the first sanctions resolution against Serbia". It was a last-minute attempt to prevent sanctions from being approved. But the propaganda continued in the following months and "the news about the concentration camps discovered in Bosnia in the summer of 1992 were either ignored or represented as a part of a Western conspiracy against Serbia (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 122). On the other side of the barricade, the enemies of the war mongering nationalism, there was the fight for an independent media and freedom of expression, promoting antiwar demonstrations with slogans declaring "Turn off Your TV and Open Your Eyes!".

Social sciences did not shut its eyes about what was going on in the country as Milan Milošević recalls: "a mid-1991 periodic survey of the Institute for Political Studies in Belgrade concluded that only 8.4 percent of the Serbian TV audience was well informed about events of vital importance to the whole country". But propaganda made its way. Surveys conducted a year later indicated that over 60 percent of television audiences expressed no doubt about the truth of the information transmitted by the TV images. Only 7 percent said they did not believe the images" (Udovicki, 2000: 123, 124).

Around the end of 1993, the media in Serbia began changing its tone just as Slobodan Milošević started presenting himself as an advocate for peace in international negotiations. However, at the same time, independent and foreign correspondents in Serbia came under attack and "thirteen foreign reporters (including those working for CNN, Radio Free Europe, Le Monde, Sky News, and the Christian Science Monitor) had their accreditations revoked because of" an alleged media war carried out against Yugoslavia and even Serbian reporters got "blamed for supplying CNN and other foreign agencies with lies and for being part of a

foreign conspiracy” (ibid.).

Serbian viewers could access fair accounts of what was happening in the country and in the region from Studio B TV but the station needed resources and technical equipment and skills. As additional funds were necessary, “Studio B was free to sell its airtime to the political parties competing in the parliamentary elections scheduled for October 20, 1993, and to make money that way. This offered the opportunity for the regime to try to destroy the station’s image. The ruling party refrained from buying any airtime, but the Party of Serbian Unity led by Željko Ražnjatović-Arkan offered to buy a lot of it. Without consulting its workers, the Studio B management decided to accept. Arkan failed to win the elections, but the collapse of confidence in Studio B was tremendously accelerated”. (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 125)

After the war in Bosnia ended, with Milošević turned into a peace-broker by American diplomat Richard Holbrooke, - the US diplomat would call him “a great defender of the Serbian national interest”<sup>393</sup> on a TV interview in Belgrade, in 1997 - the 1996 municipal elections in Serbia gave a surprising victory to an opposition coalition called Zajedno (Together), made up of several parties, including the SPO (Serbian Renewal Movement) of Vuk Drašković, the Democratic Party of Zoran Djindjić and the Civic Association led by Vesna Pšić. “This was a triumph, particularly considering that Zajedno was denied access to the official media in the pre-electoral campaign” (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 126).

The ruling SPS of Slobodan Milošević did not accept defeat in fourteen of the most important urban centres in Serbia and people came out onto the streets “in unprecedented numbers” to make Milošević understand he had lost. To the author, at her flat in Belgrade during NATO bombing in May 1999, Mrs. Pšić said: “It was the biggest democratic movement we’ve had so far. People came to the streets to fight for their political will and the recognition of the results. And, eventually, the results were recognized, so, yes, it was worthwhile” (Alexandre, 2002: 59).

There was huge international pressure to reestablish B92, by then already seen as a symbol of independent journalism not only in former Yugoslavia but in Europe as well. The 1993 Annual Award of the Committee to Protect Journalists went to its director Veran Matic, coupled with other awards<sup>394</sup>. Eventually, “determined protest and international pressure forced Slobodan Milošević to reestablish Radio B-92, claiming that the reason for the cut off was water in the cable network. When in February 1997, after months of daily

---

<sup>393</sup> As the author was told by political scientist and German Marshall Fund Vice President, Ivan Vejvoda, in Belgrade during the Transatlantic Leadership Seminar in June, 2013.

<sup>394</sup> [http://www.b92.net/about\\_us/awards.php](http://www.b92.net/about_us/awards.php)- Accessed on 02.04.2016.

demonstrations, Milošević yielded to Zajedno, acknowledging its victory, Independent TV Studio B was reborn” (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 127).

Another interesting case for reflection stems from Yutel. This federal state television channel was, from October 1990, probably one of the last attempts of the Ante Markovic led government to keep the country together and, according to its programming and, no doubt, to political interests (moreover, because the republic’s television channels would not broadcast his speeches and appeals over the need to implement economic reforms), provided the public with different information from that censored within each particular republic. Behind the scenes, as its main figure, the Federal Prime Minister was particularly confident about the success of this project. In *Forging War: The Media in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Mark Thompson (1999: 34) reassures Markovic’s “high hopes. By contrast with Tanjug and Borba, which were conceived to serve the information system in a one-party state, Yutel’s political goal was to speed Yugoslavia’s passage to full democracy”. Aspiring to comply with the highest standards in journalism, “Yutel would show all the facets of the truth to all of Yugoslavia’s fractured and bewildered public. It would remind people, by force of objective programming, why Yugoslavia should stay together”. However, “since there were no federal frequencies available to the government” (Thompson, 1999: 34) Yutel depended on the republics to get access to air slots and, for instance in Croatia, “Tudjman’s government (and the government in Slovenia) gave it an unfavourable slot after midnight” (Woodward, 1995: 230).

As Milan Milošević puts it, “a sizable audience, especially in the larger towns and cities, waited late into the night to watch Yutel news and commentary, because it was the only way to find out what was really going on in the already overheated situation. Quite soon, however, Yutel was labeled treasonous in both Serbia and Croatia. In this regard, the two leaderships were in total agreement — any activity supporting a multinational concept of Yugoslavia had to be silenced” (Milošević, in Udovicki, 2000: 115)

The republics had no problems in censoring the federal Prime Minister. When, in mid-November 1990, he made an important speech on the program *Ask the Federal Government*, about a financial scandal involving the Bank of Kosovo, “the three Serbian TV stations refused to relay it” (Thompson, 1999: 35), and Croatian TV delayed transmitting the speech. Planned to host Ante Markovic’s program the next day, TV Belgrade refused to do so due to alleged technical reasons. As Thompson recalls, “only Sarajevo and Skopje ever broadcasted” Yutel live (1999: 38).

Goran Milic, editor-in-chief, assures that Markovic was thinking from the outset on a wider project, “in the sense of Yutel culture, Yutel publishing, a Yutel reformist party” (1999: 37). Besides, the Federal Prime Minister and the board of Yutel were perfectly aware that, in the long-term, the station’s objectives could only be accomplished through a satellite

television station since they “knew from their fruitless discussions around the republics that only a satellite could ensure continued access to the public” (ibid.). They did not succeed in realizing their aspirations, neither at the technical level nor in the cultural field.

In Serbia, Yutel was transmitted at two or three o’clock in the morning on the second channel of TV Beograd, and “after a long musical intermission”. The same took place in Croatia, “at one or two a.m., (the newspapers omitted Yutel from the TV schedule), also after a long soporific interlude of classical music” (1999: 38). The staff were harassed by authorities and banned from the TV centre in Zagreb and attacked by nationalist gangs in Belgrade. Markovic was, to make things even more difficult, lacking in political sensitivity since he appointed “Milan Gavrovic, a Serb born in Serbia, to manage the operation in Croatia. Moreover, none of his team was a ‘pure’ Croat. These facts were ready-made propaganda for government-controlled media in Croatia” (1999: 39), where the Yutel viewing figures were lowest with no more than 27%, according to Milic’s estimations (ibid.).

With the war on the ground in Croatia and, besides obsolete equipment, Yutel staff did not have an easy life in getting access to the war zones, which became “more tightly restricted, especially for the domestic media and, most of all, for an uncommitted medium like Yutel” (1999: 40).

The author of this dissertation, from talks with numerous sources in Belgrade, Zagreb and Sarajevo, believes that much could have gone differently had Yutel started out two or three years earlier, for instance before Slobodan Milošević rose to the party leadership in Serbia. But, as Milic states, with hindsight, in Thompson’s book (1999: 40): “We understood little by little that Yutel was like trying to have a single television station for Hitler, Stalin and Churchill, broadcasting for all three in one language, or in one language with subtitles, putting Himmler on screen, then cutting to Churchill, and then saying ‘And now the football results’. It was impossible”.

By the time war broke out in BiH, in April 1992, “differences within Yutel, and outside pressure, multiplied” (1999: 41). Some of the Serb staff complained about Yutel opposing Serb nationalism in a much more vigorous way than it did with Croat and Muslim Bosnian nationalism. And in BiH, now at war, Yutel viewing rates were up around 70-80 percent, according to Milic: “Yutel and TV Sarajevo newsrooms were sometimes the only forums where political and military leaders could speak face to face, or rather voice to voice” (1999: 42). However, when a transmitter got captured in Central Bosnia, and broadcasting only to Sarajevo, on 11 May, Milic decided to suspend operations: “If you have a story ready by 11 a.m., do you keep it for yourself until 9 p.m. or give it to TV Sarajevo [to broadcast it earlier]? Do you put yourself at the service of defending the government and the people? What do you report in a besieged city? About destroyed houses, people dying, day after day? I don’t know. Nobody knows. I didn’t know how to solve the problem and I said no, I give



up” (1999: 42). Some of his colleagues have recriminated with him down through the years: “Everyone however, agrees that Yutel happened too late to influence events”, in addition to the lack of resources: “Yutel had 50 staff, whereas the republican stations employed a total of 24,000” (1999: 42-43).

Quite ironically, HRT, Croatia’s national TV, started broadcasting Yutel, “on 9 March 1991, the date of anti-government demonstrations in Belgrade. Perhaps the Croatian authorities could not resist the chance to publicize the depth of Milošević’s unpopularity in his own capital” (Thompson, 1999: 49).

The propaganda apparatus in Bosnia aimed at producing similar results as in Serbia or Croatia: *us* against *them*, *us* the victims, *they* the sole perpetrators, in a continued reproduction of a biased model of journalism and public information. In Sarajevo, the Democratic Action Party (SDA, in Bosnian), led by Alija Izetbegovic, built up “a substantial propaganda campaign at home and abroad, including the creation of new state symbols to demonstrate the venerable historical identity of Bosnia”. The Serb Democratic Party, SDS, headed by the psychiatric Radovan Karadžić, “was accordingly the most active in its propaganda war, because it was the most actively opposed to Bosnian independence from Yugoslavia” (ibid.). But it was only when the Bosnian Serbs abandoned the government in Sarajevo and moved to Pale (a small village in the hills and a traditional winter resort), about 20 kilometres from the capital, that his leadership created its own TV network, Channel S, and a news agency, SRNA, Srpska Republika Novinska Agencija (Serb Republic News Agency)<sup>395</sup>. In the nationalist controlled Channel S, the “Muslims were frequently referred to as *Turks*. In an effort to create new national heroes, Channel S televised ceremonies in 1992 in which soldiers were given awards for the number of Muslims they had killed”. (Woodward, 1995: 234)

What about the current situation in the Western Balkans? The HRW 2015 report<sup>396</sup> about the situation in the Balkans and based on 86 interviews with editors and journalists, “described a difficult media space in which they faced threats, attacks, and other types of intimidation and interference with their work”, including “veiled and direct threats against them and family members, physical attacks on themselves and their workplaces, and even death threats”. Journalists have commonly become targets, especially when reporting about war crimes, white collar corruption, powerful business or political elites.

We are talking about a region where there is a “recent history of violent wars in which authorities used the media as a propaganda tool”. The atmosphere for the media in many parts of the Western Balkans “is still characterized by danger and hostility rather than

---

<sup>395</sup> <http://www.srna.rs>. Accessed on 06-02-15.

<sup>396</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/07/15/difficult-profession/media-freedom-under-attack-western-balkans>. Published on 15.07.2015. Accessed on 04.09.2016.

improving as part of the region's democratic development". Back in 1999, in Belgrade, the leading human rights lawyer and founder of the Belgrade Center for Human Rights, Vojin Dimitrijevic, told this author that the "the most negative development, comparing with Tito times, was the increase of discrimination, not only against ethnic minorities, but against political minorities as well: you get yourself exposed to a whole range of attacks through state-controlled media" (Alexandre, 2002: 70).

The media is a mirror of its society: a truism everywhere and dramatically so in the case of Bosnia. A country with a complex, non-transparent in terms of ownership, ethnic based and biased, media landscape. The Dayton Peace Accords (DPA) provided for freedom of the press but a large number of independent broadcast and print outlets operate and appeal to narrow ethnic audiences, mostly neglecting balanced approaches and investigative reporting. The media, like the public, is divided along ethnic lines; and hence do not reach a wider audience.

Violent incidents involving the media and journalists have been occurring on a dramatically frequent basis: "In January 2014, Sinan Alić, a former journalist whose work had focused on war crimes, was attacked while walking his dog and was hospitalized with head injuries; Alić said he had received threatening text messages in the previous months". There were numerous reports of police employing excessive force against journalists covering the antigovernment protests that erupted in early 2014"<sup>397</sup>. Reporters often face more pressure from government officials<sup>398</sup>.

Lejla Turcilo, Ph.D. and assistant professor of journalism at the University of Sarajevo, stated that "media owners and/or editors enter into close relations with political and economic elites, who give them money through advertising or by buying shares in media companies. They also give them status; many former editors became PR advisors to politicians or were even made ambassadors by the politicians whom they earlier supported"<sup>399</sup>. Investigative journalism is rare in BiH but tabloid-style investigations are frequent. Low salaries make it even more difficult for the courageous journalism essential both to building up a better democracy and to leading to inter-ethnic reconciliation.

Tarik Jusić, a Program Director at Mediacentar Sarajevo and an Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science and International Relations, Sarajevo School of Science and Technology, declared that, as time goes by, and "as international intervention weakens, the pressures of local elites are mounting in an effort to scale back, when not completely

---

<sup>397</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/bosnia-and-herzegovina>. Accessed on 06.06.16.

<sup>398</sup> Available from <http://www.media.ba/en/publication/under-pressure-research-report-state-media-freedom-bosnia-and-herzegovina>. Published on 2010. Accessed on 24.07.2016.

<sup>399</sup> Available from <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-s-media-truly-reflects-its-divided-society>. "Bosnia's Media Truly Reflects Its Divided Society". Published on 29.11.2010. Accessed on 24.04.2014.

undermine”<sup>400</sup>, the positive developments. Additionally, “media and journalists have failed to professionalize, and there is still a high level of partisanship and political parallelism in the media, while the adherence to professional codes of conduct remains at rather low levels” (ibid.).

The Bosnia and Herzegovina Media Sustainability Index maintains that the issues most issued by its panel were “an alarming lack of media ownership transparency, questionable patterns of government financing, and political control over the public broadcasters—and failure to reform the institution and provide a sustainable mode to collect public broadcast fees”, which means “decreasing revenue sources, corrupt finance patterns, controversial audience measurement systems, and the migration of international advertisers to other markets and non-journalistic platforms”<sup>401</sup>.

Croatia, the newest EU member-state, also still needs to move forward from a past lack of compliance with the standards of modern press freedom. The Freedom House<sup>402</sup> “Freedom of the World 2013” report revealed that although the Croatian constitution “guarantees freedoms of expression and the press”, and despite these rights generally being respected, “journalists—particularly those covering organized crime and corruption—face political pressure, intimidation, and attacks”. Two years later, with Croatia already an EU member-state, the same Freedom House report, concerning Croatia in 2014, still reported the about harassment of journalists<sup>403</sup>. Crimes against journalists still occur with relative impunity.

Balkanmedia, an online platform for journalists, media managers, media experts and NGOs<sup>404</sup>, reveals that “Croatia continues to score mediocly in press freedom rankings and the media industry has been suffering from the financial crisis”. Other organizations, such as Reporters Without Borders (RWB) indicate “a continuous increasing of media freedom in Croatia”, ranking the country “58th out of 180 countries in terms of media freedom in the Freedom of the Press Index 2015”<sup>405</sup>, nevertheless pointing out the fact that “much remains to be done, especially in regard to the editorial independence of public broadcaster HRT”, a position shared by the Freedom’s House Report, rating Croatian media situation as “partly free”.

---

<sup>400</sup> [http://ejc.net/media\\_landscapes/bosnia-and-herzegovina](http://ejc.net/media_landscapes/bosnia-and-herzegovina). Accessed on 06.06.16.

<sup>401</sup> <https://www.irex.org/resource/bosnia-and-herzegovina-media-sustainability-index-msj>. Accessed on 06.06.16.

<sup>402</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/croatia>. Accessed on 04.09.2016.

<sup>403</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/croatia>. Accessed on 04.09.2016.

<sup>404</sup> Sponsored by the South East Europe Media Program of KAS. <http://www.kas.de/wf/en/71.13596/>. Accessed on 04.09.2016.

<sup>405</sup> [https://www.reporter-ohne-grenzen.de/uploads/tx\\_ifnews/media/Rangliste\\_der\\_Pressefreiheit\\_2015.pdf](https://www.reporter-ohne-grenzen.de/uploads/tx_ifnews/media/Rangliste_der_Pressefreiheit_2015.pdf). Accessed on 04.09.2016.

Croatia was compelled to adapt the national press and press freedom legislation throughout the accession negotiations with the EU, now including “references to media freedom and the right of access to information. Just like in other countries in South East Europe, a robust legislative framework cannot guarantee media freedom alone. Both implementation and social acceptance of the laws matter a great deal as well”, according to the aforementioned Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) report.

A new critical offence introduced into the law in 2013, “vilification”, to punish repeatedly, systematic and deliberate cases of defamation is considered to be a political tool to prevent investigative journalism. As in many other European countries, the financial crisis hit the media sector in Croatia hard, with increasing unemployment among journalists. Advertising revenues, sales and circulation have dropped, and more and more outlets feel the need of avoiding critics to the political or business interests of their owners represent.

The Croatian government should comply with democratic standards, grounded on the agreements and commitments it has signed throughout the EU accession process, but one must not blame the government for everything, as an improvement in the media sector also requires responsibility from media owners and from the society itself if willing to stand for freedom of expression and press freedom.

The author of this dissertation agrees with the perspective, shared some years ago by authors such as Christova (2009), that Croatia’s media landscape is “in a state of transition, from state-controlled media, through authoritarian administration, towards a democratic pluralistic media landscape”.<sup>406</sup> In May 2016, “around 200 journalists and activists joined a protest walk from the headquarters of the Croatian Journalists’ Association, HND to the culture ministry in central Zagreb on World Press Freedom Day on Tuesday to raise concerns about the media situation in the country”<sup>407</sup>. Reporting about war crimes committed by Croatian troops and officials still represents a highly problematic issue: “in less than two months, about 70 journalists, editors, directors, managers, cameramen and others have been removed from their positions or laid off from HRT, triggering accusations of political purges” (ibid.), and raising attention and concern from OSCE and foreign diplomats.

The situation of the media sector constitutes a real problem in Serbia, as well. In February 2016<sup>408</sup>, the European Parliament Rapporteur for Serbia, David McAllister, said that

---

<sup>406</sup> Christova, Christiana and Förger, Dirk (2009), “Media in Croatia: Between a National Past and European Future”, *Auslandsinformationen* 11/2009, ISSN 0177-7521, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V., Berlin, p.107-112. Available at [http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas\\_18346-544-2-30.pdf?091211124950](http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_18346-544-2-30.pdf?091211124950). Accessed on 04.09.2016.

<sup>407</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatian-government-ignores-cries-for-media-freedom-05-03-2016>. Published on 03.05.2016; accessed on 04.09.2016.

<sup>408</sup> EP "concerned about freedom of expression", Tanjug. [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2015&mm=02&dd=20&nav\\_id=93250](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2015&mm=02&dd=20&nav_id=93250). Published on 20.02.2015, accessed on 08.05.2015.

“media freedom is crucial for the functioning of the media”, adding that “it was up to the Serbian government to guarantee the legal framework in which they operate”. Asked whether he shared the conclusion of some representatives of NGOs and the media, such as the BIRN, which complain about coming under pressure”, McAllister followed strictly that line of thought, though reiterating that “the freedom of the media is important for democracy and the Serbian government is to guarantee the legal framework in which the media operate” (ibid.), adding that there was still work to be done in Serbia.

Despite accusations from Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic that the EU was “funding some non-governmental organizations and the media who write critically about the government”, the EU welcomed the adoption of the Law on Public Information and the Media, the Law on Electronic Media and called for their implementation although also expressing concerns over threats against journalists and about the “deterioration of the conditions for full freedom of expression in Serbia, highlighting the need for complete transparency of media ownership”.

Eric Gordy claims that “major media in the country are owned by unknown actors, shell companies, and networks with no mechanisms of accountability. Since the German publisher WAZ decided it wanted out of the domestic marketplace in 2010, it looks as though an assemblage of political entrepreneurs and economic operators have been trading back and forth. (...) The government shows evident favour to a few media outlets whose editors have personal connections in positions of power, and where there is an occasional effort to bring discipline to the rest”<sup>409</sup>.

According to some of this dissertation’s interviewees in Belgrade<sup>410</sup>, the situation is even worse than during the Milošević times, because of a decline in the quality of content, non-transparent ownership and poor finances. In fact, as Nedeljkovic argues, “the transparency in terms of the media ownership structure has a great impact on the media freedom i.e. on the freedom of expression, and thus on the existence of real democracy”. Nedeljkovic (2013: 49)<sup>411</sup>.

According to the 2016 World Press Freedom Index, organized by Reporters Without Borders, Serbia is placed in 59<sup>th</sup> position out of 180 countries, Croatia is 63<sup>rd</sup> while BiH ranks 68<sup>th</sup> and Kosovo 90<sup>th</sup><sup>412</sup>. However, in the case of Serbia, there has been progress as the country was 85<sup>th</sup> (out of 178) in 2010 and 63<sup>rd</sup> in 2013 (out of 179), according to independent Serbia news agency, Beta.

---

<sup>409</sup> See <https://eastethnia.wordpress.com/2016/07/10/when-you-say-newspaper-you-think-cloak-and-dagger-politikas-baffling-palace-coups/>. Accessed on 06.08.2016.

<sup>410</sup> On anonymity, on 01.06.2013.

<sup>411</sup> “Europe, Here and There: Analysys of Europeanization Discourse in the Western Balkans Media” (2013), Nedeljković, Dubravka Valić and Kleut, Jelena, Faculty of Philosophy, Regional Research Promotion Programme in the Western Balkans (RRPP), Novi Sad.

<sup>412</sup> <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>. Accessed on 08.05.2016.

Quoting data from 2011, this research revealed that “out of 240 editors of the informative media polled in late 2011, only six (2%)” considered that “media freedom and reporters’ rights were fully realized” during that year and “21% that only sporadic incidents occurred. About three quarters of the reporters (72%) think that Serbia has a big problem in terms of media freedom.” (ibid.).

In January 2013, analysis published by BIRN and written by Nemanja Cabric<sup>413</sup>, provided an account of a series of ethnic insults and “hate speech in Serbian newspapers and magazines, with Albanians subjected to racist slurs (‘Shqiptars Make Arrests for Christmas’. The usage of the term ‘Shqiptar’, in its Serbian version ‘Siptar’, is a way of mocking Albanians and presenting them as an inferior race to Serbs), Croats labelled compulsive thieves and a regional public broadcaster accused of being a front for Zagreb’s interests. Such rhetoric showed that anyone who criticises nationalism now runs the risk of being targeted over their ethnic origin or labelled ‘anti-Serb’”.

Undoubtedly, even if the tone is not hysterical as happened in the Milošević-Tudjman era in the 1990s, the truth is that inflammatory press headlines may fuel and re-stoke ethnic hatred and, as Cabric argues, “even more disturbing rhetoric has emerged online”, when people claiming to be members of a notorious Serbian interior ministry special operations unit disbanded a decade ago issued a military threat to ethnic Albanians in Kosovo”. The letter, published online, applied these terms: “We are calling on patriotic organisations, political parties and individuals to join us in any form of fight, including an armed one, against Albanians”. What is more revealing is that the SNS government did not condemn the hate speech on which this letter was based, “but simply said the letter could not be taken seriously because the unit was defunct”.

The context of European integration places considerable importance on Serbia establishing a legal framework for media operations, and leaving the media sphere to journalists and media outlets. The media should be free of influence from business and political circles, but also be responsible for what they report to prevent violations of human rights and liberties. Journalists should be able to nurture investigative reporting. At the moment, there is a worrying tabloidization of the Serbian newspapers. Serious newsmagazines like Vreme or NIN are selling just 3,000 or 4,000 copies. Blic, a tabloid daily, meanwhile has a circulation of 350,000<sup>414</sup>.

Changes in the media sphere may not be, after all, as quick as Serbians may expect, but rather a gradual process as the experiences of other EU countries, such as Portugal or

---

<sup>413</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbian-nationalists-bring-back-hate-speech>. Published on 30.01.2013, accessed on 27.05.2016.

<sup>414</sup> Author’s own field-work notes.

Spain, have shown. In the next subchapter, we analyse the importance of another crucial institution: the Church, the role of religion in these post-conflict societies.

#### **4.8. The Church**

Ethnic mobilization in the 1990s brought religiosity into a close link with ethnicity, both widely considered at a high value. Churches and religious communities occupied a much larger space than they had in the former Yugoslavia, leading to a stronger influence on the political and social life, which is still prevailing.

With religion merged in with politics, social issues have gained less attention from the Church than the local reality would justify, which could make the church losing prestige and credibility in society. Is it somehow happening?

Croatia is a devout catholic country and the Roman Catholic Church is an influential and powerful institution in the country, with an estimated 3.7 million baptized Roman Catholics in Croatia accounting for over 85% of the population according to the 2011 census. Years before, 2005, in Zagreb, the sociologist Dunja Potocnik, would tell the author in an interview: “Religion still plays a very important role at various levels. When the war began there was the feeling that everyone had to be religious here in Croatia, which was obviously a manipulation; therefore, with the decrease, fortunately, of this type of manipulation, people are more flexible and open with regard to religiosity, but it is still very important”.

The Serbian Orthodox Church is an important force in the country and there has been a revival of marrying in church but many analysts have considered this more as part of tradition than as proof of any increase in the political power of the Church leadership, arguing that Serbs do not go to church massively and that society is fairly secularized.

In fact, Serbian Church approval rates have been declining ever since their strong criticism of the government's agreement with the Pristina authorities on Kosovo, the Brussels Agreement. However, for the Church, there is no great scope for acting differently since incidents in the former province and the cradle of the Serbian nation still occur on quite a regular basis. In any case, both in Serbia and Croatia, we are talking about rather important and, still, influential institutions.

Analyzing the historical role of the catholic and orthodox churches in the Croatian and Serbian societies, and their prevailing political influence, may be important to understand tensions that may obstacle the overcome of ‘hate speech’.

In the early 1940s, during the Second World War, Croatia lived under a Nazi puppet state, the so-called Independent State of Croatia (NDH), established by Ante Pavelić and his Ustaše led movement. This regime carried out atrocities and, to many analysts, in particular in Belgrade, a genocidal policy against minorities, especially orthodox Serbs. The creation of

the NDH was, at least in a first moment, welcomed by the Catholic Church hierarchy according to authors such as the historian Michael Phayer<sup>415</sup>.

Aloysius Stepinac, the then Archbishop of Zagreb, was an enthusiastic supporter of Croatia's independence from Yugoslavia, which he considered as dominated by Serbs, and with the Yugoslav state as “the jail of the Croatian nation” (ibid.). However, there was no formal recognition for the NDH from the Vatican, which insisted a peace treaty first be signed as there were Catholics on both sides (though in much smaller numbers in the partisans). The repression of Serbs, as well as Gypsies and Jews, was supported by many Croatian nationalist clergy, and even alongside their forced conversion to Catholicism, as another historian, Richard J. Evans, argues<sup>416</sup>. In 1942, Stepinac criticized developments in the NDH, even while without specifically mentioning the persecution of Serbs, when writing a letter to the puppet-Nazi state leader, the dictator, Ante Pavelic, condemning the mass killings at the Jasenovac concentration camp: “The very Jasenovac camp is a stain on the honor of the NDH. Poglavnik! To those who look at me as a priest and a bishop I say as Christ did on the cross: Father forgive them for they know not what they do”<sup>417</sup>. In Jasenovac, between 80,000 and 300,000 people (numbers differ from Zagreb sources to Belgrade ones) were killed.

The Church faced huge repression under Tito's rule, with the murder or imprisonment of bishops, the confiscation of church registries and, in 1952, “the communist regime officially banned all religious education in public schools”<sup>418</sup>. The demand for religious education increased openly after Tito's death<sup>419</sup> but the Church nevertheless had to await Croatia's independence in 1991 to recover its status, freedom and influence. After the treaty Croatia signed with the Vatican in 1997, the relations between the state and the Church were regulated, including financing the Church from the national budget.

Very active in the political and social spheres, the Croatian Catholic church campaigned in 2013 for a referendum that kept marriage as a union between a man and a woman, with the faithful responding decisively to its call with the result defeating those who wanted to make a push for legalizing same-sex marriage (with the EU accession process in its final steps, a law approving same-sex partnerships would eventually be drafted and passed in June 2014, affording same-sex couples equal rights in inheritance, social benefits, and taxation, but barring them from adopting children). In its opposition to abortion and

---

<sup>415</sup> Phayer, Michael (2000), *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust 1930-1965*, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, page 32.

<sup>416</sup> Evans, Richard J. (2009), *The Third Reich at War*, Penguin Press; New York, pp. 158-159.

<sup>417</sup> Alojzije Viktor Stepinac: 1896-1960 Archived May 30, 2003, at the Wayback Machine.

<sup>418</sup> Akmadža, Miroslav (2004), *Katolička crkva u Hrvatskoj i komunistički režim 1945-1966*, Biblioteka Svjedočanstva, Rijeka, page 93.

<sup>419</sup> Ramet, Sabrina P. (1990), *Catholicism and politics in communist societies*, Duke University Press, p. 194.



ethanasia, as well as to contraception and infertility treatments, the Church has also been rather active.

Croatia is a democracy, the country has joined the EU but the phantoms of the past still linger. In 2016, a television statement from “a Catholic priest in the ongoing public debate about Croatia’s WWII Nazi-aligned Independent State of Croatia, the NDH, has again highlighted far-right tendencies among an outspoken minority of the country’s clergy”, according to an article signed by Sven Mikelic, from the BIRN office in Zagreb<sup>420</sup>. The priest, Luka Prcela, was speaking in the coastal city of Split and screened live on state TV HRT and did not restrain from criticizing Croatian President Kolinda Grabar Kitarovic for stating that the NDH “wasn’t independent and was criminal”.

In a socially conservative environment such as contemporary Croatia, subjects like sexual health remain a taboo, very much due to the role played by the Catholic church that campaigned against a then SDP government health education program “in primary and secondary schools that included information on sexual health and same-sex relationships. The Constitutional Court suspended the program, arguing that the government failed to consult with parents on the curriculum”<sup>421</sup>. A survey conducted in 2015 by the ‘Ivo Pilar’ Institute of Social Sciences suggests that the Church is the second most trusted institution in Croatia, right after the military.

In our own survey, responded to by 274 university students throughout Bosnia, and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo (with the detailed and disaggregated results presented in chapter VIII), when students are asked if they have friends from other religious affiliations (than their own) and, among the positive answers, besides their own religious affiliation or non-affiliation, 31.38% respond they have Orthodox friends, 45.6% state they have Catholic friends, 37.9% have Muslim friends, 8.75% Jew friends, while 7.66% say they have friends from “other” religious affiliations. In conclusion, a substantial majority of respondents do have friends from religious affiliations other than their own. Only 11.6% reported having no friends from other religious affiliation.

The following question in our survey related to the latter facet. The students were asked: “How important is religion to the construction of your national identity?” There is a balance in responses when the question focuses upon measuring the importance of religion to the construction of one’s national identity. It is of little importance to 29.56% of respondents, not important to 34.6% but very important to 31.38%. However, the overall results tend to show a decline in the importance of religion in the construction of national identity as there is

---

<sup>420</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatia-s-catholic-church-easy-on-fascist-sympathizers-05-09-2016>. Published on 09.05.2016; accessed on 04.09.2016.

<sup>421</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2016/croatia>. Accessed on 04.09.2016.

a substantial majority of respondents (around 63.6%) who attribute this dimension with little or no importance.

When the survey approaches the acknowledgement of opinions that have a major impact on the lives of individuals, the results are not particularly different. When asked about “marrying someone from a different religion”, a huge majority accept that is a possibility (53.6% saying Yes and 22.99% saying maybe). Only 9.48% reject the idea while 8.75% state such an option is not very likely.

In 2014, the Serbs driven out of Đakovica in Kosovo, after the war in 1999, sent a protest letter to the Priština authorities for not being allowed to visit their town and property on Good Friday. The Serbian government's Office for Kosovo condemned the decision: “Đakovica is a forbidden town for Serbs, because somebody does not want a reminder that 12,000 Serbs lived there before the conflict in the province, while now there are only four elderly women left.” This case is one mere example of the sheer complexity of the interethnic relations in the region intermingled with religious diversity.

Two sociologists of religion, Milan Vukomanović, Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, and Dino Abazović, Professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo, were interviewed on a radio talk show, “Bridge” (“Most”) on Radio Free Europe in South Slavic and Albanian languages, published online by the Kosovo Interfaith 5th Edition, an innovative approach to diplomacy through civil society<sup>422</sup>.

The topic of the conversation was the power of religion in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Questioned whether the huge influence that religion has in Serbia today is due to the fact that in the last census, 94 percent of the population declared themselves as believers, 84 percent of whom are Orthodox Christians, Vukomanović argued he “would not associate the census results with the influence of the church. (...) The fact that they identify themselves as belonging to a religious community does not mean that they are religious”. Vukomanovic would rather term the influence of the church on today’s Serbia as “political orthodoxy that implies the coupling of certain social groups, political parties and churches. There is a tendency to reject the secular values of civil society, which calls into question pro-European values such as democracy, civil society, pluralistic discourse, religious tolerance and human rights. Religion is increasingly occupying public space and tends to shape it in the way it wanted”. Its role in contemporary Serbian society should neither be overestimated nor underestimated. Dino Abazovic added, referring to a study he himself conducted among the Muslim population in BiH, that “the percentage of confessional self-identification was 96 percent. One should not forget that in BiH, as well as in Serbia and more or less throughout the region, we have a historic symbiosis between ethnicity and religion. Regarding Bosnia,

---

<sup>422</sup> <http://www.interfaithkosovo.org/initiative/?lang=En>. Accessed on 28.05.2016.

religion was the key differentia that significantly influenced the ethnic division of the population”.

Even if leaving a more detailed analysis of the role of Islam in BiH to the next subchapter, one can point out that the latter and the two other major religions in the former Yugoslavia, Christian Orthodoxy and Catholicism, have all played a significant role in helping politicians to play the nationalist or ethnic card but have rarely engaged in spreading tolerance. They were all much more focused on victimization and the blaming of others than on any mutual understanding and reconciliation. Vukomanovic acknowledges that “mediators and initiators of reconciliation have always been external actors, either non-governmental organizations and foundations or international organizations” (ibid.).

#### **4.9. Religion and the European Call for Jihad**

A report entitled “The Lure of the Syrian War: The Foreign Fighters’ Bosnian Contingent”, published in 2015 by University of Sarajevo professor Vlado Azinović and Islamic theologian and columnist Muhamed Jusić reveals that Bosnia is “ill-equipped to deal with the potential threat”. It is a weak state. 22 police agencies “operate in the country with overlapping jurisdictions and roles”. The report alerts, quoted by The Guardian: “Returning foreign fighters from Syria and Iraq – battle-hardened, skilled in handling arms and explosives, and ideologically radicalised – pose a direct threat not only to the security of BiH, but also of the region and beyond.” The authors of the study<sup>423</sup>, after a period of three years of observation of Bosnian jihadists, “place them in two broad categories: veterans who fought alongside mujahideen volunteers from the Arab world in the 1992-1995 Bosnian conflict, and young Bosnian men “driven mostly by adrenaline and a quest for self-validation, self-respect, group belonging, and purpose”.

A youth unemployment rate of over 60% clearly aids the so-called Islamic State, and their media expertise completes the rest of the story, posting videos with “an idyllic picture of insurgent life in Syria, with Bosnian, Kosovan and Albanian fighters walking off to battle like a smiling band of brothers while enjoying time with their families on their days off”, besides portraying the current Bosniak political leadership as “collaborators with the enemies of Islam ‘preparing you like sheep for the next genocide’”. The Sarajevo authorities “believe that the roughly 50 jihadists who have come back to Bosnia so far represent a manageable load for the Bosnian intelligence and security agencies, despite their many divisions and flaws. But they

---

<sup>423</sup>[http://atlanticinitiative.org/images/THE\\_LURE\\_OF\\_THE\\_SYRIAN\\_WAR\\_THE\\_FOREIGN\\_FIGHTERS\\_BOSNIAN\\_CONTINGENT/The\\_Lure\\_of\\_the\\_Syrian\\_War\\_-\\_The\\_Foreign\\_Fighters\\_Bosnian\\_Contingent.pdf](http://atlanticinitiative.org/images/THE_LURE_OF_THE_SYRIAN_WAR_THE_FOREIGN_FIGHTERS_BOSNIAN_CONTINGENT/The_Lure_of_the_Syrian_War_-_The_Foreign_Fighters_Bosnian_Contingent.pdf). Accessed on 05.09.2016.

also worry that the scale of the problem could escalate dramatically given the parlous conditions of Bosnia's economy and society"<sup>424</sup>. The European attraction to jihadism, thus, constitutes a complementary reason to analyse the role of religion.

BiH is a country where freedom of expression and religion, both in RS and in the FBiH, are provided. At the state level, there is a law on religious freedom to ensure the rights of the different religious communities in the country. These rights have generally been respected despite some problems and minor incidents, particularly during politically sensitive moments such as prior to elections.

Nevertheless, on a daily basis, life in the country is organized along ethnic and religious lines, for example the educational system, with its Two Schools Under One Roof (a topic subject to consideration in chapter seven), so that Croat and Bosniak Muslim students do not mix. Religious minorities in different parts of the territories have constantly been subject to discrimination and there have been frequent cases of misuse of religious symbols, festivities and memorials staged for political purposes.

The importance of religion is indisputable in post-conflict BiH, very likely much more important than before the conflict. Were there not anything else to support this perspective, the numerous mosques that have been built (for which hundreds of people were employed) by donors such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Arab countries in Sarajevo testify in concrete to this view.

This does not represent anything new or particular to modern times or some lingering effect of the 1990s civil war. In fact, there has been a close relationship between the religion and the state or the nation in the Balkans down through centuries. The Rosemont College religion scholar Paul Mojzes says the "fusion or overlapping of ethnicity and religion is a well-known phenomenon (...) in the Balkans. For centuries, the church was the people and the people were the church.... [In 1989,] the coalescence of ethnic and religious identification returned with such a vengeance that it is mandatory to use the single word "ethnoreligious."<sup>425</sup>

After the DPA in the late 1995, many projects have taken place in efforts to bring Bosnia's religious leaders together. For instance, a World Conference on Religion and Peace was organized aiming at bringing the different religious communities onto common platforms coupled with a "moral agenda", as Johnston and Eastvold tell us. The multireligious cooperation project in BiH, "began a program to promote the growth of mutual trust; provide an opportunity to clarify common moral commitments; and initiate a process to create an

---

<sup>424</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/25/isis-targets-vulnerable-bosnia-for-recruitment-and-attack>. Published on 25.06.2015; accessed on 05.09.2016.

<sup>425</sup> Mojzes, Paul (1994) *Yugoslavian Inferno*, Continuum, New York: pp.125-7.

organizational vehicle for collaborative actions for peace and social reconstruction at the national level with the major religious leaders in BiH<sup>426</sup>.

The road is not easy, and accidents occur at each corner, particularly when what is put on the table is a common Western undervaluation of the meaning of religion to societies which are far from secularized. As Johnston and Eastvold explain, “religious and ethno-political identity in the Balkans are intimately linked to the extent that religious conversion is viewed as both religious apostasy and political treason. Consequently, any inter-religious effort that treats religious differences as insignificant is likely to be regarded as politically suspect and will retain its credibility only among those who are already predisposed to inter-religious cooperation.

Rather than exhorting religious people to stop fighting because their differences do not matter, it will be far more productive to work within each tradition to show that peace is necessary precisely because their beliefs do matter”.

Rather than “writing religious leaders off as a part of the problem, it is both possible and necessary to empower them to become an integral part of the solution”. However, these authors also claim that the strategy should be different from that commonly applied for policymakers: “the carrots in a policymaker’s toolbox, which are mostly economic in nature, are not legitimate incentives for religious leaders; (...) threatening the use of sticks to convince a religious leader to change his or her teaching is simply inappropriate and infringes upon religious freedom”.

The scholar Zilka Spahic-Sijak, who this author questioned over the value of civic education in post-conflict societies and whether the researcher at the Sarajevo and Stanford universities would agree that civic education represents a step ahead of religious education, in terms of fostering reconciliation, said that “civic education is a huge achievement<sup>427</sup> and it is most important “that children and youngsters have it at schools, in all public schools” and a goal correspondingly fostered in the early years of the 2000s by peace-builders such as Rahela Džidić, portrayed in Spahic-Sijak’s book *Shining Humanity*. However, civic education is not replacing religious education: “civic education is not sufficient, specially having in mind that according to recent research, 95% of parents want religious-confessional education in public schools. It’s a really huge percentage, and knowing that you cannot say ‘now we have civic education, it’s done’. It’s good to have civic education because it brings children

---

<sup>426</sup> <http://www.mott.org/grants/world-conference-of-religions-for-peace-inc-multireligious-cooperation-in-bosnia-herzegovina-199700370/>. Accessed on 05.09.2016.

<sup>427</sup> Talk with the author during her presentation on 24.04.2015 at Columbia University, New York, in the World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities. Zilka Spahic-Sijak participated in the panel “Faith Communities: Fostering Civil Society in Post-Conflict Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo”, with the paper “Believers and Peace and Development: Bridging the Secular-Religious Divide in Bosnia”.

together, but after they go to religious education separately to learn about their own religious traditions, and not so much about the others, so I think we need a combination”.

A clear focus on education, with an emphasis on civic education and a different approach to religious education that might simultaneously serve as education for peace and for knowledge of “others”, might be an answer to overcoming the divide along ethnoreligious lines prevailing in BiH, in the Balkans in general and in post-conflict societies across the world.

In this chapter, this research has focused on several dimensions (comparable, though not on a symmetrical basis) of the countries studied under this research. Starting with the political structure, stabilized in Croatia, rather complex in Bosnia and conditioning all other aspects of the life in the country as well as the prospects for reconciliation; in Serbia, all major developments, including its EU accession process, remain conditioned by the lack of any definite status for Kosovo, whose independence Belgrade insists in not recognizing, preventing the new country from moving forwards and opening up space for the parallel economy, the violation of basic rights and deepening a problem that is starting to turn into a structural feature of the countries in the region: the brain-drain. The economic situation, the rule of law, the judiciary, the human rights situation, the highly problematic media landscape, the role of the religion, were also part of this in-depth journey. In chapter V, the focus turns to education, and its role in post-conflict societies.

## CHAPTER V – EDUCATION IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES: FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION

*Since wars begin in the minds of men,  
it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed*<sup>428</sup>

### 5.1. Introduction and state-of-the-art

The inclusion of educational policies in the peace-building post-conflict process is crucial to a better understanding of the role of education in post-conflict societies, even though one must be aware that conflict transformations always carry out a multi-dimensional task, as Hugh Miall (2004: 17) puts it<sup>429</sup>, seeing it as “a comprehensive approach, addressing a range of dimensions (micro to macro issues, local to global levels, grassroots to elite actors, short-term to long-term timescales). It aims to develop capacity and to support structural change, rather than to facilitate outcomes or deliver settlements. It seeks to engage with conflict at the pre-violence and post-violence phases, and with the causes and consequences of violent conflict, which usually extend beyond the site of fighting”. The author, Emeritus Professor of International Relations at the University of Kent, “proposed expanding conflict theory to include conflict-in-context, and suggested a theoretically informed framework for evaluation” (ibid.).

Assuming the role of education as part of the conflict transformation theory will be one of the two axes of the current chapter. The other is related to the conceptual developments of the notion of education for peace, “defined as an interdisciplinary area of education whose goal is institutionalized and non-institutionalized teaching about peace and for peace”<sup>430</sup>.

Decades before the Yugoslav disintegration, the schools and universities, arts and culture, as well as the mass media, were “the very institutions that Titoist Yugoslavia once used to create *bratstvo i jedinstvo* — brotherhood and unity — and a sense of Yugoslavian identity”<sup>431</sup>. For Tito, this idea of national unity very much interrelated with linguistic and educational policies, especially the teaching of literature and history, as well as artistic works with a Yugoslav perspective<sup>432</sup>.

---

<sup>428</sup> From the Constitution of UNESCO, signed on 16 November 1945.

<sup>429</sup> Miall, H. (2004). Conflict transformations: A multi-dimensional task. In A. Austin, M. Fischer, & N. Ropers (Eds.) *Transforming ethnopolitical conflict: The Berghof handbook* (pp. 67-89). Wiesbaden, Germany: VS Verlag Fur Sozialwissenschaften.

<sup>430</sup> <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2314/Peace-Education.html>. Accessed on 23.10.2016.

<sup>431</sup> Davidson, Douglas (2009) “Recapitulating Yugoslavia: Culture, Politics and State-Building in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, *Policy Brief*, The German Marshall Fund of the US, July 31, p.3.

<sup>432</sup> Josip Broz Tito was quite a serious cinephile.

In this chapter, we consider the role played by the educational system in the post-war period towards reconciliation between the nations and the peoples of the former Yugoslavia, in great need of coming to terms with historical events on a consensual basis in order to reject manipulation and apply values such as tolerance, compromise, responsibility and reconciliation in their public political and social discourses. Education is, consequently, a key factor in achieving stability and a pacific, convivial relationship between these nations and their peoples; if not in the near future, at least in the long run, an assumption we strive to develop theoretically in this chapter.

According to European standards, these countries are poorly served regarding education policies, especially higher education, but the problems Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian universities face, nevertheless, seem “easier to deal with than their fragmented structures, organisational rigidity, intellectual isolation and endemic corruption”<sup>433</sup> (Temple, 2012).

The modern world has learned that education is “not a privilege for the few, but a right for all” (UNESCO, 2001) and the widespread democratisation of education was a key benchmark of the twentieth century. A group of Greek social scientists concluded that “the original source which makes people susceptible to nationalism, to the authoritarian mentality and, therefore, to ‘hate speech’, is education” (Papanikolatos, in Lenkova, 1998: 10). But one should bear in mind as well that in modern societies “the fundamental mechanism of cultural homogenization in the shaping of a collective national identity is provided by the institution of education”<sup>434</sup>. Disseminating the official historical discourses by deploying “the apparatus of the educational system is one way in which the hegemony of the nation-state is perpetuated and the prevailing social order maintained” (Johnson, 2011: 2).

Environments of tolerance and peaceful co-existence were destroyed or, at least, severely damaged, after the wars of disintegration, secession and independence throughout the former Yugoslavia. And a society is “infinitely more difficult to reconstruct than roads or bridges. The destruction of the system of public administration and governance, the interruption in the development of knowledge and technological innovation and the brain drain of qualified workers and experts has had a tremendous effect” (OECD, 2006: 29,30).

In this chapter, one begins with a brief analysis of the educational situation regarding the political evolution and the momentum in the case studied: Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo. Then, the analysis is broadened to a non-Balkan approach in order to

---

<sup>433</sup> Temple, Paul, “Small countries, big problems: higher education reform in the Western Balkans”, Open Society Foundation, posted on 14.08.2012. Accessed on 19.03.2013.

<sup>434</sup> “Hate speech: (re)producing the opposition between the national “self” and the “others”, in Lenkova, Mariana (editor), “hate speech in the Balkans”, The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF), Nafsika Papanikolatos quotes Frangoudaki, Anna and Thalia Dragona, eds. What is our fatherland? Ethnocentrism in education, Alexandria publications, 1997 (in Greek), pp.12-13 & 25.



acknowledge the influence played by international institutions in the former Yugoslavia countries' educational provision. Taking into account two diverse western cases, one considers the relations between the church and the state, in providing religious and/or civic education. Besides citizenship and religious models of education, adding the dimension of anti-racism as well as the theoretical contributions which have been backbones of these models.

This chapter focuses in some detail on the work of Elisabeth King and her nuanced approach to education in post-conflict societies, Robert Jackson and his arguments in favour of religious education, but also David Hargreaves and his three-level solution to dealing with the dichotomy between religious education and citizenship education processes. Ali Rattansi<sup>435</sup> leads us through his proposal of “reflexive multiculturalism” to overcome incompatibilities between antiracism and multiculturalism, and, in trends such as “Education for peace”, and the conceptual developments of this notion, one approaches Danesh's integrative theory of peace as well as the peace curriculum stemming from this theory in accordance with three premises: “unity, not conflict, is the main force in human relationships; worldview is the main framework within which all human individual and group behaviour takes shape; and peace is the main outcome of a unity-based worldview” (Danesh 2011: 70).

In his 2009 report on peace-building, the UNSG refers to the most crucial priorities in post-conflict societies: “establishing security, building confidence in a political process, delivering initial peace dividends and expanding core national capacity”<sup>436</sup>. And these priorities shall also include ‘the provision of basic services, such as water and sanitation, health and primary education’. Smith (2010:1) argues that education is much more than a service as it implies socialization and identity development through a process of transmission of “knowledge, skills, values and attitudes across generations”. Education may constitute a driving force for conflict transformation and peace-building processes, promoting reconciliation. On the other hand, education also provides a potential catalyst for conflict, feeding rivalries, stereotypes – “they revolve about true occurrences, but it is the blanket generalization that elevates them to a seemingly, coherent and, most often, dangerously sweeping and oversimplified picture<sup>437</sup>” and xenophobia.

However, in accepting the scope for considering the education system as part of the problems, this correspondingly represents how the system may also be part of the solution. In fact, education may provide a tool for conflict (and social) transformation not only through

---

<sup>435</sup> Rattansi, Ali (1999) Racism, postmodernism and reflexive multiculturalism, in MAY, S., (ed.) *Critical Multiculturalism: Rethinking Multicultural and Antiracist Education*, London: Falmer Press.

<sup>436</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict*, 11 June 2009, A/63/881-S/2009/304, Available from <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a4c6c3b2.html>.

<sup>437</sup> Todorova, Maria (2013) “My Yugoslavia”, in Gorup, p. 26.

reforms carried out in the education system itself but also by empowering people with new models and forms of political representation, judicial organization and police behaviour, for instance. Lynn Davies (2010)<sup>438</sup> warily suggests that every analysis of the education system “is more likely to highlight a range of areas where some parts of the system may be fuelling conflict in a highly politicized way, whilst there may be other aspects of the system that are trying to bring about change and contribute towards peace-building” (2010:3).

How harmful can education be to intergroup and interethnic relations? What’s the extent of the damage potentially produced to reconciliation in the aftermath of a civil conflict? Elisabeth King (2013: 2) reflects about the role of the education system in a post-conflict society, i.e. Rwanda, and warns that it “has and continues to play a more harmful role in intergroup relations”. One of her interviewees, identified as a “female of unknown ethnicity, northern Rwanda” (2013: 1), explains how education played an important role in promoting violence, “because from primary school, from the youngest age, you had to differentiate the Hutu and the Tutsi. Every time Tutsi were the minority in relation to the Hutu”.

The way history gets taught about each ethnic community, their past and their ancient whereabouts, how the minority group came to Rwanda, met the Hutus and sort of colonized the country, increased prejudice and hate speech: “They (at school) said all this and we learned it from a very young age. I think that it is normal that there be hatred between Hutu and Tutsi starting from this very young age”. Normally, education is crucial to local politicians as, according to Bassuener, it is through education “that happens the indoctrination of creating the next generation of nationalists”<sup>439</sup>.

The most common pattern in the peace-building and state-building literature, when focusing on education, even in a subfield labelled as “education in emergencies”, centred on the provision of education as part of humanitarian actions<sup>440</sup>, tends to value the positive contributions potentially given to peace and reconciliation processes. King helps us to consider the other side of the coin, stating the weakness of literature “in terms of appreciating the importance of education, as well as how a nuanced understanding of education illuminates conflict and the potential for peace” (King, 2013: 4).

This dissertation adopts this concept of a “nuanced understanding of education” to approach the reality in the WB countries. King follows in the line of Bush and Saltarelli (2000), Smith and Vaux (2003), among others scholars and practitioners who “began to question the role of ‘ordinary’, everyday education and to acknowledge education’s role in

---

<sup>438</sup> Davies, Lynn, *Education and Fragility. A Synthesis of Four Country Case Studies (Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia and Liberia)*, International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), 2010.

<sup>439</sup> Interview with the author, May 2015, New York.

<sup>440</sup> King, Elisabeth, *From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda*, Cambridge Books Online, 2013, p. 4.

conflict” as displaying two sides: “alongside the most common ‘positive face’, the ‘negative face’ of education recognizes the harmful effects of inequitable distribution of schooling, cultural repression through schooling and propagandistic textbooks that promote intolerance” (King, 2013: 5). Bearing in mind that we are considering a relatively new field of studies, the one of ‘two sides’ of education, the author agrees with King when arguing that “calls for better frameworks and stronger empirical research remain widespread” (ibid).

Should Rwanda’s schools have, as King argues, “produced and reinforced horizontal inequalities and psycho-cultural processes” (King, 2013: 9), understood as a combination of factors such as “categorization, collectivization and stigmatization” (King, 2013: 19), what can we say about the education system in the former Yugoslavia? This author also agrees with Elisabeth King (2013: 14), when she argues that by saying “education can conduce to violent conflict does not mean that no education builds peace”.

King reassures that “approaches to teaching are as important, or even more important, than curriculum, but receive far less attention”. She refers to “history content and pedagogy collectively as the ‘content of schooling’ (2013: 20)”. Proceedings to grant or deny access to the education system, “linguistic and symbolic processes also matter indirectly. For example, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, symbols like a crucifix, an Islamic banner, or a Serbian flag make some children uncomfortable to attend school” (2013: 20-21). The way classes were segregated by group as in apartheid South Africa or the model of “two schools under one roof” as in Bosnia, “is another main part of the structure of education in conflict and peace-building” (King: 2013: 21). On the other hand, desegregation of the school structure may be “insufficient for peace-building without significant changes in curriculum and pedagogy” (2013: 21).

King identifies two pathways that interlink education with violent conflict: horizontal inequalities and exclusive identities. The first stems from “severe social, political and/or economic inequalities between groups that can underlie conflict” (2013: 23). In the latter, “exclusive and collectivized identity categories also frequently underlie conflict”. The simplification of complex relations in society through recourse to group categorization and the collectivization of individuals may also arise from the school system: “in the case of Northern Ireland, a number of studies find that the segregated structure of the school system contributed to categorizing and collectivizing children into two distinct, essentialized, and polarized groups” (2013: 27).

Equity is the positive reverse of inequality. King identifies the contribution made by horizontal equity towards peace building: “intergroup conflict is less likely where groups have fewer significant political, economic or social inequalities. While inequalities are very unlikely to be completely erased, horizontal equity exists when key groups accept a given level of horizontal inequality, making these inequalities unlikely to underlie conflict” (2013:

28). Underlining the influence of inclusive identities to promote peace-building and reconciliation, King values “inclusive or encompassing identities that emphasize similarities between individuals and are more accepting of their differences” (2013: 29).

History teaching and regional cooperation, the importance of alternative proposals, such as the Joint History Project and the criticism it had to deal with, form the heart of the discussion in the final section of this chapter, before the conclusions where we follow King’s as well as Bush and Salterelli’s approach (2000: 34) and their need for “shared values” so that education can more truly be part of the solution than part of the problem.

In the next section of this chapter, we focus on the existing landscape of university institutions, their problems and challenges, in Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Croatia.

## **5.2. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo**

Throughout the former Yugoslavia, in the past decade there has been a boom in new universities, state-run as well as private institutions. “In Serbia, there are some 17 universities, plus a number of independent “faculties”, i.e. departments”. In Bosnia more than in Serbia: “nine (including two in Sarajevo and Mostar) and around the same number of private universities<sup>441</sup>. Kosovo lags behind with just two public universities (and the second one in Prizren is still pretty new)<sup>442</sup> and less than ten private universities” (Bieber, 2011)<sup>443</sup>. In Croatia, there are seven public and three private universities; besides that, twelve public polytechnics and three private entities. Advancing in higher education, in a region where the percentage of graduates remains below the European average is perceived as a good thing, but there is some oversupply of private universities in Western Balkans as indeed in the rest of the EU.

Bosnia remains one of the world's most complex educational system and a clear example of the impact of political deadlocks on education systems. One can understand this better by taking into consideration the post-conflict political and administrative arrangement upon which peace was internationally settled in Bosnia.

The division of the country into two entities, the district of Brcko<sup>444</sup> and ten cantons

---

<sup>441</sup> In August 2013, the author, searching on the Web, could identify nine public universities and sixteen private institutions throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

<sup>442</sup> In fact, there are three as of 2015 (Pristina, Pec and Prizren), plus the Serbian branch of Pristina University in the North of Mitrovica.

<sup>443</sup> Bieber, Florian (2011), “New Universities in the Balkans: European Visions, UFOs and Megatrends”, available from [www.balkaninsight.com](http://www.balkaninsight.com). Published 03-10-2011. Accessed on 24.03.2013.

<sup>444</sup> Brcko District was established after an arbitration process undertaken by the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. After the war, the EU kept a diplomatic peacekeeping office. Brcko was the only element in the Dayton Peace Agreement, which was still to be settled. On 23 May 2012, the decision was taken to suspend the mandate of Brcko’s International Supervisor.

“has led to differing legislation, differing languages of instruction, differing curricula and textbooks, differing modes of administration and differing standards” (OECD, 2006: 31).

Regarding the administration of education, under the Dayton Agreement, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports merely holds a co-ordinating role over the local administrations. Each Canton has its own ministry of education, with complete responsibility on education policy: “This creates difficulties as each canton has elected governing politicians of the dominant nationalist group, i.e. Croat-majority cantons are governed by Bosnian Croats and Bosniak cantons by Bosniaks. These nationalist politicians appear to be making decisions about education provision on the basis of nationalist politics rather than educational policies” (Owen-Johnson, 2008: 84).

Bosnia runs an educational system that has been characterized by “division and segregation, with the vast majority of children learning separately according to ‘their’ ethno-national group. This division is reifying the differences used to stoke up war, and creating three different groups of future citizens who are ignorant and mistrustful of each other”<sup>445</sup>.

The educational ethnic division of the country produces incongruities such as the following: in the Croat majority cantons, the curriculum and text books are sourced from Zagreb, Croatia; in Republika Srpska, they come from Belgrade, Serbia. Students learn (and consequently live) as if they were not living in an independent country called Bosnia and Herzegovina, but rather in their ‘mother countries’, Croatia and Serbia, which obviously deepens the separation from the Bosniak population. Programs and textbooks provide students with “an understanding of the world from their respective national viewpoints” (Donia, 2000: 42); in practice, the country works with three different and separate education systems.

In Croatia, education sector reforms have been very much related to the EU integration process – Croatia has been a European Union member state since 1st July, 2013 - with market oriented standards an increasing presence.

International institutions, such as the World Bank, acknowledge how Croatia has carried out “substantial reforms and improvements” in the education sector, but “advances have been slow in improving the efficiency and the quality of higher education to better respond to the needs of the labour market”<sup>446</sup>. Indeed, Croatia’s enrolment at university levels “remain below the EU and the Organization of European Cooperation and Development (OECD)” (idem).

Kokic (2010:7) argues that “relevant legislation, policies, regulations and educational strategies in Croatia are relatively progressive and geared towards inclusion”. The Croatian policy and legislative frameworks do focus on the protection of minority rights to education

---

<sup>445</sup> Education Reform Briefing Materials (October 2008) OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

<sup>446</sup> Available from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/croatia/overview>. Accessed on 14.12.2014.

in their respective minority languages, “with a strong emphasis on increasing the participation of the Roma minority and the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream schools”. However, the report also identifies how “changes in practice are happening at a much slower pace than expected”.

In BiH, the five cantons with a Bosniak majority and the three with a Croat majority are not mono-ethnic, there are minority populations with ‘the other’ ethnic group; their students must go to schools whose curricula were designed for the majority population, which means that a Bosniak child living in a Croat-majority canton receives a Croatian education. This implies that “these minority ethnic children are denied their right to learn about their culture and language, as provided for in the constitution of the Dayton Agreement” (Owen-Johnson, 2008: 84).

The return of refugees and the right of access to education resulted in the so-called ‘dual schools’ or ‘two schools under one roof’, where teachers and students from the different ethnic groups are either housed in different parts of the same building or attend classes at different times; if the Bosniaks come in the morning, Croats attend classes in the afternoon or vice-versa. This model was created with good intentions: motivating the return of displaced families to areas where they were now ethnic minorities. However, these schools have transformed into a model of segregation based on unequal access to school resources. Bosniak and Croat children may go to the same building but on different schedules and to study different curricula.

The selection and content of history books in BiH remains highly politicized. There have been some positive steps every time a new generation of books is published but they nevertheless often remain impregnated with offensive language and ethnic intolerance and narratives promoting victimhood. Nevertheless, all the efforts to deal with the past and promote reconciliation should still be valued<sup>447</sup>.

The international community has not been successful in changing the educational situation that the DPA has fostered. Owen-Johnson (2008: 82), in a research paper<sup>448</sup>, states that “international organisations play an important role in resolving conflict, but questions could be asked about their ‘neutrality’ in this role”. In 1998, the Office of the High Representative in BiH “convened an Education Working Group comprised of representatives

---

<sup>447</sup> [http://nenasilje.org/publikacije/pdf/prirucnik\\_pomirenje/Handbook\\_Reconciliation\\_e.pdf](http://nenasilje.org/publikacije/pdf/prirucnik_pomirenje/Handbook_Reconciliation_e.pdf). Accessed on 27.12.2014.

<sup>448</sup> In “Political Peace – Educational War: the role played by international organisations in negotiating peace in the Balkans and its consequences for education”, Owen-Jackson (2008), focuses on the work developed in Mostar, BiH by organizations such as the World Bank, the UNHCR, UNDP, OECD, OSCE) and agencies of the EU. Available from <http://www.worldbank.org/pdf/validate.asp?j=rcie&vol=3&issue=1&year=2008&article=7> Owen-Jackson RCIE 3 1 web. Accessed on 14.12.2014.

from a range of international organisations. This group made recommendations regarding school textbooks”, for instance that there should be no references to the recent conflict (the war had only ended less than three years earlier) and that “passages considered offensive to one or more ethnic groups (should) be deleted”.

Bosniaks objected to the Group’s recommendations because they argued that their commitment was only to the country’s textbooks, in fact, Bosnian textbooks; “as the group only had authority to comment on these, not those of Croatia or Serbia, so the recommendations were not implemented” (Owen-Johnson, 2008:85). The same happened with other attempts to diminish the weight of ethnic lines across the Bosnian educational system.

In most of the textbooks, one can come across in Southeast Europe, it is not hard to “find expressions and phrases that could generate negative or hostile attitudes towards neighbours. There is a more or less direct connection “between the content of textbooks and the escalation of nationalism, whose extreme manifestation is armed conflict” (Koulouri, 2009: 55). Koulouri argues that “school history textbooks have been identified as one of the potential causes for intolerance between different nations or ethnic communities and, consequently, as a reason for conflict”. Therefore, “an improvement of school textbooks may function as a long duration Confidence Building Measure”, meaning, a tool for reconciliation, through the promotion of “democratic citizenship, tolerance and mutual understanding” (2009: 55).

Koulouri, on a point of divergence with those authors that attribute full responsibility to local leaders and their policies, thinks that “the failure of educational reforms up to now has to be ascribed to the fact that the reforms designed by the international community had rejected elements of local culture as ‘non European’. However, the planning of the transition should take into account the double heritage, of communism and of conflict, at least in Western Balkans” (2009: 57). Nevertheless, it also remains true that nationalist political parties still strongly dominate the Bosnian political landscape; and education is organized on this ethnic basis, rather than on recommended and internationally accepted standards. Owen-Johnson’s conclusion is that “whilst the intervention of international organisations was able to bring about political peace, it has contributed to continued conflict in the educational sector. The DPA, which was designed by the international community to bring about a cease to violent conflict created a political situation that supports the ethnic division of education provision” (2008: 85).

Even if not for pedagogic and civic reasons, the maintenance of this multiplication of resources and programs may in any case be economically unsustainable in the short run. Moreover, as textbooks in some ethnic-based schools contain offensive material from the perspective of another ethnic group, some common ground must be found in order to promote

effective reconciliation and overcome the still far too present 'hate speech' in these post-conflict societies.

The OECD has been proposing for several years that measures be taken by both schools and teachers, as well as at the textbook production level, which means a systemic transformation; and, in turn, requiring, above all, a fairly reasonable amount of political will. Inclusive peace education represents the strongest weapon against segregation and discrimination, showing due respect for ethnic, social and cultural diversity: "an education system that divides and segregates children is unacceptable. Our education system should enable children to respect and cherish the precious cultural diversity that makes Bosnia and Herzegovina unique" (OECD, 2006: 37).

Croatia still falls substantially short when one refers to teacher competences. Most of the teachers interviewed by Kokic (2010:7) "support the idea of inclusive education, but recognise that they are not adequately prepared to work in inclusive settings". Should such be the case, they are also far less able to promote them. In 1999, the Croatian National Board for Human Rights Education introduced a peace education component into the curriculum, running from pre-school through high school.

The authoritarian Milošević regime of the 1990s, NATO's bombardment for 78 days in 1999, the international embargo and consequent economic deprivation were major factors for one of Serbia's most serious problems: the brain drain. More than 300,000 educated young people have left Serbia in the last ten years and the trend is far from being reversed. Zarko Kovacevic, from the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Novi Sad, expressed his concerns and gave an example: "this is the best indicator of a deep depression in science and the economy. Every third student graduating from the Department of Electrical Engineering leaves the country"<sup>449</sup>. Kovacevic stresses the influence of partisanship and political loyalty, instead of talent, on the Serbian scientific research and education landscapes: "lack of finances, an inadequate research infrastructure, an inappropriate institutional system, fragmented research, and no less important, an uninspiring research environment and still bureaucratic governance of science institutions. This primarily occurs because the directors are, in many cases, still selected on the basis of their loyalty to the political parties in power. They do not need talented young men. They need loyalty".

Under the governments of President Boris Tadić, and up until the global financial crisis in 2008, Serbia had been moving closer to western partnerships, breaking away from

---

<sup>449</sup> Kovacevic, "Some Important Questions Concerning the Development of Research and Education in Serbia", Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Novi Sad. Available from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001878/187823e.pdf>. Accessed on 18-03-2013.



the isolation of the Milošević era. There were some effects on the education sector as recognized by international institutions: “Serbia has undertaken considerable reforms covering democratisation and decentralisation of the education system in the past several years, attempting to bridge the gap experienced in the field of education during several years of isolation from the world community” (OECD, 2006: 365).

Serbia faces some of the most complex ethnic challenges of the whole region. Besides the issue of Kosovo and the currently pacific and well-developed northern province of Vojvodina, there are secessionist aspirations from the Islamized population in the south, in a region called Preševo Valley, where the town of Bujanovac is the main hotspot, not far from the Kosovo border. There was an armed conflict from 2000 and 2001 between Serbian police forces and Albanian separatists fighting under the name of the Liberation Army of Preševo, Medveđa and Bujanovac. This ended after diplomatic intervention by the international community with strong pressure and military threats made against Belgrade’s newly democratic authorities<sup>450</sup>. But problems between ethnic Albanians and the federal government have persisted and regularly bubble to the surface. On 14th September 2011, some three thousand ethnic Albanians took to the streets of Bujanovac to protest against the prohibition of Albanian textbooks in local schools and the lack of recognition for education diplomas awarded in Kosovo. Singing popular Albanian songs, they promised to protest until Belgrade resolves problems over Albanian language textbooks and recognizes diplomas from Kosovo<sup>451</sup>, demanding a solution for problems in the educational curricula that date back several years<sup>452</sup>. The Education Ministry stated that the country has one curriculum, whether it is taught in Serbian or Albanian, but local leaders do not agree on “which textbooks to use, especially in the sensitive subject of history”, a highly sensitive subject in this part of Europe.

The then Serbian Education Minister Zarko Obradovic in Belgrade replied saying that “much had been done in the field of education for young Albanians in South Serbia, noting that a university department in Bujanovac” was about to open.

In spite of being crucial, this problem takes more than political action. Several regional non-governmental organisations have been developing programs in the last eighteen years (since war ended) “to build bridges among youth across multiple fault lines” (Thorup, 2003: 14). In “What Works in Building Tolerance Among Balkan Children and Youth”, published in 2003 by the International Youth Foundation with the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Cathryn L. Thorup puts

---

<sup>450</sup> Slobodan Milošević stepped down after the revolution of 5th October 2000.

<sup>451</sup> Serbia does not recognize Kosovo independence, so does not accept as valid degrees stamped "Republic of Kosovo". This proves a big issue for young ethnic Albanians from the Presevo valley who often go to Kosovo to finish their studies.

<sup>452</sup> Available from [www.balkaninsight.com](http://www.balkaninsight.com). Balkan Insight, “Young Albanians in Serbia Protest Over Education”. Published in 14-09-2011. Accessed on 23-03-2013.

forward some important projects in the former Yugoslavia. Here we would feature two of them in Bosnia:

- “Peace Building Project” - Omladinski Center (The Youth Center) in Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje, Bosnia and Herzegovina, was established in 1996 by the United Nations and the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). It is dedicated to providing a safe environment for children and youth, through educational, artistic, and creative resources and activities, aiming to strengthen skills and help youth to nurture the leadership capacities which enable them to assume roles in peace building among their communities.

- The Education for Peace Institute of the Balkans (EFP-Balkans), in Sarajevo, is a non-profit and charitable NGO, a registered field office of the International Education for Peace Institute, Switzerland. The goal of the EFP-Balkans projects is to equip program participants, teachers and students, with skills and knowledge to develop non-violent conflict resolving attitudes and a culture of peace, “to build a lasting foundation for inter-group and inter-ethnic peace in the whole Balkan region”. EFP-Balkans also assists “traumatized children and adults in the process of psychological recovery by creating a culture of healing in the participating communities”.

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia reassures that some important achievements have been made in reforming the education sector and modernizing schoolbooks and the teaching of history, as well as growing respect for diversity and learning about minorities. This has been result of the joint work of the OSCE Mission with the Council of Europe and the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, launching the project “History for the Future – Towards Reconciliation through Education”, that aims to establish common principles and values for the teaching of history to all schools, teachers and students.

The international funding is still flowing despite the lack of nationwide results and the continuous assistance to Bosnian institutions by international donors now stretching over the past twenty years (1996-2016)<sup>453</sup>.

In Croatia (and Serbia) as in BIH, the role played by some local and regional NGOs has been quite influential.

- The NGO Nansen Dialogue Center (NDC), with its Osijek and Belgrade branches, runs a program in Vukovar called “The New School”. The NDC’s core objective encapsulates the promotion of inter-ethnic dialogue within the goal of the social reconstruction of society, achieved by raising awareness about problems in inter-ethnic relations, establishing conditions for interethnic dialogue with and between those social actors of importance to peace-building processes. In Vukovar, as of 2003, all classes in primary and elementary

---

<sup>453</sup> For instance, Norway awarded the Ministry of Education of Canton Sarajevo almost 150,000 Norwegian Kroners for the New Curriculum project setting down a new curriculum in line with goals related to education reform.

schools were ethnically divided and, until that year, in different shifts and buildings. From September 2006, high school students were placed together in the same building. Since 2010, nine New Schools have opened in eastern Croatia. Other NDC centres in the former Yugoslavia opened with the primary aim of providing a safe space for inter-group dialogue and supporting reconciliation processes<sup>454</sup>. NDC works to break down stereotypes, getting different communities to understand better each other's needs, interests and positions. Schools, teachers, students, staff as well as peace educators are some of the key NDC targets.

- The PostPessimists (Belgrade, Pristina, Sarajevo, Zagreb) is a regional youth network dedicated to improving conditions in the Balkans. It is a "highly regarded and internationally recognized effort to build tolerance among youth across the Balkans" (2003: 16). The Pristina organisation, formed both by Kosovar Serbs and Albanians up until 1998, diminished considerably in member numbers after the conflict between Serbs and Albanians in 1999. Nevertheless, Albanian PostPessimists kept on working publicly with their counterparts in Belgrade. Furthermore, the Belgrade PostPessimists launched the Seeding the Future program linking seven PostPessimist Centres in Serbia (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis, and Subotica), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mostar), Croatia (Zagreb), and Slovenia (Ljubljana). It focuses on improving communication among the youth, encouraging activism through better understanding of conflicts, besides teaching techniques of non-violent communication (2003: 34-35).

- "Democracy Learning – Youth Participation," Group MOST. *Most*, the local word for *bridge*, is also the name for one of the oldest Serbian NGOs, established in 1993. They organize training seminars on conflict resolution and positive intercultural non-violent communication for individuals regardless of age and national origins.

After World War II, there was a widespread illiteracy in Kosovo, very few of the less than eight hundred teachers were Kosovars and students numbered just above fifty thousand<sup>455</sup>. The socialist Tito regime granted more education rights in the following decades and in 1970 the first university in Kosovo was established. One decade later, the figures were completely different: "358,521 students and 17,751 teachers and other education workers" (OECD, 2006: 171).

Kosovo became an autonomous province in 1974 as also did Vojvodina. That autonomy was revoked by the federal government in 1989, under the rule of Slobodan Milošević. With the leadership of the pacifist and philosopher Ibrahim Rugova, Kosovar

---

<sup>454</sup> Available from <http://www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcserbia/index.php/en/>  
Accessed on 14.12.2014

<sup>455</sup> Strategic Plan for Education Development in Kosovo, 2002-2007, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, January 2003.

Albanians created parallel institutions<sup>456</sup>, and that was particularly evident in education with the Ministry of Education and Culture in Immigration<sup>457</sup> and the Albanian Teachers League of Kosovo.

The KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army), in conflict with Serb police and military forces since 1997 and after NATO intervention in 1999, with dozens of thousands of IDPs (internal displaced persons) increasingly affected the educational system in the majority Albanian territory “without contact for over ten years, with developments in Western education theory and practice” (OECD, 2006: 171).

After 1999, Kosovo basically became a UN protectorate<sup>458</sup> with military protection from NATO and its KFOR mission. The teaching and learning processes were rather traditional and there was a huge lack of educational materials and resources in schools. KEDP<sup>459</sup>, was granted funds and training support by CIDA (the Canadian International Development Agency); the senate of the University of Pristina in Kosovo approved new teaching rules and curricula and, the year after, opened four urban faculties: Pristina, Gjilan, Gjakova, and Prizren<sup>460</sup>. In 2010, UNICEF assisted Kosovo’s Ministry of Education in developing and implementing the new Kosovo Curriculum Framework (KCF)<sup>461</sup>, “integrating and reflecting the fundamental values and principles of human rights, living together, social justice and inclusiveness”<sup>462</sup>. A Strategic Kosovo Education Plan 2011–2016 was developed as a six-year plan with life-long learning and inclusion in education as the main cornerstones with the aim of offering equal opportunities and quality education. It remains a particular concern for Kosovo, “the 124,500 young people (15-24 years) that are not in education, employment and training (NEET), representing about 35.3 percent of the young people (KAS, LFS 2013)”<sup>463</sup>.

The ambiguity surrounding the political status of Kosovo yields considerable influence over the local educational system; meanwhile, the Serb population of the territory (after 2000) put into practice their own parallel institutions. OECD claims for a substantial “de-politicisation of education policy”, which implies a “stable implementation plan, monitored by donors, with a clear focus and evaluation mechanisms will also aid in assuring coherency and consistency” (OECD, 2006: 200).

---

<sup>456</sup> Available from [http://www.see-educoop.net/education\\_in/pdf/building-kosovo-ed.pdf](http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/building-kosovo-ed.pdf). Accessed on 14.12.2014.

<sup>457</sup> Nowadays, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

<sup>458</sup> Administered by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission In Kosovo (UNMIK).

<sup>459</sup> Kosovo Education Development Project.

<sup>460</sup> See Annex II with the number of universities in the cases studied.

<sup>461</sup> Available from

[http://www.educationandtransition.org/wpcontent/uploads/2007/04/Kosovo\\_EEPCT\\_2010\\_Report.pdf](http://www.educationandtransition.org/wpcontent/uploads/2007/04/Kosovo_EEPCT_2010_Report.pdf)  
Accessed on 23-03-2013.

<sup>462</sup> Op.cit. page 6.

<sup>463</sup> From <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2015/06/jar-english-2014.pdf>. Accessed on 21.08.2016.

Anderson and Breca (2005), describe how several educational initiatives were launched in order to turn Kosovo's teaching program into a less authoritarian and more liberal approach: "in a society where cultural marginalization, religious divisions, executions, and ethnic cleansing were the state agenda not long ago, this has been a tremendous challenge". The authors, in 2005, acknowledged the challenges ahead, with evident tension ongoing "between forces of conservatism and the forces of liberalism (reform)"; but, simultaneously, did not hide their surprise when it became clear that academic freedom was "driving resistance to change in teacher preparation at the University of Pristina", while the government was playing the role of the agent of change.

Disputes related to status issues "continue to hinder the functioning of institutions, frustrating the reform process, sometimes with broader regional implications. Pursuing the EU path is the best way for the countries to address these problems. (...) The issue of north Kosovo remains a major challenge" and will require "all actors involved to work together in a constructive spirit"<sup>464</sup>, recognizes the European Commission in its Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014. The participation of "minority communities in Kosovo also presents a challenge" since Kosovo has reserved "quotas for non-Albanian communities in the University of Prishtina for Turks, Bosnians and Egyptian"<sup>465</sup>.

### 5.3. An international approach

The countries from former Yugoslavia have worked as a laboratory for EU to develop its crises management capacities. That has been particularly evident on the education sector, in which most of the measures taken, plans and strategies adopted, consulting, regional cooperation attempted by national and local governments, have had the sponsorship, if not the action, of the EU institutions, EU's programmes such as CARDS, TEMPUS, Framework Programmes, Erasmus-Mundus and Erasmus (in Slovenia and Croatia) or CEEPUS<sup>466</sup> are very "appreciated by the grassroots: domestic students and staff eager to gain experience abroad". Mobility and the experiences taken from it, is a crucial tool for teaching improvements, namely when relating to fostering diversity in the school environment.

---

<sup>464</sup> Available from [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2013/package/strategy\\_paper\\_2013\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/strategy_paper_2013_en.pdf). Accessed on 14-12-2014.

<sup>465</sup> From <http://kfos.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/BRIEF-SITUATION-ANALYSIS-.pdf>. Accessed on 21.08.2016.

<sup>466</sup> CEEPUS is the Central European Exchange Program for University Studies, an international Agreement signed by the member states of the EU and open for accession. It consists of networks operating joint programs Joint Doctoral Programs. CEEPUS covers mobility grants for students and teachers in this framework. <https://www.ceepus.info/#nbb>. Accessed on 24.10.2016.

One of the EU initiatives for regional cooperation in education is the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training (WB PET), launched on 7th March 2012, which assists governments with reform efforts in education and training. All countries in the region have been implementing reforms according to the Bologna process and EU standards, but each one is at a different phase<sup>467</sup>.

Alan Smith has developed a substantial body of work on ethnic and religious shared education to promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland in the wake of the 1998 peace agreement. Lessons from the Irish experience should, one argues, be considered by governments and international actors in the WB region. In Northern Ireland, the education system is still very divided, “with more than 90 percent of Catholic and Protestant children attending separate schools. Education was never regarded as the cause of the conflict but from the outset there were concerns about the impact of segregation and violent conflict on children and young people and education was regarded as one way of contributing to peace-building” (Smith, 2010:14). Initiatives such as inter group contact (with high levels of support by parents from both communities, catholic and protestant) have enabled students to mix across community divisions: “84 percent of the general population believe that integrated education is important to the peace and reconciliation process in Northern Ireland” (2010: 20). There were also important changes to school curricula during and after “The Troubles”. British and Irish history began being “taught from multiple perspectives; the introduction of a common curriculum for all schools with a common syllabus for religious education; and 'Education for Mutual Understanding' (EMU) to enable pupils ‘to respect and value themselves and others; to appreciate the interdependence of people within society; to know about their own and other cultural traditions; to appreciate how conflict may be handled in non-violent ways’”. Alongside investment in teacher education and training, a new citizenship curriculum was tested out in an increasing number of schools before becoming a requirement for all schools from 2008 onwards. This curriculum spans four dimensions: Diversity and inclusion; Equality and justice; Human rights and social responsibilities; Democracy and active participation.

Although Northern Ireland did not establish a truth and reconciliation commission, there is a Consultative Group on The Past, set up in 2009, that recommended that education programmes be developed “in a balanced way, about the nature and impact of the conflict’. Sixteen years after the peace agreement, Smith says, “there are no longer any schoolchildren with direct experience of the violent conflict, but the society still faces the challenge of how to deal with the legacies of the past and explain the conflict to new generations” (Smith, 2010: 21).

---

<sup>467</sup> Available from [http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/wbplatform\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/wbplatform_en.htm). Accessed on 24-03-2013.

According to Smith (2010:17), “civic and citizenship education is one way that children and young people learn important messages about who is a citizen of their country, how diversity is viewed and citizenship is inclusive or exclusive. Such programmes also carry

The way to move forward might be through alternatives approaches to conflict and post-conflict situations: Severine Autesserre, professor at Barnard College, in Columbia University, talking with the author in May 2015, acknowledged “there are many different ways of acting” in those situations; “what I claim in my book is that the traditional way of doing it is not the most effective. Routine and apparently banal things such as (when working with a peacekeeping mission): who you’re going with for a drink after work, the security measures, the way we talk about our projects, the way we access to information about violent situations, which car you are driving and the way you are driving it, all these little things really matter to the peacebuilding process”. In her book *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*, and as she puts it in the interview given to the author, Autesserre argues that the conventional approaches are, thus, “counterproductive, creating obstacles to the success of peacekeeping missions”. To sum up, “we should improve the relations we develop with people on the ground”.

In the following section of this chapter, this dissertation puts forward some relevant contributions to academic reflections on religious education, education for citizenship and antiracist education.

#### **5.4. Religious, Citizenship, Antiracist Education: the state-of-the-art**

Bush and Salterelli (2000) identify potentially negative or positive aspects to education in areas of ethnic conflict. The negative side stems from the uneven distribution of education whenever regarded as a weapon of oppression and war (with the use of ethnically based languages), manipulation of textbooks (especially history books) distorting facts for political purposes, self-worth and hating the Others as well as segregating education to ensure inequality, lowered esteem and stereotyping. Owen-Johnson argues that “the role played by international organisations in bringing an end to the conflict in BiH has contributed to and entrenched these negative aspects by giving them political legitimacy. The geographical and political structure that was created by the Dayton Agreement served to reinforce ethnic boundaries, which led to segregated educational provision and a deepening of separate ethnic identities” (2008: 86, 87).

On the other hand, one must not forget that post-conflict contexts may also open a window of opportunities. Following Bush and Salterelli (2000), we should also take into account what might be viewed as the positive dimensions of education in post-conflict societies: the conflict-dampening impact of educational opportunity, nurturing and sustaining

an ethnically tolerant climate, de-segregation of the mind (the mindsets of students), linguistic tolerance, cultivating inclusive citizenship, “the disarming of history” (2000:19), education for peace programmes, educational practice as an explicit response to state oppression.

Just as we cannot discuss nationalism and nationalist policies without taking into account gender issues, then it is inconceivable to discuss religious and/or citizen education – especially in the Balkans context – without paying attention to “gender-sensitive analysis of religious traditions” (Tobler, in Jackson, 2003: 125). Tobler argues that the creative dimensions of religions as myths, symbols and rituals, “offer a myriad resources for understanding difference and diversity, for creating and re-creating gendered subjectivity, for encouraging self-esteem and active citizenship for women and men, all of which can be engendered by a desire and respect for learning the difference” (2003: 126).

Gallagher (2010)<sup>468</sup> provides some comparative examples of shared and divided schools in different societies. He identifies an important distinction between segregated systems in which minorities are forced to have their own schools (such as apartheid South Africa and the USA until 1954) and separated systems in which minorities choose to have their own schools. However, he concludes they both return a “negative impact on social cohesion”.

Jackson (2004:14), in turn, argues that “it is crucial that members of different minorities need to be involved directly in the democratic processes of society”. The author advocates religious education (RE) in common schools, together with citizenship education or intercultural education, accounting for the plurality that forms our reality, with education “not as defined by a fixed body of knowledge (...), but as a series of existential and social debates in which pupils are encouraged to participate, with a personal stake related to their own developing sense of identity” (2004: 17-18).

Globalization has brought about “more awareness of the contested nature of concepts such as religion, ethnicity and culture” (2004: 20). In such a perspective, “the context for religious education in the twenty-first century is plurality – an interaction between ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ plurality. (...) Every school in some respect is a plural school and every locality, whether urban or rural, is plural” (2004:21).

Emphasizing the importance of context in religious education, this approach faces opposition from advocates of antiracist education and citizenship education, arguing that RE, even multi-faith or multicultural education, contributes to the reification of religions and cultures; and should thus be replaced by anti-racist education. Jackson responds to this argument in favour of approaches to RE that advocate both multicultural (the term is more common in the UK and the USA) or intercultural (more commonly applied in continental

---

<sup>468</sup> Gallagher, Tom (2010), *Key Issues in Coexistence and Education*, Coexistence International, Brandeis.



European literature) and citizenship education, “giving close attention to the analysis of culture and the complexities of culture making in the lives of individuals, including pupils” (2004: 127).

For antiracists, the point is not the individual and his beliefs about race but rather the structures of power that produce racism; hence, the needs arise far more from overcoming this structural influence than teaching religion and multiculturalism. This kind of antiracist approach, states Jackson, began to change in the early 1990s, coincidentally or not, when violent wars led to the implosion of *Titoist* Yugoslavia. Some antiracists, like Leicester (1992) and Rattansi (1992) understood they had underestimated the “importance of questions of cultural and religious representation, transmission and change” (2004: 128).

Ali Rattansi was very critical about the approaches that had been produced whether by antiracists and multiculturalists and that were then still prevailing: “the multiculturalists will have to abandon their additive models of cultural pluralism and their continuing obsession with the old ethnicities. Antiracists (...) will have to move beyond their reductive conceptions of culture and their fear of cultural difference as simply a source of division and weakness in the struggle against racism” (Rattansi 1992: 41). New approaches have emerged such as ‘reflexive multiculturalism’ (Rattansi, 1999: 77) and ‘critical multiculturalism’ (May, 1999: 33), interlinking the formation of culture with power relations.

Rattansi argues that one key element to reflexive multiculturalism encapsulates “the constant attempt to engage the monoculturalists and racists in dialogue” (May, 1999:114). Bearing in mind the dramatic growth in the circulation of knowledge and discourses following the advent of the new information technologies, a reflexive multiculturalism in education “must be constantly attentive to the arena of culture as one of power, domination, hegemony and struggle” (May, 1999: 115).

Education for peace values the non-violent resolution of conflicts. Research carried out by Salomon (2003) with young Israeli Jews and Palestinians found that, although violence still persists, the scope for contact among them brought forward positive views about peace and the peace process as well as an increased capacity of understanding the Other.

Beckerman (2010) is nevertheless more cautious and says the impact of inter group contact will only work whenever it manages to approach much deeper identity questions and/or related with historic inequalities in the power relations prevailing in the society. Reflecting about peace education, Galtung (1990) makes a distinction between positive and negative peace. The latter reflects the end of violence with the former incorporating the structural transformations necessary to dealing with the social injustices potentially serving as the cause of violence. Lederach (1997) understands that it is necessary to work simultaneously with political, community and grassroots civil society groups in order to attain any sustainable, lasting peace.

We must also bear in mind that “minority cultures, religions and ethnicities are themselves internally pluralistic” and diverse, often with contradictory and even conflicting positioning over important issues, and “the symbols and values of their various constituent groups are open to negotiation, contest and change” (Jackson, 2004: 130). Jackson quotes Gerd Bauman’s words: “A multicultural society is not a patchwork of five or ten fixed cultural identities, but an elastic web of crosscutting and always mutually situational identifications” (Bauman 1999: 118).

In a completely diverse approach, David Hargreaves (1994)<sup>469</sup> argues that RE cannot be the basis for civic education in a secularized and plural society, with this research following this line of thinking, especially taking into account the empirical evidence returned from the dissertation’s survey undertaken by Serbian, Bosnian, Croat and Kosovar university students, revealing that most students have friends from other religious affiliation than their own. Only 11.6 percent declare having no friends from different religious groups.

There is a balance of responses when the question turns to measuring the importance of religion for the construction of one’s own national identity. This proves of little importance to 29.56 percent of respondents, not at all important to 34.6 percent but still very important to 31.38 percent. However, the overall results tend to show a trend towards a reduction in the importance of religion in the construction of national identity as a significant majority of respondents (around 63.86 percent) attribute this with little and no importance. To reinforce this idea, when asked about their willingness to marry someone from a different religion, a huge majority accept this possibility (53.6 percent say yes with 23 percent responding maybe). Only 9.48 percent of respondent reject the idea while a further 8.75 percent declared this to be unlikely.

Hargreaves proposes a three level solution to the problem of citizenship and religious education: an expansion of religious schools within the state system for “the transmission and living experience of a shared moral and religious culture” (Hargreaves 1994: 35); the abolition of religious education in all other schools, the secular schools. On a third level, Hargreaves claims that religious education in secular schools needs replacing by citizenship education, which not only provides social cohesion but also works as a bridge to what this education specialist perceives as ‘second languages’ spoken by the different moralities and religious groups present in modern societies. Moreover, Hargreaves thinks that religious schools ought to have citizenship education.

Jackson questions this approach regarding “its particular assumptions about the homogeneity of religions, the nature of secularity in society and the nature of social

---

<sup>469</sup> Chief Executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum and Professor of Education at Cambridge University, with an influential role in the Labour government’s educational policies during Tony Blair’s governments.

plurality”. The argument in favour of RE in British public schools maintains its vitality to different “aspects of education for citizenship in the common school” (2004: 133), despite also recognizing that “religious education specialists should welcome the opportunity to bring their expertise to programmes of intercultural and citizenship education, but with a recognition that their contribution needs to be complemented by that of others” (2004: 170).

One also follows Leganger-Krogstad, when saying that, “dialogue in the classroom should not serve primarily as dialogue between religions. (...) Rather, the main task of dialogue in the classroom is to operate at an interpersonal level, building identity and empowering young people for citizenship in a plural global world”. This Norwegian author argues that “citizenship is not achieved through co-operation and dialogue if part of the pupil’s religious world or worldview is excluded from the classroom agenda” (in Jackson 2003: 164-165).

The UN recommend “mixed-religion and mixed-race schools as the best way of combating intolerance and discrimination”, but simultaneously suggests that “faith-based schools can provide a prime and fertile terrain for lasting progress with respect to tolerance and non-discrimination in connection with religion and belief” (Smith, 2010:13).

The arguments in favour of faith-based schools “emphasize the right of parents to choose the type of school their child attends based on freedom of conscience and belief”. The opposite argument states that “faith-based schools tend to emphasize that they may reinforce economic and ethnic divisions and that faith development should be the responsibility of the churches and not the state” (Smith, 2010:14).

The point remains: what is the most appropriate relationship between faith-based schools and the state? How are these schools funded and how are their activities regulated? Furthermore, retaining them under the state umbrella may qualify the state as responsible for fuelling divisions and antagonisms.

Research findings, such as those reported by Christina A. Parker<sup>470</sup>, have shown that “diverse students experienced and responded to implemented alternative curricula: when content was explicitly linked to their identities and experiences, opportunities for democratic peace-building inclusion increased” (Parker, 2012: 5). Studying three elementary classrooms in Ontario, Canada, and the implementation of peace-building dialogue processes and how students from ethnic minorities backgrounds reacted and “experienced these pedagogies in relation to their own perspectives, histories, and identities” (ibid.), Parker argues that “peace-building education processes can provide opportunities for students to practise tolerance and

---

<sup>470</sup> “Peacebuilding Education: Using Conflict for Democratic and Inclusive Learning Opportunities for Diverse Students”, *International Journal of Peace Studies*, Volume 18, Number 2, Winter 2013. Available at [https://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/Vol18\\_2/Peacebuilding%20Education-%20Using%20Conflict%20for%20Democratic%20and%20Inclusive%20Learning%20Opportunities%20for%20Diverse%20Students.pdf](https://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/Vol18_2/Peacebuilding%20Education-%20Using%20Conflict%20for%20Democratic%20and%20Inclusive%20Learning%20Opportunities%20for%20Diverse%20Students.pdf). Accessed on 25.08.2016

inclusion, and become participatory citizens”. Parker advocates the learning through discussion approach to diversity, conflict dialogue<sup>471</sup> and conflictual, even if teachers are more or less open to such practices according both to their experience and, even still more importantly, their “positionality on ethnic and political conflicts” (Parker, 2012: 5). She wanted to understand “how their experiences with explicit conflictual content were (and were not) addressed as learning opportunities” (2012: 6).

Providing teachers with culturally appropriate pedagogies may be fundamental to promoting dialogue in classrooms with multiple identities, allowing interaction between students from contested settings, be it Israelis and Palestinians, or Serbs and Albanians from Kosovo. In the diverse classrooms studied, Parker understood how “teachers used diverse pedagogical processes in conjunction with local, global and historical content to facilitate culturally sensitive and responsive learning environments for diverse students” (2012: 18). Parker follows Hemmings (2000)<sup>472</sup> when arguing that “when teachers connected students’ identities to curriculum content, minoritized students were empowered to participate in democratic dialogue processes” (2012: 19), and the author witnessed this over the course of the Ontario fieldwork: “teaching explicitly about conflict and diversity through a critical multicultural program invited quiet and diverse students in the classroom to speak. Through discussions about diversity and conflict, the three teachers facilitated peacebuilding, which then invited further opportunities for learning about divergent or conflicting perspectives” (ibid.). Her study contributes to a better understanding of how “diverse, lower-status, potentially marginalized students experience conflict dialogue processes and how their identities can be included in the curriculum in ways that promote democracy and peacebuilding” (2012: 22). Most importantly, the “peace-based pedagogical experiences”, allow for “movement within institutional constraints” and, as Parker concluded, when conflict issue discussions were somehow linked to student backgrounds and identities, there was a “high level of engagement”, which this dissertation author perceives, in accordance with Parker, as an indicator “of how curricular content can be made to relate and connect to students’ past, present, and future experiences in their diverse world” (ibid.).

---

<sup>471</sup> Understood by the author as the “constructive discussion of conflictual or controversial issues in educating for and about peace, democracy, equity and social justice” (2012: 6).

<sup>472</sup> Hemmings, A. 2000. “High School Democratic Dialogues: Possibilities for Praxis.” *American Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 67–91.

## 5.5. Education in the Balkans: time to move forward

The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe<sup>473</sup> was signed in 1999, following a German proposal, between the EU and Balkan countries, in keeping with prospects for the region's integration into the EU. The Pact aims to honour its name and promote (reconstruction and) the stabilization of the so-called Western Balkans. Education was regarded as an important tool to achieving and ensuring peace. The final goal is: EU accession. Additionally, during the negotiations for the Stability Pact, the term "Balkans" was consciously avoided, as "the process of reconstruction in post conflict Balkans has been influenced by stereotypes for the region that existed in Western minds for centuries" (Koulouri, 2009: 57). Europeans partners seem correspondingly to have eventually understood that the time has come for the Western Balkan states to move forward.

The perceptions populations hold as regards their national education systems should also not get neglected. Bearing that in mind, this research tried to assess the opinion of university students about the quality of the education they received at school. The respondent answers demonstrate the existence of a considerable level of satisfaction, with 52.53 percent of respondents (31.38 percent good, 18.97 percent very good and 2.18 percent excellent) taking to the 'positivist' side while the 'negativist' side attracted a total of 37.94 percent of opinions (26.27 percent bad and 11.67 percent very bad). Their educational experiences were neither good nor bad to 6.98 percent of the respondents.

Education for peace has been one of the most recent trends regarding the search for a solution to overcome "hate speech" in post-conflict societies, in particular in the Western Balkans, with implementation of different projects and programmes as already referenced through the examples in this dissertation.

Danesh (2006) proposes the integrative theory of peace (ITP) and outlines the education for peace curriculum developed on the basis of this theory. ITP is built upon the concept that "all human states of being, including peace, are shaped by our worldview—our view of reality, human nature, purpose of life and human relationships" (2006: 55). The author establishes four prerequisites for effective peace education (EFP): "unity-based worldview, culture of healing, culture of peace and peace-oriented curriculum".

In BiH, from 2000 to 2006, over one hundred schools with almost 80,000 students, plus their parents and teachers, "have begun to systematically introduce the principles and

---

<sup>473</sup> The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SP) was an initiative aimed at strengthening peace, democracy, human rights and the economy in the countries of South Eastern Europe from 1999-2008. The pact was created at the initiative of the European Union on June 10, 1999 in Cologne, following the end of the Kosovo war. Serbia and Montenegro (then FR Yugoslavia) and Moldova were not present at the founding conference. SP was replaced by the Regional Co-operation Council (RCC) in February 2008.

practices of EFP into the curriculum and operation of their respective schools” (Danesh, 2011: 17). Koulouri (2009)<sup>474</sup> argues that the “rewriting of the Balkan countries’ history corresponded to major changes in historiography but also reflected changes in collective self-definitions. On the other hand, the wars in Yugoslavia triggered interest and intervention by Western organisations into history teaching” (Koulouri 2009: 53). Organizations such as the Council of Europe, OSCE, OECD, besides NGOs and teacher associations have developed and put forward projects to reform the teaching of history in that region said to “produce more history than they can consume”<sup>475</sup>, as Winston Churchill once put it. All these initiatives are grounded on the conviction that history, after somehow having been the problem, can also be deployed as an instrument for reconciliation in post-conflict societies, torn apart by nationalist rhetoric and violence. Therefore, “history teaching has been conceived as part of a major project of peace education in Southeast Europe” (Koulouri 2009: 53).

There are still, in the former Yugoslavia countries, many school books and curricula that carry the glorification of historical events that portray the prominent community at the expense of and against those who are minority in the country and in the classroom (the persistence of the nationalistic rhetoric ‘us’ against ‘them’). However, when asked in our survey a majority of respondents report the quality of teaching of history in their countries as positive, 51.39 percent in total (good for 32.48 percent, very good for 16 percent and excellent for 2.91 percent), with just less than one third returning negative opinions, 30.65 percent (bad for 21.53 percent and very bad for 9.12 percent). The picture differs just slightly when these university students – and the author of this dissertation again stresses the lack of sample representation – are asked about the proportion of nationalistic contents and tone in the history teaching of in their countries. Half (50.36 percent) go along with the idea that the nationalistic tone and contents in the teaching of history was adequate with 21.16percent deeming it still insufficient. Less than one in five responses (18.2percent) consider the nationalistic tone and contents as excessive. Something this author would argue proves substantially disturbing when taking into account the recent history and the role played by national historical narratives in that course of events.

In post-conflict societies, peace education is considered a prerequisite to establishing a lasting peace. The Enhanced Graz Process<sup>476</sup> boosted by Austria, at the time holding the EU

---

<sup>474</sup> Available from <http://hermes-ir.lib.hit-u.ac.jp/rs/bitstream/10086/18053/1/HJart0500100530.pdf>  
Accessed on 14.12.2014.

<sup>475</sup> Available from <http://www.great-quotes.com/quote/41356>. Accessed on 14.12.2014.

<sup>476</sup> The Graz Process was initiated under the Austrian EU presidency in 1998, aimed at promoting democratic and peaceful development in South Eastern Europe “by supporting and co-ordinating educational co-operation projects in the region”. With the increasing number of countries and organisations joining the Graz Process, it became the Enhanced Graz Process (EGP). Available from [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/historyteaching/perspective/handcoe/cooperationeast\\_EN.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/historyteaching/perspective/handcoe/cooperationeast_EN.asp). Accessed on 18-03-2013.

presidency, coordinates the “Education and Youth” area of the Stability Pact. The teaching of history was placed, in the Balkans case, at the centre of peace education, due to the common understanding that, on the one hand, the history of the region's countries had been distorted and manipulated to foster particular identities and ideologies and, on the other hand, history teaching should be the object of a critical revision in order to provide room for the history of neighbouring countries and ethnic minorities. Moreover, a considerable amount of the new lexicon was gradually implemented and spread to citizens more broadly, especially through the media: “a ‘dialect’ of reconciliation has been composed with key words such as democratic citizenship, social reconstruction, mutual understanding, tolerance, stability” (Koulouri, 2009: 59).

Regional cooperation in history teaching strove to bring about the writing of a common history for the Balkans. This bears particular importance in a region where “the new nation-states were denying any common past, while emphasizing the conflicts between them as a historical fact” (2009: 59). Conflicts were remembered permanently, the pacific past that endured for decades (between the end of World War II and 1991) was tentatively obliterated, disregarding a coherent account of the region’s history that “could pacify inter-ethnic rivalries and antipathies and promote harmonious coexistence and a common future”. A Croatian writer, Miljenko Jergovic puts it simple: “that's the problem of all our story, what they taught us in history classes. What they omitted to tell us and everything that was happening to us in the 20th century”<sup>477</sup>.

A solid initiative in this area was The Joint History Project, created in 1998 by an Athens based NGO, the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE), focusing on investigating the conditions to write and teach a common history for all Southeast European countries, from Slovenia to Cyprus. The project has a History Education Committee<sup>478</sup>, chaired by Christina Koulouri. This historian argues that “this new history should not be a new construction which would replace the national histories. It would rather be a new interpretation of the national pasts based on a common Balkan cultural and institutional heritage. Besides, we were aware of the fact that national history would continue to be taught in all Balkan countries and that it would be utopian to try to abolish its teaching. Consequently, any innovative attempt should integrate national history or at least be compatible with it” (Koulouri 2009: 60). The aims therefore involved revising ethnocentric school history teaching and avoid the reproduction of stereotypes.

---

<sup>477</sup> The Long Road Through Balkan History. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5YQINoR3Bw>. Accessed on 24-03-2013.

<sup>478</sup> The HEC includes 17 members, most of them history teachers from primary, elementary and secondary schools and representing the south-eastern European countries.

In the first phase of the project (1999-2000), history textbooks and curricula in all the countries of the region were analyzed as well as the respective situation as regards history education<sup>479</sup>. Developing new skills and resources for teachers, training, and so forth, made up the second project phase (2000-2002). During the third JHP phase, the Committee came up with “a very concrete method for the teaching of history in the perspective of reconciliation and regional stabilization”, through the production of four workbooks under the title “Teaching Modern Southeast European History”. In these books, history is divided into four periods that form part of the curricula in every country in the region: Ottoman Empire, Nations and States, Balkan Wars, World War II. The Yugoslav wars of the 1990s were omitted on the grounds that “we still lack historical distance”.

Koulouri explains that “these workbooks are not textbooks but thematic books of sources, complementary to the textbooks used in the classroom. Their method is comparative and multi-perspective. Sources are not classified per country or per nation but are integrated in larger thematic units regardless of their origin. For each event or case or subject, we offer different aspects and perspectives coming from different national histories. Besides, the history of the region is put into the larger comparative context of European and world history” (2009: 60). The main goal of this project phase was to foster the idea of multiple interpretations of one event by coming up with alternative teaching methods. The workbooks have been published in Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, English, Greek, Macedonian, Serbian and Turkish.

When the books were presented in Belgrade in September 2010, with the JHP already encompassing around sixty historians from eleven countries in Southeast Europe, Serbian Minister of Education Zarko Obradovic declared: “An understanding of the past is a precondition for the future. (...) Truth may hurt some people, but one should not escape from it, because the facts have to be faced.”<sup>480</sup>

The four workbooks require new teaching methods so that the teachers can successfully spread the message, that is, the content with its multiple approaches to each subject. At the ceremony, Dubravka Stojanovic, editor of the Serbian edition, stated: “talking about history has nothing to do with the past but with the future, and why substantive activity in the areas of culture, social sciences and education will determine whether Southeast Europe, and Europe itself, would be able to re-imagine (or invent) its community as

---

<sup>479</sup> The results of this first phase of JHP were included into two publications: *Teaching the History of Southeastern Europe* (2001), online at [http://www.cdsee.org/publications/books/teaching\\_history\\_of\\_see](http://www.cdsee.org/publications/books/teaching_history_of_see) and *Clio in the Balkans. The Politics of History Education* (2002), online at [http://www.cdsee.org/pdf/clio\\_in\\_the\\_balkans.pdf](http://www.cdsee.org/pdf/clio_in_the_balkans.pdf)

<sup>480</sup> *Balkan Insight*, 23-09-2010. Available from <http://old.balkaninsight.com/en/main/analysis/30712/>



a democratic and peace-making one, or be faced with new conflicts”.<sup>481</sup>

However, the Joint History Project did not escape from strong criticism. Koulouri admits there were “fierce reactions” (2009: 60), mainly in Serbia, Greece and Kosovo. The project was classified as a foreign conspiracy, “a result of the supra-national conspiracy, whose aim is creation or restoration of the former multinational states that existed in the Balkans. In Croatia, there was immediately fear that this should lead to restoration of Yugoslavia; in Serbia, that this will mean an imposition of the 'brotherhood and unity'. We are talking about a country where “challenges to the transmission of a unified national narrative are routinely resisted” (Johnson, 2011: 3). In Greece, there was fear that the JHP would “bring the restoration of the Ottoman Empire”<sup>482</sup>, under American rule. However, from Athens there were insults and accusations, while in Serbia the criticism kept to an academic tone.

In fact, the project has triggered a debate between two schools of historiography: a group of “traditional” and “conservative” historians and a group of “young” and “progressist” historians, with the latter more closely linked to “the international level of historical science” (2009: 61). However, there were some cautious remarks even from among these young historians.

Maria Todorova finds it imperative, following the extent of the nationalist rhetoric prevailing in the wars of disintegration, “to look carefully into the political motivations behind these calls as well as the political and cultural costs of the project” (2004: 10).

Dana Johnson focuses her critical attention on the “development of supplemental teaching materials that challenge students to critically engage with the hegemonic history found in their textbooks” (2011: 1). For most students, the “revelation that multiple interpretations of the same event exist is a novel idea”, and therefore a challenge to make them “reconsider what they know to be true about the past and about their neighbors” (2011: 4). Dana Johnson stresses that the alternative educational materials of a project like Joint History “do not attempt to resolve the tensions between the national narratives of the Balkan nations. Rather, they understand reconciliation in the practical terms of managing difference” (2011: 3). Or, as Elazar Barkan puts it, “building bridges that enable the two sides to

---

<sup>481</sup> Available from <http://pescanik.net/2013/12/onward-to-world-war-i/>. From the regional conference “History or history – Europe in the trap of populism”, Thessaloniki, 13-15 December 2013, Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe. Dubravka Stojanović is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade. She deals with the history of Serbia and the Balkans in the 20th and 21st centuries.

<sup>482</sup> Stojanovic, Dubravka (2009), *Balkan History Workbooks, Consequences and Experiences*, unpublished paper. Available from [http://www.desk.c.utokyo.ac.jp/download/es\\_7\\_Stojanovic.pdf](http://www.desk.c.utokyo.ac.jp/download/es_7_Stojanovic.pdf). Accessed on 08.12.2014.

negotiate and discuss differences”<sup>483</sup>. Nevertheless, such projects “have been frequently perceived as challenges to the nation-state and its institutions” (2011: 4).

Koulouri (2009: 62) concludes that despite the reactions, “there exists a core of young historians and teachers who are eager to work towards the revision of history teaching in order to achieve cohesion and unity in the region. It is obvious that how we write and we teach history depends on our vision of the future. The EU integration has offered a new perspective to this region that can be instrumentalized also in the field of history education”. This also reflects the line followed in this research even while continually submitting this perspective to critical analysis.

In the survey developed under this dissertation, university students throughout Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, were asked about the possibility of a common contemporary history curricula for all the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

The author of this dissertation accepts this potentially represents a key proposal deriving from the research and the degree of “don’t know/don’t answer” (17 percent) hardly proves inspiring even if over sixty per cent (60.53 percent) regard this as a positive measure. Only less than one out of four respondents (22.2 percent) do not accept this idea/proposal. The proposal’s pertinence gets better feedback when these university students are asked about the quality of the proposal. To the question, “How do you perceive this idea?”, there is close to a majority in favour of such a measure, 47.2 percent (17 percent responding excellent, 12 percent very good and 18.2 percent good). 11.31 percent deem this impossible with only 8.75 percent (7.66 percent bad and 1.09 percent very bad) reporting a negative feeling towards this proposal. This result leads to the understanding that proposals such as the JHP, or those with similar goals, should be encouraged not only by the governments and local authorities in Croatia, BiH, Serbia and Kosovo, but also by public and private international donors and as well as the European institutions, hopefully ranking this as a possible facilitator to the accession processes in the cases, except for Croatia, where countries are applying for EU membership.

## **5.6. Conclusions**

Regarding the Balkans, education is clearly a part of the problem when we consider how its societies remain deeply divided across ethnic boundaries. While this is part of the problem, it has not yet been able to be part of the solution although there is no sustainable solution without... a new provision of educational system. In a rather controversial approach, Bush and Salterelli (2000: 34) point out how “in many conflicts around the world, education is part

---

<sup>483</sup> Interview with the author in New Yor, 2015.

of the problem not the solution, because it serves to divide and antagonize groups both intentionally and unintentionally”. These authors emphasize the need for “shared values” as a main feature of a process of peacebuilding education, which has its fundamental goals, such as “demilitarization of the mind, problematization, articulation of alternatives, changing the rules of the game, delegitimation of violent force as a means of addressing problems, remembering and re-weaving the social and anthropological fabric, nurturing non-violent, sustainable modalities of change” (2000: 34). Following Barkan, this dissertation agrees with the idea that, in the Balkans, “there have been some good efforts but they are overshadowed by nationalists”, adding that “the Balkans has not seen any meaningful reconciliation, it has seen a lot of investment of the international community and a lot of individual and organizational effort, at the micro level”. Barkan agrees that “the EU accession is the most important driving force that pushes people towards reconciliation, but the nationalism is far too dominant in the region<sup>484</sup>”.

But do these shared values actually exist, at least in the margins of these societies? Will they be sufficient and strong enough to promote intergroup support for non-violent conflict resolution or conflict transformation, to put it more realistically? How can hatred between communities be overcome? Stojanovski states that rather than to forget, forgiveness is the cornerstone and the persistence of conflictual points can serve positive causes: “there is no need to suppress the conflict rather to negotiate and to solve the problematic issues. In the Balkans, having permanent conflict, creates conditions of being aware of differences in existing communities. This awareness helps to make a compromise, to create mutual respect and to create permanent and sustainable peace” (2012: 8). In a rather emblematic formulation, former UNSG Kofi Annan (2001) advocated more dialogue and bridges across borders and differences, claiming that “today’s real borders are not between nations, but between powerful and powerless, free and fettered, privileged and humiliated”<sup>485</sup>.

To engage in a transformational commitment on behalf of education requires, more than “challenging the dominant, nationalist/ethnic paradigm and encouraging young people to look for alternatives to the segregation“ (Owen-Johnson, 2008: 87), political will. The substantial involvement of the international community has, thus far, not been able to achieve the level of political will on the part of regional politicians that might lead to a necessary, urgent and inspiring change in the educational systems. With peace essentially based more on ethnic lines – in BiH - than on integration, tolerance and acceptance, the fighting ended but the conflict did not, it just “moved to different arenas, including education” (Owen-Johnson, 2008: 86).

---

<sup>484</sup> Interview with the author, New York, June 2015.

<sup>485</sup> Available from <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/sgsm8071.doc.htm>. Accessed on 17-03-2013.

Bearing in mind theoretical approaches based on citizenship and antiracist models of education, without neglecting the importance of a mutual understanding between religions, the proposal of this dissertation advances towards the establishing of the conditions necessary to building up a unified and consensual school curricula in history teaching, following multi-perspective approaches, starting with high-school students and then moving into higher education in former Yugoslav countries. Differently to the Joint History Project, this researcher believes that the time has come for alternative models based on the multi-perspective approach to include the wars of the 1990s in the history teaching programmes.

In *The Balkans - From Constantinople to Communism* (2002), Dennis P. Hupchick, divides the history of the region into five eras: the era of Byzantine hegemony (600-1355), the era of Ottoman domination (1355-1804), the era of romantic nationalism (1804-1878), an era of nation-state nationalism (1878-1945), and the era of communist domination (1945-1991). In accordance with this division, we would now add another section, the wars of disintegration and independence (1991-1999), since the outbreak of the first war in Slovenia until the conflict in Kosovo and NATO's intervention against Serbia.

A commonly accepted history would not be a simple task, since countries and communities tend to preserve and retain narratives of self-glorification and self-victimhood for promoting their own national cohesion, denoting “sharp divergences between themselves and the other ethnic groups, with no interest to present the conflicting narratives” (Kaprinis, 2007: 35)<sup>486</sup>. To change this complex situation requires, beyond the crucial political will and thorough teacher training, taking into account the importance, influence and responsibility of some authors in the production of narratives addressing legacies of atrocities and, in doing so, potentially perpetuating the conditions for the reinforcement of hate speech.

Peace shielded by ethnic lines and divisions tremendously compromises reconciliation (understood as patterns of conditions nurtured in order to allow social harmony in the daily life of multi-ethnic societies) and furthermore requiring a serious commitment to peaceful and tolerant relations between the nations and the peoples of the region.

In his Oslo delivered Nobel Lecture, laureate Kofi Anan said: “we can love what we are, without hating what – and who – we are not”<sup>487</sup>.

---

<sup>486</sup> Available from [http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/pdfs/ecsf/ecsf2006\\_Kaprinis.pdf](http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/pdfs/ecsf/ecsf2006_Kaprinis.pdf). Accessed on 24-03-2013.

<sup>487</sup> Available from <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/sgsm8071.doc.htm>. Accessed on 17-03-2013.

## CHAPTER 6 – YOUTH AND THE FUTURE OF BALKANS

### 6.1. Introduction: The new battles of the peace born generation

“It’s sad that here people always have a war in the beginning and in the end of their lives”, the dramaturgist and leading personality of the Yugoslav theater, Jovan Cirilov, told this author in 1999 (Alexandre, 2002: 89).

Have the young people from Kosovo, Bosnia, Croatia or Serbia found new battles to fight for? If one takes the words “battle” and “fight” in their most strict and literal sense, one might come to the conclusion that there is some sort of indisputability in *The Economist’s* argument in the 2015 article “Balkan warriors abroad fight the good fight”<sup>488</sup>.

In an article written from Pristina, Kosovo, and Donetsk in Ukraine, in April 2015, this magazine affirms that, “with the Western Balkans at peace, some go abroad to look for war”. As if ex-Yugoslav countries were turning – again, after the same happened right after the conflict in the first half of the 1990s – exporting mercenaries to wars: “from the Sea of Azov to Aleppo, fighters from the western Balkans are at war. So worried are their governments that laws have been passed to make fighting abroad illegal, and their security services co-operate with foreign ones to monitor them. The numbers are small, but the Balkans looms relatively large on foreign battlefields”. They take sides, and the affiliation is, once again, ethno-religious: “Orthodox Christian Serbs are joining pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine while Catholic Croats fight on Ukraine’s side. Muslim Albanians, Bosniaks and Muslims from Sandzak, have gone to fight in Iraq and Syria. All spread their messages online and send greetings to one another. Last month two gloating Croats speaking on YouTube said ‘Hope to see you soon!’ to their Serb ‘friends’. For Serbs and Croats, this war is a replay of their own conflict in the 1990s as much as an adventure or crusade”, says *The Economist*.

The numbers are small (“with up to 100 Serbs having fought for the rebels, they have been among the biggest group of foreigners. Croats, with 25-odd fighters, have been the third-largest foreign contingent on Ukraine’s side”), composed of people who usually belong to non-relevant ultranationalist groups, but, as the same article acknowledges, governments are worried and trying to tackle the problem. As Serbs fighting in Eastern Ukraine “hate the European Union and are against joining NATO”, believing “they are fighting a Christian fight”, the same way the “Croats who have, in western Ukraine, joined the so-called Azov Battalion, a unit notorious for its neo-Nazi symbol that has attracted volunteers from the far

---

<sup>488</sup><http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21648697-western-balkans-peace-some-go-abroad-look-war-fight-good-fight>. Published on 18.04.2015; accessed on 07.09.2016.

right across Europe”, see the war they have jumped into as well as a Christian war.

The numbers are considerably higher in the Syrian war, with hundreds of Kosovar Albanians fighting. As the same *Economist* article reveals, “Shpend Kursani, author of a report on Kosovars fighting there, says there have been 330 Bosnians, 90 Albanians, 70 Serbians and 12 Macedonians. (...) Mr Kursani finds that, when jihadists are counted as a percentage of countries’ populations, Kosovo is top of a list of 22 countries, Bosnia second and Albania fourth”. Kursani says that many of the Kosovars fighting in Syria “have been motivated by the Takfiri ideology, which has been spreading recently into Kosovo through Albanian imams living in Macedonia, who first embraced it in Egypt”.

In former Yugoslavia, Croatia is the only country “where fighting in foreign wars is not outlawed”, so many of these fighters face jail when they return – if they do – to their home countries. *The Economist* article concludes with a disturbing idea: “Balkan governments want neither extreme nationalists nor violent Islamists causing trouble. What is striking is the degree to which, apart from their religions, most Balkan fighters are so broadly united: against liberalism and the West”.

Some years before, in late 2011, in another press article, from *World Affairs Journal*, “a quarterly international affairs journal that argues the big ideas behind US foreign policy”<sup>489</sup>, the focus was on those who were called “War Babies: The Balkans’ New Lost Generation”, those who did not fight the war because they were just born or not even that, and, at the same time, unlike their parents, they do not have the memory of the Tito’s Yugoslavia ‘good old times’; therefore, “today nationalism is not only socially acceptable in the region, it’s the default position, especially among youth”.

An important battle to be won: cross bridges between the educational systems and institutions. As the same article puts it, and no scholarly article read by this dissertation author goes in different sense, “there are no joint studies or seminars between Sarajevo and [Republika] Srpska universities, despite the fact that the institutions are only a half-hour drive away. (...) The lack of cooperation is politically driven, an effort to keep young people divided” (ibid). Moreover, there are many competing historical narratives in the post-Yugoslav space, “almost all of which have been rewritten in one way or another depending on who controls the word processor. These narratives are reinforced by policy. Primary schools, and even some kindergartens, still routinely separate children by ethnicity. Despite efforts at reform, school systems in many areas remain biased. The Dayton Agreement, (...) provided no long-term vision for inter-ethnic education. That meant a war-scarred generation would be raised in divided classrooms, many with overtly nationalist educational agendas” (ibid). It is important to stress the fundamentality of involving the education system and, consequently,

---

<sup>489</sup> <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/war-babies-balkans'-new-lost-generation>. Published on November/December 2011; accessed on 07.09.2016.

the youth, in the peace, stabilization, and reconciliation processes throughout the region. The danger of not doing it is the core of the Economist article cited above.

Experience in the Balkans as elsewhere in other world's hotspots, tells us that, "student exchange programmes, (...) have proven to be a powerful tool in repairing long-standing regional divisions in the Western Balkans. Many young people in the region were raised on narratives that depicted their neighbouring states as enemies. Children who were born during the violent breakup of Yugoslavia are now in their late teens and early twenties. Though they were too young to experience the wars of the 1990s firsthand, the stories from their parents, history books and television screens have instilled a distinct sense of otherness and fear towards those living just across the border". This is why, in the survey under this dissertation, one wants to know if university students travel throughout the region, if they visit other countries (once republics) from former Yugoslavia, and for what reasons; the results will be set out in the next sub-chapter, 8.2.

RYCO is the acronym for a new initiative: The Regional Youth Cooperation Office, aims at creating "an institutionalised system of student exchange programmes" in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia with the idea of reconnecting the youth of the Western Balkans, "an idea based on a reconciliation project to bring French and German youth closer together after World War II". Anita Mitic, the director of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) in Serbia sees it "as an opportunity to have a real game changer in the region". As the Bosnian activist Rasim Ibrahimagic explains, "We do listen to the same music, we eat the same food, we drink the same beer. We are basically the same and, even more importantly, we do understand each other without any translation."

The resistances to this kind of approach are mainly political. In the German Marshall Fund Transatlantic Leadership Seminar the dissertation's author participated in 2013, the Croatian head of the regulatory board for the media, told us that there could not be a common TV of the countries from former Yugoslavia, for a simple reason: "people do not speak the same language". Against this tide of nationalistic discourse, the free, independent, regional media is definitely a battle that is worthwhile to fight for.

Even if Kosovo is not recognized as an independent country by Serbia and by five EU countries as well (Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Slovakia and Romania), "the Youth Department within the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport has responsibility over youth affairs and policy in Kosovo. Moreover, the Kosovar civil society pays importance to the youth policies and the "Central Youth Action Council of Kosovo (CYAC) exists to [...] advance the rights of young people and to ensure that strong collective voice of young people [is] heard to policy and decision makers at all levels. Activities of the CYAC include research, representation to government, participation in youth policy design & implementation, awareness campaigns, and youth exchanges" (page 16). Nevertheless, the situation of youth participation is

considered by researchers “rather dim in Kosovo. The comparative review developed by Ferrer-Fons (2013) “reveals that there is very limited influence of youth on the institutions that affect their lives, whether in family, at school or in the community”<sup>490</sup>. The Kosovar youth mistrusts the institutions, their levels of efficiency and integrity. Youth CSOs are active but they are concentrated in major urban areas and young people in rural areas are excluded and underserved” (page. 16). And even if there is a Kosovo Youth Network (KYN), which is “an independent body representing 127 youth organizations and youth centers throughout Kosovo”, the truth is that “international organisations still present one of the major stakeholders in the youth field in Kosovo. (...) Sustainability and exit strategies for the international donors were not well planned which made the survival of many youth CSOs rather difficult” (ibid.).

In Serbia, the National Youth Strategy 2015-2025 has the merit of recognizing “the groups of young people who are vulnerable, marginalized, at risk of social exclusion and poverty as well as those who are exposed to multiple discrimination and exclusion” (page. 18), to better identify, support, address the needs and “monitor all cases of young people at risk of social exclusion” (ibid.). There is a Serbian Youth Umbrella Organisation (KOMS) that is “the highest representative body of the young people in Serbia whose mission is to represent the interests of young people by developing a partnership with the state, inter-agency and international cooperation, encouraging the active participation of young people and organizational development of its members” (page 18). The authors of the comparative review state that, “although active participation in Serbia seems to be a popular idea among young people, the reality does not reflect this positive opinion”.

We analyse some dimensions of the Shell survey published on the work led by Petkovic and Rodic<sup>491</sup> and we realise that when asked to rank the major problems in the society, young people in Bosnia, Kosovo and Serbia always rank unemployment in the first place and poverty in the second place. Differences between these nations come when it concerns the third ranked problem: it is job insecurity in BiH, insufficient fight against corruption in Serbia and the Kosovo territory itself in Kosovo. From the three, only in the declared independent country in 2008 environmental pollution was mentioned.

In a region where the “legislative treatment of vulnerable groups has been largely neglected”, the researchers in the Shell national surveys “recognized discrimination as one of

---

<sup>490</sup> Ferrer-Fons, M. (2013): Comparative Review of National Reports submitted by member states in the field of action ‘Youth Participation’, Brussels.

<sup>491</sup> The survey was carried out through an online questionnaire; 942 young men (36%) and women (64%) were reached. 26% with 15-19 years old; 40% from 20-25 years old; 34% with 26-30 years old. 55% are studying, 27% employed, 18% unemployed. 34% from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 32% from Serbia, 7% from Kosovo, 12% from Montenegro and 15% from Macedonia.



the important issues”. Therefore, the first five ranked grounds of discrimination experienced by the youth in four countries reveal that gender discrimination is absent from the types of discrimination ranked by the respondents in BiH, whereas ranked as the first one in Kosovo and second in Serbia, where the economic status is seen as the major ground of discrimination (it places second both in Bosnia and in Kosovo). In Bosnia, religion tops the reasons for discrimination, which is a reason for major concern, since it is already more than twenty years after a war in which religion was manipulated for political purposes and territorial and power ambitions.

The EU has worked as a catalyst of reforms in the case of Croatia, is working the same way with Serbia, with the membership process formally on the way and it might work as well in the same way with Bosnia and Kosovo.

Conditions, in terms of framework legislation, regulations and, last but not the least, implementation and monitoring capacities, have to be set up in order to enable the youth in the countries in the region, to actively and meaningfully perform its transformative role, that so often – in contexts that go beyond the Balkans – is used as a propaganda tool or political rhetoric and very little as an effective and sustained policy that perceives youth participation as “an essential element of citizenship in a democratic society, not only as political participation, but also as participation in civil society, policy and decision making, culture and environmental activities” (ibid.). Peace and stability in the region also depend on this, on the capacity of the countries to prevent the deepening of the youth brain-drain and create conditions to improve participation of the most creative, dynamic, qualified generation they have ever had.

Petkovic and Rodic sustain that “education for active citizenship within the context of powerful political influence and weak democratic institutions is proven to have a pivotal role for making the environment of youth participation more conducive and for the democratic life across the region in general”.

The way through, may be the developing of “adequate formal/informal educational platforms for active citizenship through sustainable regional exchange programmes, educational and volunteering opportunities, peer-to-peer exchange, e-learning modules adjusted to diverse youth groups; encouraging youth inter-cultural dialogue and understanding”, namely at cross-border and regional level. To make youth understand they have a say in the most fundamental issues of their countries, “accessible co-operation and learning platforms” should be provided, “for youth to engage more effectively in democratic reforms and consultation process on EU integration perspective of the Western Balkans” (page 58).

To sum up, a clear focus on education and local, regional, national and international exchange programs to counter competing historical narratives, joint programmes in education

and research, but in activism, culture and sport, as well. Other battles that the peace generation should fight for, are not that different from the sense of priorities that may be felt by young people in less-recently-troubled parts of Europe: gender equality, employment, civic and political participation, environmental issues, free and independent media. To clarify some of this priorities, but also obstacles, problems and constraints felt by young people in the post-Yugoslav space, this research will now analyse and summarize the results of the survey responded by 274 university students from Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia.

## **6.2. Results and analysis of the survey: Youth, Balkans and the World**

The survey was responded by 276 students, 2 of them non-valid, in result of being answered by people born before 1991. Therefore, 274 respondents were considered. 124 were prior to the researcher's staying in New York at Columbia University as Visiting Scholar (from March to June 2015) and 150 after that, from June 2015 to the end of the year<sup>492</sup>. From the 274 responses, one can easily admit that one group (ethnicity), Croatians, are over-represented in the sample. 139 are Croatian (50,7%), 55 are Serbian (20%), 36 Kosovo Albanians<sup>493</sup> (13,1%), 31 are Bosniaks (11,31), 1 is Hungarian (Vojvodina), 1 Montenegrin, 2 declared themselves Yugoslavs (responses from Sarajevo University) and 9 (3,28%) did not mention their nationality.

Bearing in mind the overall population of the four cases (countries/nations) studied (Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo), 17 million people, roughly speaking, Croatia or responses from Croatians (4,25 million), should be 25% of the respondents; Serbia (71,16 million) should be 42%; Bosnia and Herzegovina (3,82 million) should be 22,4%; Kosovo (1,82 million<sup>494</sup>) should be 10,7%. The author states that the purposive sample is not balanced taking into account the university population in the countries studied, lest the overall population of the countries.

---

<sup>492</sup> The importance of the inputs received by scholars, teachers and students in New York, and the authorization of mentioning, in further contacts with universities in the Balkans, that this research had "instrumental support" from Columbia, - for which this researcher is endlessly thankful to Tanya L. Domi, leading the Balkans Program of the Harriman Institute at School of International and Public Affairs, besides his 'host', Prof. Mark Mazower - represented a considerable boost in the number of answers, especially from Croatia.

<sup>493</sup> According to the RCC 2015 public opinion survey report, Kosovo has the highest proportion of students/pupils – 14% of the population.

<sup>494</sup> We here assume the Serbs from Kosovo belong to the Kosovo population, not to Serbia. In the same line, Serbs from Republika Srpska are obviously included in the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the Albanians from the Presevo valley and Muslims from Sandzak are included in the population of Serbia and not Kosovo or Bosnia).

When asked about Yugoslavia as an ideal of a country<sup>495</sup>, over 4 out of 5 respondents see Yugoslavia, as something that is past (82%). 8,39% says it should have never existed and it never existed to 2,55%. Nevertheless, it is something present to 1,45% and something future to 2,91% of the respondents. But when when confronted with the challenge of emitting an opinion about the disintegration of Yugoslavia, nearly half of these after 1991born-repondents, say it was negative (49,2%), almost one third of them (30%) admit it was positive and the collapse of the former country was irrelevant for less than one out of ten (8,5%). Regarding the opinion about which were the fundamental factors for the collapse of Yugoslavia, the opinions are substantially balanced, but two factors are the most valued (on a 1-100 scale): national policies (46,69%) and Yugoslav politicians (44,37%). Surprisingly for the author, international media was the less important factor, according to the respondents (22,33%). Other factors considered were international policies, national media, foreign politicians, economic situation, the armies, the intellectuals and Tito legacy.

More than half of the total of respondents consider their countries politically independent (58,7%). More than one out of three respondents (34,3%) states his/her country is not politically independent. Interesting in this question is to perceive the opinions in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because of the lack of definitive status of the former and political institutional framework of the latter. Bearing this in mind, when one ungroups the results, one can verify that out of 36 Kosovo Albanian respondents, 26 see their country as political independent and 10 consider that Kosovo is not politically independent. In the case of respondents from Bosnia and Herzegovina, from the 31 responses, 22 consider BiH politically independent, which means there is a substantial understanding of one's country political independence, even in contexts where that independence is somehow disputed.

However, the degree of independence of the respondents' own countries is perceived as not sufficient by more than four out of ten respondents (43,4%). The degree of independence is total only to 12%. The degree of satisfaction with the independence of the respondents' own countries is perceived as not sufficient by more than four out of ten respondents (42,3%) and none to 13,1%. The degree of satisfaction with the level of independence is total only to 8,75%.

Very critical of the quality of the political class of their country, 66% gives negative opinions (36% bad; 30% awful) about the political class, and it is neither good nor bad to less to nearly one out of four (23,72%). Only 8,75% has a good opinion, but no answers were given as evaluating the political class of the respective country as 'very good' or 'excellent'.

To the author, the most striking figure is that only 26,64% (less than one out of three) finds the nationalistic tone of their country's ruling politicians as excessive. It is adequate to

---

<sup>495</sup> Full results to the survey Youth, Balkans and the World in Annex I.

22,92% and still not sufficient to almost a third of the respondents (32,48%).

When asked to classify (from 1 to 10) according to their preference historical political personalities from former Yugoslavia region, Josip Broz Tito is the only historical personality who gets a positive appreciation, over than 5 (5,02) on a 1-10 scale. Radovan Karadžić and Slobodan Milošević get the lowest evaluation. The over-representation of Croatian respondents may have contributed to make Franjo Tuđman with the second highest evaluation, ahead of Ibrahim Rugova and Alija Izetbegovic. But when asked to do the same with current political personalities from the region, the Croatian Ivo Josipovic (3,48), social-democrat (SDP) and President between 2010 and 2015 is by far the best appreciated political personality in the region, though with less than 4 on a 1-10 scale. It is rather relevant since he was being rather well evaluated, even before responses to the survey began arriving from Croatian universities, despite some responses from Bosnians from Croat origins. Josipovic is ahead the current Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić (2,98).

The language people speak is a fundamental indicator of the identity, and the way that identity is perceived, likely more than the religious affiliation and place of birth. About the question of the native language of the respondents, the most relevant result in this question, in the subjective interpretation of the researcher, is the fact that only 2,55% (7 out of 274) say their language is Serbo-Croatian, which was the official name of the language spoken in former Yugoslavia. The weight of Croatian in this question may be overvalued, taking into account the demographic weight of Croats in the overall population of the studied cases<sup>496</sup>: 42.7% of the respondents indicate Croatian as their native language.

The author of the dissertation wanted to acknowledge the extent of relationships that contemporary youth in the studied cases develop with the neighbouring countries or with people coming from neighbouring countries. The result was that more than one third of the respondents have friends in/from Bosnia and Herzegovina (37,22%). The low result of Croatia may be explained by the fact that a significant proportion of respondents were themselves from Croatia and this specific question was about neighbouring countries. When the question concerns the religious affiliation than yours, and they are asked to mention positive answers, besides their own religious affiliation or non-affiliation, a substantial majority of respondents has friends from other religious affiliation other than their own. Only 11,6% has no friends from other religious affiliation.

Bearing in mind the latter response, it was important to acknowledge the importance of religion to the respondents' construction of national identity, and the research comes to the conclusion that there is a balance in responses. Religion is of little importance to 29,56% of respondents, none important to 34,67% but still very important to 31,38%. But the overall

---

<sup>496</sup> (Croatia – 4,25million inhabitants; Bosnia – 3,82m; Serbia – 7,16; Kosovo – 1,82m; Total – 17,05m).

results tend to show a trend to a decrease of the importance of religion in the construction of national identity, as there is a huge majority of respondents (around 64,23%) who give it little and no importance.

But if the question is about admitting marrying someone from a different religion, a huge majority admits that it is possible (53,6% says Yes and 22,99% says maybe). Only 9,48% rejects the idea, while 8,75% admits it is not very likely.

The wars in the 1990s, the restriction to obtain visas to travel to foreign countries have had a significant impact in a country where the people were used to travel, even in the period of Tito and the communist bloc; Yugoslavia, was, in fact, an exception, and that freedom gave wide popularity to the so-called 'Tito passport'. But, once again, it is the author's conviction that the origins of the respondents played a considerable role in the result to this question: the fact that a significant proportion of respondents were themselves from Croatia and this specific question was about neighbouring countries explains the fact that Croatia is not ranked as destination nr.1, but Bosnia and Herzegovina (28,4%). Nevertheless, despite the wars and the physical borders created after the collapse of socialist Yugoslavia, the university students keep on travelling throughout the region, and only a small proportion does it by obligation (work), 19,7%. More than 40% visits the neighbouring countries as tourists.

Taking into account the crucial importance given to education in the research, it was mandatory to perceive the way respondents evaluate the quality of Education in their own countries. There is some division between those who value the quality of Education as positive and those who regard it as negative. On the 'negativist' side, there is a total of 37,94% opinions (26,27% bad and 11,67% very bad) which is less than 52,53% on the 'positivist' side (31,38% good, 18,97% very good and 2,18% excellent). It is neither good nor bad to 6.98% of the respondents.

When trying to understand how the university students see the quality of the education not only in their own country, but also in other former Yugoslav republics and, as well, in each of the BiH entities, the perception about the quality of Education system in Croatia is valued 2,86 (on a 1-5 scale) and 2,83 in Serbia. All other countries do not reach a positive evaluation and Republika Srpska is the worse (1). This question wanted to test the perception about the quality of education in BiH on a state level and on the entities level, and showed that on the former the perception is better than on the latter (in RS and FBiH separately the quality is worse than on the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Related to the quality of the educational system, the quality of teaching of History (the way History is taught and narratives about the Balkans wars are disseminated) bearing in mind the importance of this factor to the prospects of reconciliation. The results tell us that close to a majority of respondents finds the quality of teaching of History in their countries

positive, around 47,79% (Good for 28,83%, very good for 15,32% and excellent for 3,64%). It is neither good nor bad to 18,61%. It is badly valued to less than one third, 29,19% (20,8% bad and 8,39% very bad). But, to the author's surprise, as already stated in the previous chapter, 51,45% of responses go along with the idea that the nationalistic tone and contents in the teaching of History is adequate and 24% think it is still not sufficient. Less than one in five responses (15,69%) find the nationalistic tone and contents as excessive.

A cornerstone in this research is our proposal of the creation of a common contemporary History curricula to the overall countries of former Yugoslavia: when asked if they admit a common contemporary History curricula to the overall countries of former Yugoslavia, there is a very significant abstention (17,1%), although over than 60% (36,13% Yes + 24,4% Maybe) see it possible or admit it. Only less than one out of four respondents (22,26%) do not admit this idea /proposal. About the perception of the respondents over this proposal, there is close to a majority in favour of such a measure, 47,4% (16,8% excellent, 12% very good and 18,6% good). 11,31% find it impossible to happen and only 8,75% (7,66% bad and 1,09% very bad) show a negative feeling towards this proposal. 12,77% finds it neither good nor bad. 22% do not know or do not answer.

The quality of media and its perception among university students was also an important dimension of this research. Not even half of the respondents evaluate the quality of the media as positive (39,77%; whereas it is good for 26,6%, very good for 9,85% and excellent for 3,28%), but are fewer those who evaluate it in a negative way (35,39%, whereas it is bad for 21,53% and very bad for 13,86%)<sup>497</sup>. For almost one in four of the respondents (23,7%) the quality of media is neither good nor bad.

The excess of nationalistic tone and content in the mainstream media in former Yugoslavia is far too evident, simply by reading titles and headlines on front covers and watching newscasts on main TV channels. It was the author's surprise, that university students find it essentially adequate (36,86%) and even not sufficient (24%). Nevertheless, one out of four (25,18%), finds it excessive. One of the respondents did not answer according to the proposed multiple-choice options, but instead wrote something that made the researcher reflect about the formulation of the question itself: "Nationalistic rhetoric is irrelevant nowadays, populism has replaced it". This student, a Serbian male from the faculty of Philosophy at the University of Novi Sad may surely have a point.

The accession to EU, something Croatia has already achieved (and Slovenia almost a decade before), is a fundamental political objective to all the former Yugoslav republics, from BiH to FYROM, to Serbia and Montenegro and Kosovo. It has been said before that there has

---

<sup>497</sup> The author admits an error in the set up of the survey in this question, since there are three categories for positive evaluation and only two for negative evaluation of the media (there should have been a category "awful").

been a gradual disenchantment about the EU benefits in the past few years, partly because of the Eurozone crisis itself, and secondly – but not less important – the long duration of the accession process, which eventually provokes an erosion on the positive opinions towards EU, when people are constantly ‘bombed’ by political propaganda about the coming ‘el dorado’ but, in fact, don’t see anything changing in their lives and quality of living. On the contrary, the so-called structural reforms in the economies throughout the accession period, involves privatization of formerly state-owned companies with huge costs on employment and social welfare. Among the respondents to our survey, positive opinions towards the EU still overcome the negative ones: 56,55% (8,02% excellent; 24,45% very good; 24,08% good) against 12,76% (6,56% bad, 6,2% very bad), since a significant proportion of the respondents, 27,3%, do not have either a good or bad opinion about the EU. Positive opinions towards EU score better, without including responses from Croatia, the only case in this research of a Member State. Trying to understand the respondents’ opinion of their countries joining the EU, in line with the answers to the previous question, positive perceptions surpass the negative ones by large. 60,5% has an overall positive opinion about their countries joining the EU: it is an excellent thing for 13,1%, very good for 22,6% and good for 24,8%. The negative ranks amount for almost twenty percent (19,33% - 12,04% bad and 7,29% very bad). One in each five respondents thinks their country joining the EU is neither good nor bad.

The brain drain of the most qualified generation of the Western Balkans is probably one of the most serious problems the studied countries face. And there is not a foreseeable solution to the problem, taking into account the contemporary economic context, the political constraints and the systemic problems of the countries in question. Therefore, it was important to acknowledge if the university students plan to emigrate, deepening the problem of a massive brain-drain in the region: leaving the country is admitted by more than two thirds of the respondents. 28,83% admit they are planning it, and 44,1% say that it is a possibility, which means 72,9% admits it, almost three out of four. Emigration is rejected by 22,6% of the respondents. The crisis in the Euro zone is very likely to have increased the proportion of those who plan to emigrate to a country outside EU, 64,59%, which means almost two thirds, at least admit that possibility. Less than one out of five, 19,34% reject the idea. It is rather high the proportion of those who do not admit to migrate to another former Yugoslav country, 57,2%, that is, clearly half of the respondents. Clearly admitting to migrate to another former Yugoslav country, only 9,12%.

What are the major concerns of the university students from Croatia, BiH, Serbia and Kosovo? Asked to evaluate from 1 to 10 your degree of concern regarding the following topics: peace, security, employment, justice, environment, public finances, culture, family, religion and politics, on a 1-10 scale, in countries affected by wars in the past few decades, ‘peace’ is not the major degree of concern, but “family” (7,49) and “employment” (7,46),

which, in our understanding, means a sense of normality in life. Only after those, come justice (7,29), peace (6,83), and security (6,78). Not surprisingly, but no less revealing, religion (4,52) is the topic which causes less degree of concerning among the university students who responded the survey. Being Employment one of the most valued factors, it is important to say that 43,4% of the respondents have high and /or sufficient expectations in finding a job compatible with His / Her qualifications and/or area of expertise. That expectation is low for a significant minority (36,1%) almost none for 10,94% and none for 4,74%, an overall proportion of negative expectations of 51%.

The survey also included questions about football<sup>498</sup> and culture, to perceive the importance of certain symbols to the studied countries' university students. Asked to point out their world's favourite cinema director from the following names: Joel & Ethan Cohen, James Cameron, Alejandro Iñárritu, Jean Luc Goddard, Kathryn Bigelow and Tom Hooper, it becomes clear that the fact that Jean Luc Goddard filmed about Sarajevo and was an intellectual activist against the siege to the city during the conflict in the 90's has not played any kind of special role when respondents were asked to name their favourite cinema director. James Cameron (38,3%) leads the preferences. Besides, Mr. Cameron was very active in solidarity campaigns with the victims from the conflict in Kosovo in the late nineties<sup>499</sup>.

On a regional level, the most renowned Balkans' film director, Emir Kusturica, leads the preferences (29,92%). There is a quite significant abstention (37,59%), but it is noticeable that the fact that Kusturica, born in Sarajevo but moved to Belgrade during the civil war in Bosnia may not be a decisive element to acknowledge student's preferences as it was a decade ago, when he was mostly regarded as pro-Serbian<sup>500</sup>. The Bosnian director Danis Tanovic, Oscar award-winning is also on high preference (16,6%).

Regarding writers, Stephen King, one of world's bestselling writer, leads the preferences among Balkans' university students who answered the survey: 22,2%, followed by Danielle Steel (12,40%) and Stieg Larsson (8,02%). There was no apparent influence of the nationality of the author on the results of José Saramago (only 1,82%). There was a significant proportion of people who don't know /don't answer (27%).

There is a considerable ethnic divide, when the respondents to the survey were asked to name their regional favourite writer: the Yugoslav Nobel Ivo Andric is pointed out by 35% of the respondents. Most respondents from Croatia voted for Miroslav Krleža (30,29%) and

---

<sup>498</sup> In a time when most of the world football fans would whether vote for Lionel Messi (24,45%) or Cristiano Ronaldo (14,96%), there is a significant result on Zlatan Ibrahimovic, a Swedish from Muslim Bosnian origins (11,31%). This was the idea of this question: to acknowledge the degree of sympathy that could collect a foreign football player, but from Balkans' origins. There is a significant group of those who don't know or don't answer (33,21%). Results mostly collected before 2014 Brazil World Cup.

<sup>499</sup> <http://investor.yahoo.net/releasedetail.cfm?releaseid=173628>.

<sup>500</sup> About controversies and scholarly debates around the work of Emir Kusturica see chapter 2.



most from Kosovo chose Albanian writer Ismail Kadaré (11,67%).

The Irish pop-rock stars, U2, very active in the artistic and intellectual defence of Sarajevo during the Serbian siege to the city (they even composed a song called “Miss Sarajevo” featuring Luciano Pavarotti) collect 18,24% of the preferences regarding international musical names, but the answers relating to the regional bands or singers, give us some interesting conclusions. Rita Ora (12,4% of the preferences), born in 1990 in Pristina, to Kosovar-Albanian parents, moved to the United Kingdom when she was still a baby, but enjoys a huge popularity among the kosovar youth and abroad. In fact, she became the artist with the most number-one singles on the UK Singles Chart in 2012. Bijelo Dugme (trans. White Button, cited by 28,46% of the respondents) was a former Yugoslav rock band, based in Sarajevo, considered to have been the most popular band that ever existed in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The last questions of our survey are related to the prospects of reconciliation and the factors which may, most decisively, contribute to it. At the time of the responses, almost half of the respondents (46,3%) do not believe that there is a true reconciliation between nations in former Yugoslavia. There is reconciliation for less than one in three (26,27%) and maybe for 9,85%. When asked about which are the factors that would allow a stringer and more effective reconciliation among countries and peoples from former Yugoslavia? (from 1 to 5, according to increasing importance given to each of the possible choices), though there is a significant abstention (20,4% of the respondents), the most valued factor is the strengthening of criminal punishment against ‘hate speech’ (average of 3,12 on a 1-5 scale), followed at big distance the trial and condemnation of war criminals (2,86). Considering an academic research as a process and, as said early in the introduction to this research, that the work on the field may influence the researcher on his/her prior ideas, this one, assumes that, from the evidence from what was analyzed, people with whom one has spoken to and literature consulted, besides the responses to the survey, it would have been a far more accurate question if a factor such as “equality of opportunities to jobs regardless ethnicity” had been included in the options above. And options were the creation of true and reconciliation commissions, return of refugees and IDPs (internally displaced persons) and return of properties to its owners previous to war.

The last question asked the university students if they agreed with the sentence: “there will be a lasting peace time in the Balkans”. The “Yes” and “maybe” answers, respectively with 35,7% and 42,7%, altogether, lead us to an optimistic vision about a peaceful future in the region. But still 17,15% believe that there won’t be a lasting peace time in the Balkans. What do the results of the survey above tell us, broadly speaking? The respondents tend to believe in reconciliation among the peoples and nations from former Yugoslavia and the strengthening of criminal punishment against ‘hate speech’ is seen as the

most fundamental factor that would allow a stringer and more effective reconciliation. Nevertheless, the majority of them admit there will be a lasting peacetime in the Balkans.

### 6.3. Youth, Europe and Euro-scepticism

One opens the reflection over this topic with incitement from an article of two young researchers from the faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Belgrade, both MA in Cultural Studies, Jovana Papovic (born in 1985) and Astrea Pejovic (born in 1984), for whom – the “Euro-scepticism amongst youth in Serbia and Croatia as [is] an extreme form of strategic coalition”<sup>501</sup>.

Although both countries come from the same deceased country, although they are on the early moments of their EU integration (Croatia as a member-state since 2013, Serbia accepted as a formal candidate to membership since early 2016), their new identities derive from different contexts in the aftermath of the Yugoslav collapse: “While Serbian national identity was formed in an opposition to the western discourse, Croatia based its nationalism on the continuity within its independent presence in Europe”. But in the core of the topic of this subchapter, both countries are in a strange perfect harmony: “Although generally very optimistic towards EU integrations, Euro-scepticism emerged in both Serbia and Croatia especially inside youth groups. Main reason for this sceptical feeling is in majority produced by both the prolongation of the transitional situation and the European paternalistic relation to the Balkans”. In this sceptical approach towards EU one finds as well an improbable alliance between right-wing nationalists and anti-liberal leftists, mentioning Boris Buden<sup>502</sup> who noticed that the “leftist critique of globalization also implies a critique of loss of sovereignty produced by neo-liberal capitalism, which is a main right-critique argument” (Papovic, 2012: 4).

It was already mentioned in previous chapters, that the long period of transition that these countries faced – in the case of Croatia – or have been facing – in the case of Serbia – substantially contributed to this youth disengagement towards the idea of Europe and the representations they operate around its meanings. The main purpose of this disenchanted youth is not to question the foundations of the European integration or to challenge it as if there was as an alternative, but “do not hesitate to question the system itself. The trigger for the re-birth of Euro-scepticism can be seen in the current euro-crisis, Greece’s loss of financial sovereignty and the overall difficult financial situation. Not only those non-EU members are

---

<sup>501</sup> <http://euroacademia.eu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/draft-paper-Pejovic-Papovic.pdf>. Accessed on 07.09.2016.

<sup>502</sup> Buden, Boris (2007), “Children of Post-communism”, *Radical Philosophy no 159*, January/February 2010: 14-22.

spreading Euroscepticism, but also the idea of unification is now questioned in the Union itself". In contrast to Milošević" ambiguous relation to Yugoslavia, Croatian nationalist discourse emphasized Yugoslavia and Balkan as a main threat to Croatian sovereignty". But both looking to the Western Europe. The central cinema in Zagreb saw it's name changed from "Balkan" to "Europe". The authors recall that "religion was another important guideline present in both nationalistic discourses", but while the Serbian Orthodox heritage "always gravitated towards Russia", the Croatian Catholic Church "was always turned to the 'Catholic West'".

But what, after all, may have been the reasons for the disenchantment among these youths towards what one still considers the European project? Some part of the reason may lie on the conditionalities imposed by the EU itself, according to which countries have to restructure their economies (a period of pains), before they join (the reward). The problem is that those pains mean privatizations, therefore, unemployment impacting in the lives of entire families, with children and youngsters frequently prevented – due to lack of financial capacity – from proceeding their studies. Besides, in many situations, and Croatia may be a good example on that, when the "reward" comes after the painful transition, the package does not come with a real improvement in the social, economic, and political situation, "therefore the whole pain/reward process lost its credibility" (Papovic, 2012: 3).

With the Bologna reform, educational system that was socialist and free, changes without a proper preparation of a new system and the public opinion itself, specially young people, who came to the streets of Belgrade and Zagreb, among other cities, in protest, in 2012. First, in Croatia, already in 2009, "an independent student movement articulated a strong resistance to the privatization and commercialization of higher education. Their protest against neoliberal reforms in education turned into what was probably the first strong political opposition to not only the government, but the general political and social regime" (Horvat and Štiks, 2011)<sup>503</sup>. Following the same path, Belgrade students organized protestes in the Serbian capital and "blocked the Faculty of Philosophy (Humanities and social sciences) at the University of Belgrade. By protesting against the liberalization of the University, students tried to draw the attention on the global liberalization of the society. They organized the plenary assemblies in which they tried to explain their reasons for protesting, and to question the entire society" (Papovic, 2012: 4). The Zagreb protests, or the Facebook protests as it became known, were windows opener of a general discontent with the transition process and the pains the country was going through in order to achieve the EU membership. The 'Croatian Spring' in reference to the 'Arab Spring' managed to unite "dissatisfied citizens

---

<sup>503</sup> Horvat, Srećko, and Igor Štiks. "Dobrodošli u pustinju u Tranzicije! Postsocijalizam, Evropska Unija i nova levica na Balkanu." Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Southeast Europe. 12 30, 2011. <http://www.rosalux.rs/sr/artikl.php?id=107>.

with different problems, and different political ideologies. For students in Serbia, the thought is often that even if the country really achieves membership, in the current situation of EU, with high youth unemployment, restrictions to freedom and human rights in consolidated democracies due to security reasons, besides the presence of xenophobic MPs in the European Parliament in increasing numbers, they are “almost completely aware that they will share the destiny of their Greek compatriots” (Papovic, 2012: 3). To sum up, they don’t see reasons to be enthusiastic about the EU integration. Is there a way out?

#### **6.4. Cultural cosmopolitanism and supranational identities in post-Yugoslav space**

Here this dissertation argues in defence of a shifting from national ethnic based identity conceptions to supranational identities and cultural cosmopolitanism conceptions in the post-Yugoslav space.

Identity is far from something that societies can change by legislative decree, even if in contexts of crisis or post-conflict. In “Ergo Sum – shifting conceptions supranational identities and cultural cosmopolitanism in the post-Yugoslav space”, Ljubica Spaskovska, from the University of Exeter, researching the varieties of supra-nationalism in the former Yugoslavia<sup>504</sup>, “explores changes of identity and self-perception at moments of profound political and social change, putting into perspective the impact of the events preceding and following the Yugoslav dissolution, as one of the several great ruptures (with the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the Second World War) which marked the disappearance of the big supranational agents in the region”. The Yugoslav identity lived alongside – with the mentioned virtues and peacefulness as well as with moments of friction and even social disruption in some cases, as for instance, with the Albanians from Kosovo since the early 1980s – with other ethnic, religious and cultural identities throughout the existence of the socialist Yugoslav federation, a very decentralized country, particularly after the death of its founder and president, Josip Broz Tito, at the same time first defender and last resort of the concept of “Brotherhood and Unity”<sup>505</sup>.

Wars in the 1990s brought what the Croatian writer Dubravka Ugresic sees as the confiscation of past memories, as Spaskovska so appropriately quotes. The situation in wartime was particularly complex and dangerous for ethnic minorities in each of the territories, mixed marriages families, for those who were insisting on the attachment to what can be understood as a Yugoslav identity, and, generally speaking, to everyone who took a

---

<sup>504</sup> <http://eprofile.exeter.ac.uk/ljubicaspaskovska/>. Accessed on 21.09.2016. See also Spaskovska (2017), *The last Yugoslav generation*, Manchester University Press.

<sup>505</sup> In Serbo-croatian *bratstvo i jedinstvo*, a popular slogan of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia from the Yugoslav People's Liberation War (1941–45), that became a guiding principle of Tito's Yugoslavia's post-war inter-ethnic policies.

stand against what one could describe as a compulsory attachment to an ethnic identity, whose main features would be the rejection and repression, and even extermination (even if in a given area) of all the other identities. Spaskovska focuses on the “phenomenon of (forced, compulsory, voluntary or politically correct) re-negotiating and re-formulating of identities, through the following case-studies of: the urban youth (as a producer and consumer of the vibrant Yugoslav rock scene); the Yugoslav Army personnel and the children from nationally/ethnically mixed parentage”. The author argues these three groups embodied distinct “but overlapping” forms of supranationalism: inherited and cultural in the case of children, progressive and engaged in the case of youth and the rock scene; ideological and institutional in the case of the JNA. One feature is common to the three groups when one looks at the Yugoslav breakup: for them, it “meant the disappearance of an environment that provided meaning and framework for their existence or what they worked or stood for”.

Twenty-five years after the beginning of the collapse of socialist Yugoslavia, in the nations and independent countries that emerged from the defunct country, identities are being again reconfigured, and once again in the sense of a supranational quality, not in a regional block – at least for the moment – but as an effect of increasing perceptions and self-perceptions of belonging to an European space, which works both as a social and economic aspiration as well as political goal of political forces – specially from the mainstream political spectrums – that have the EU integration as their main driving force, as the top priority on their agenda, doing as best as possible to make it to be felt as a collective and indisputable destiny.

The emergence of a cultural cosmopolitanism, directly deriving from increasing cosmopolitan cultures due to exchanges and tourism, to which the role of youth is fundamental, can be – to the understanding of the author of the dissertation – even more fostered and enhanced, in a region where cultural values and popular cultural consumption (as seen with music and, somehow, with cinema and even sports in chapter II), though it were misused and manipulated, were kept nevertheless as a shared heritage, a common code of communication and understanding, a sense of descending from a common country and belonging to a now supranational identity. It is as important as an urgent need in a time of recrudescence of the “antagonism towards the ‘stranger’, especially those strangers deemed to have a different colour, creed or culture”, and very especially, as these authors point out, “the mobile other” (Szerszynski, 2002: 462)<sup>506</sup>. Of course that cosmopolitanism cannot be dissociated from class status, economic situation, gender, ethnic background, etc. Societies are defined and conditioned by power relations that, as it happens with multiple dimensions of our lives, determine the contents of the “cultural cosmopolitanism”. Advocating for a

---

<sup>506</sup> Sociological Review 50(4):461-481, November 2002.

cultural cosmopolitanism without taking - those dimensions linked to power relations - into account, would be nothing but an abstraction.

Pointing out a study in which, already back in 2000<sup>507</sup>, over than 10 percent of UK respondents said their first affiliation was to “the world as a whole”, the authors put forward some important questions: “Even for those whose primary identification is with locality or nation, how might a wider awareness of the world be altering the nature and character of such local belongings? Furthermore, what is the role of the media in the production and maintenance of cosmopolitan attitudes to the wider world?” (ibid.).

Even if these authors stress that their data is “extremely limited in time and place – for example, taking place well before the September 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, after which the notion of cosmopolitan openness and tolerance has at once been qualified in the West and also trumpeted as one of its defining features”, the truth is that, as the authors put it, “with the emerging convergence of media, from televisions to computers to phones, this global vernacular will be increasingly folded into an wide array of other practices – such as advertising, sport, education, arts, travel and so on – that are saturated with media images and information, with a banal globalism that is both outside and in a way within each of us”. Fifteen years past the study mentioned, the evolution of globalization processes does not come in contradiction with what was argued then, on the contrary, to the understanding of the current dissertation: a cosmopolitan globalism is increasingly widespread due to media flows and what one could consider a massification of an online way of life, but that cosmopolitanism interacts and is somehow balanced by regional, national, local, religious, ethnic, gender specificities, impacting on socialization and, therefore, on globalization processes.

Can the social media, that must be reminded, were not even by close in relevant place of existence by 2000, be regarded as “a cosmopolitan public stage or screen” (ibid.), building up a virtual global village, blurring borders and boundaries between geographies and cultures, as well as between private and public life, consolidating thus a cultural cosmopolitanism that, on the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, is still positioning itself on a global stage of identities shared – and challenged – by exclusionary localisms and militant nationalisms? In a radio interview with the author in 2013 in Lisbon, when confronted with the possibility of re-emergence of those exclusionary localisms and militant nationalisms in violent forms, the philosopher Daniel Innerarity said that “because European nations and states have a long tradition, many of them, in fact, a long democratic tradition, the democratic game in which we are now in Europe, when it comes to guaranteeing the commons, such as peace, political

---

<sup>507</sup> ORB, (2000), *Soul of Britain: Analysis by Demographics, Denomination and Values*, Vol. II, London: The Opinion Research Business. The Soul of Britain was conducted by the Opinion Research Business (ORB) for the BBC, 1000 telephone interviews being carried out in May 2000.

and economic coherence, prosperity and the financing of democracy, the fight against climate change, all of them are objectives that can not be achieved by them countries individually, on their own. At the moment, the worst in Europe is loneliness, which is not a solution: closing the spaces, taking care of only what is ours without taking care of the effects that this causes on others, is a short-term strategy that will eventually come back against those who practice it”.

Shall it help us to read identities in a different way? Shall it help us to write history, and political science, and international relations, in new and different manners? With the impossibility of definitive answers, something very common in political science and social sciences in general, at this point, a reflection on identities in a post-international world is the focus one embraces.

Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach in their “Remapping Global Politics. History’s Revenge and Future Shock”, reflect over why in the world today “identities merit our attention” and why they say we are living in a “post-international world” (Ferguson, 2004: 143), starting with the end of the Cold War up to our days with “dramatic shifts in identities and identity hierarchies, ranging from the collapse of communism to a proliferation of Islamic terrorism, are having a significant impact on global life”.

With massive tourism and trade, global networks of communication flows, with the world updated each second in our tablets, one can trace a division between some sort of a mobile elite very much attained to a global culture and, as Ferguson and Mansbach tell us, “leaders of traditional social groups, fearful of losing authority”, mobilizing to resist to “the ‘strange,’ ‘secular,’ or ‘sensual’ flows from outside. The corrosive effect of homogenization-by-globalization on local cultures and norms is increasingly triggering backlashes such as that which in the late 1970s brought down the Shah of Iran or thereafter brought the Taliban to power in Afghanistan. No aspect of the emerging post-international world is more controversial than the clash between yesterday and today’s cultural values. (...) Religious fundamentalism (whether that of Islamists in Algeria, Orthodox Jews in Israel, Hindu militants in India, or the Christian Coalition in the United States), gender conflict, interethnic or intertribal rivalries, and national revivals all involve cultural backlash.” (Ferguson, 2004: 153,154). What is ISIS if not this duel between the present and the past?

These authors understand that today’s “boundaries demarcate who is ‘inside’ and who is ‘outside’ the boundaries of civic and moral obligation, and that issue is regaining an importance for political theory and global politics not seen since the triumph of the Westphalian State” (2004: 154).

Towards a transnational civic culture and practice of peace, in the next subchapter we focus on some examples of ‘heroes’ of democratic and civic citizenship.

## 6.5. Towards a transnational civic culture and practice of peace

“We have always fought against this incredible arrogance that led to a provincialization of culture that considered what was different as being inferior”, Borka Pavicevic, theatre director, founder of the Center for Cultural Decontamination, told this author in Belgrade, back in 2000 (Alexandre, 2002: 277). “The Revolution is already eating its own head” (Alexandre, 2002: 279). When this interview took place, two weeks after Milosevic's fall, this was what Pavicevic most feared, that the velvet of the Revolution could make the Serbs fall back again into the tight knitness of an authoritarian regime. It did not happen.

Svetlana Broz, granddaughter of president Josip Broz Tito, doctor and specialist in cardiology, volunteer as such at the outbreak of the war in Bosnia, in January 1993, in the middle of the conflict began doing interviews with people describing their war experiences and the way they helped or were helped by the others, in the sense of the other group, of the other ethnicity, those who – in wartime – the belligerent politicians wanted common people to perceive as the Enemy. Many times standing against those of their ethnic group. From the book *Good People in an Evil Time*, in a story told by writer Aneta Benac in Sarajevo in 1998, one can keep this out of many examples: “Daily you could see young Bosniak men helping by carrying water for elderly, retired women, Croatian, Serbian and Jewish women who had been left behind when their family had left the city or when their relatives couldn't reach them.” (Broz, 2002: 222).

Broz's book came out in 1999 as *Dobri ljudi u vremenu zla* (*Good People in an Evil Time*, English edition in 2002), a rather balanced book in which none of the ethnic groups of former Yugoslavia is collectively blamed, though Svetlana Broz being rather critical towards the Serb leadership actions from the moment the former country started collapsing, which made her move from Belgrade to Sarajevo and acquire Bosnian citizenship<sup>508</sup>.

Svetlana Broz Tito<sup>509</sup> is an example of civic courage and a builder of civic culture, and it is through the example of such people that the Western Balkans in general and the studied cases in particular may set up bases for a practice of peace and a transnational civic

---

<sup>508</sup> In a 2005 interview for Bosnian daily newspaper *Nezavisne novine*: “After the NATO intervention, I moved to Sarajevo. Twenty years ago, Belgrade was a European metropolis, a city that I loved a lot. Unfortunately, in a way that city has lost its soul. Sarajevo, despite going through a four-year-long siege of hell, kept its soul intact. I love Bosnia-Herzegovina, I feel as this is my homeland. Last year I even became a citizen.”

<sup>509</sup> Broz heads the GARIWO, Gardens of the Righteous Worldwide, an NGO through which she founded the “Education Towards Civil Courage”, seminars designed to teach adolescents from all over the Balkans “how to stand up to corruption and social and political divisiveness”. Later founded a Center for Civil Courage in BiH. The centre, as it is presented in the book *Good People in an Evil Time* is “designed to combat the prevailing ethnic intolerance, corruption, violence, or any type of discriminatory behaviour, and to build a resilient civil society in the Western Balkans by inspiring civil courage above all in the young and teaching the day-to-day skills of constructive opposition”.



culture that are essential to achieve reconciliation between nations and peoples of former Yugoslavia. When asked, by the author, in Sarajevo in 2013, about the conditions to reconciliation in the region, Svetlana Broz replied that “the real conditions to reconciliation to a serious reconciliation in the Balkans, not only in Bosnia, should be decent politicians, who will not play the nationalist card, who will understand the past, present and future. We are far from having that kind of politicians. All peoples were victims of the war and only newly democratically oriented politicians might lead to a real reconciliation”. Through the NGO GARIWO, she educates people in civic courage, to create “a critical mass of responsible individuals in the societies who can say No in the face of everybody who abuses power”.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, examples of good practices towards reconciliation and overcoming hate speech could also be found in organizations such as the Association of Independent Intellectuals CIRCLE 99 (promoting tolerance and diversity in wartime Sarajevo), The Sarajevo International Multi-religious and Inter-cultural Center<sup>510</sup>, Education Builds BiH (led by retired General Jovan Djvak, a Bosnian Serb who decided to defend the city during the civil war and siege by his ‘comrades’ Karadžić and Mladić), etc.

In an interview with the author of this dissertation, in Sarajevo in 2005, the retired general, speaking his office at Education Builds Bosnia and Herzegovina’s facilities, said that the fact that he was born in Belgrade Hospital, does not make him “a citizen of Belgrade”. And he added: “I could have been born in Lisbon and would be on the same citizen of Sarajevo. I live here 40 years ago, my children are here, made here my entire career in the army. For many, it was weird, someone born in Serbia and raised in Vojvodina, have decided to stay in Sarajevo with Muslims. I stress this point: I am Bosnian, citizen of Sarajevo, and the world, regardless of being born Serb, Croat or Muslim”. At the headquarters of his Education Builds Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has awarded more than 20,000 scholarships and promotes social equity in the country, Divjak<sup>511</sup> states, when interviewed by the author of this dissertation: “Education is the basis for development. In Bosnia there are 35 000 children without parents”. In the war 20,000 children were killed: “all the children in the region, here, in Croatia or Serbia, suffered from war traumas... many suffered irreparable psychological damage that will require medical follow-up forever”.

Making Divjak and others such as him tasks harder, one must realize that in order to promote education and foster a civic culture that may achieve a transnational sphere, there needs to be, first of all, a culture of debate. “Conceived as a joint search for the truth, a

---

<sup>510</sup> Available at <http://www.annalindhfoundation.org/members/imic-international-multireligious-intercultural-center>. Accessed on 27.09.2016.

<sup>511</sup> After the war, the hardliners of the SDA party wing in Sarajevo, compelled him to retire. The Bosnian national army now has, exclusively, Muslim generals. Djvak had become a troublesome for the new power. He was saving too many lives of Serbs civilians in Sarajevo, including at the hands of a Bosnian musician who became warlord, Caco, author of several massacres against non-Muslim civilians.

culture of debate gives us a chance to examine the beliefs and values we were brought up with and often take for granted. It is more attractive than either forcing our views on others or becoming mired in multicultural complacency” (Fraenkel: 2015, xvi).

In his *Teaching Plato in Palestine – Philosophy in a Divided World*, the Canadian-Brazilian philosopher Carlos Fraenkel<sup>512</sup> contends that providing the foundation for a culture of debate is, thus, an important role of philosophy.

In the next and concluding chapter, answering the central research question, we will focus on establishing what are, to our understanding, the conditions to reconciliation in post-conflict societies, approaching possibilities of solutions that question the Western Balkans specificities: emergence of civic political leaderships and consolidation of the civic society sector; the role of media independence and social media to overcome hate speech (strengthening of criminal punishment against ‘hate speech’ is seen as the most fundamental factor that would allow a stringer and more effective reconciliation); political and economic development and integration in regional (reinforcing cooperation) and international spheres; true and reconciliation commissions as well as compensation of victims as fundamental pillars of transitional justice; the crucial youth employability; the de-nationalization of schoolbooks, community agreements and religious dialogue as paths to a sustainable peace and effective reconciliation.

---

<sup>512</sup> Fraenkel collected evidence from fieldwork grounded on philosophy workshops in divided communities or fighting for their statehood, like an university in east Jerusalem, Palestine; an Islamic university in Jakarta, the Indonesian capital; with the Hasidic community in New York; a school in Salvador, Brazil and the indigenous Mohwak community in North America. Rather than “replacing one system with another under the guidance of intellectuals with supposedly superior knowledge”, the culture of debate that Fraenkel proposes, besides bringing the practice of philosophy to peoples’ lives, “aims to provide to all citizens tools with which they can change the system on their own if they find fault with it upon careful examination” (2015: 187). He concludes his highly stimulating book by saying that “the idea of an open-ended culture of debate entails that what is right isn’t written in stone once and for all, but remains open to revision from one generation to the next”.

## **CHAPTER VII – CONCLUSIONS**

### **Modest Contributions to Reconciliation in Post-Conflict Societies**

The observation on the ground throughout the years, readings and interviews allow us a substantial degree of comprehension of the cases/countries under study in the current dissertation, enabling this author to provide comparisons and following the methodology chosen, the comparative method case-oriented. Under the research, as can be read in chapters III, IV and V, one has analyzed the process of European integration (which can not be dissociated from the general political and economic situation of each of the cases studied); the situation of minorities and the degree of respect they get from public authorities in each of the cases and the respect for human rights in general; the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, namely from the political power and the strength or weakness of the separation of powers; the prevalence of hate speech in these countries, the way it is fought in order to promote reconciliation between diverse ethnopolitical communities; the role of the civil society sector and the support it gets from public institutions, whether guaranteeing their freedom and independence, or contributing to their funding; the plurality and independence of media; the role of the church in easing or reinforcing the divide in multiethnic and multireligious communities, thus the role of religion in promoting or creating obstacles to reconciliation; the extent to which multiethnicity is embraced in the educational system, the degree of segregation and the equality in access and conditions it provides to the different ethnic communities.

The author felt important to acknowledge how the achievements and progress regarding these variables were defined in each of the countries/cases studied. According to his own interpretation and assumed subjectivity, and taking into account the observation on the ground, the unfolding of political and economic facts and events, interviews the author did with privileged sources, as well as the researcher's reading from the answers to the survey disseminated through the university students in the countries studied, the author proceeded to the elaboration of a gradual classification, in ascending order, as follows: regression (R), deadlock (D), slow progress (SP), efficient progress (EP), consolidated (C), as shown on Table 1.

Comparable variables in studied cases				Countries as cases/comparable units			
				Bosnia&H	Serbia	Kosovo	Croatia
Process of	European	Integration		D	EP	SP	C
Respect for Minorities and Human Rights				SP	SP	SP	SP
Rule of law and judiciary independence				SP	EP	D	C
Fighting hate speech and promoting reconciliation				D	SP	SP	SP
Role of the Civil Society sector				EP	SP	EP	EP
Media independence	and plurality			D	R	SP	SP
Role of the Church in	promoting reconciliation			EP	SP	SP	R
Multiethnicity and equality in the educational system				D	SP	D	SP
C=Consolidated							
EP = Efficient Progress							
SP = Slow progress							
D= Deadlock							
R= Regression							

Table1 – Progress in comparable variables.

From the table above, the researcher feels the need to sustain the classification above by acknowledging that in the variable of the European integration, the obvious classification of Croatia as consolidated (C), despite issues as the Eurozone, since Croatia is a Member State but does not use the Euro, like some other eight countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The plans of the country included the accession to Euro as soon as possible after accession<sup>513</sup>, which means meeting the criteria and, in addition, being part of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) for two years. The Euro zone crisis and the Croatian contracting economy have somehow delays the plans anticipated by the Croatian National Bank to join the euro two or three years after accession. At the time of writing, April, 2017, Croatia still uses the Kuna, although with the euro as its main reference.

As written in chapter IV, the Serbian accession process is moving steadily. There are some improvements in Chapters 23 and 24, which relate to the rule of law and human rights, but more complex is Chapter 35, which deals with the relation with Kosovo. The former autonomous province has the same problem in its own accession process, but lags behind in the process as a whole, since the negotiations for EU membership will only start once the country becomes an official candidate for membership, which implies the classification of SP. A major obstacle is, since the membership of a new state requires unanimity, the fact that Kosovo's unilaterally declaration of independence in 2008 was not recognised by five EU countries: Spain, Slovakia, Greece, Romania and Cyprus. Nevertheless, good news came to

<sup>513</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887324063304578525240431831674>.

Pristina as of 26 February 2016, the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between the EU and Kosovo was signed.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is classified as well with SP, despite the country's EU membership application was accepted<sup>514</sup>, on September 20, 2016, and the then Slovak EU presidency, welcomed Bosnias's progress in "implementing their reform agenda and invited them to continue their efforts to the benefit of their citizens. Still, there is a lot to do when it comes to issues as "socio-economic reforms, reforms in the area of rule of law and public administration". The fact is that all the member states of the EU, as published in official documents, "fully and firmly support Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU perspective as a future member of the EU, consistent with the Thessaloniki Declaration of 2003. In February 2016, Bosnia and Herzegovina formally applied for EU membership in Brussels. However, on EU level it is clear that this accession process will take years".<sup>515</sup> Moreover, the political and institutional deadlock resulted from the Dayton Paris Peace Accords and the lack of cooperation between the two entities of the country, are major obstacles to an efficient accession process. Bosnia is since September 2016 facing accession procedures that involve "a long process of assessment and of decision making in granting candidate status, followed by a new decision-making to open accession negotiation" (Gotev, 2016). Already in 2017, in EU parliament meeting in, Bosnia was urged to "overcome its ethnic and political divisions" and to remain united throughout the EU membership application evaluation process to prove it is a functioning state"<sup>516</sup>.

Regarding the respect for minorities and human rights, the classification under this research could not be different than placing each of the studied case as SP, since slow progress is the least we can say from complexities, setbacks and problems they face and all the unresolved issues, from equality in access to education and public employment, to language in official administration and housing, besides political rights; to sum up, minorities do not have an easy-going life when one gets to the countries studied in former Yugoslavia. One should not forget that these issues do impact on the European integration processes.

Another comparable variable is the rule of law and judiciary independence. The EU officially opened the negotiations about chapters 23 and 24 with Serbia, covering judiciary, fundamental rights, justice, freedom and security, in July 2016. The Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn stated: "It is recognition for Serbia and the progress the

---

<sup>514</sup> Gotev, Georgi (2016). Euractiv.com. Available at <https://www.euractiv.com/section/enlargement/news/eu-accepts-bosnia-and-herzegovinas-membership-application/>. Accessed on 15.04.2017.

<sup>515</sup> Available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/austria/resource/static/files/rule-of-law-bih-11.pdf>. Accessed on 15.04.2017.

<sup>516</sup> Culbertson, Alix (2017). Available at <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/761758/Albania-Bosnia-Herzegovina-European-Union-membership-democratic-values.Accession> on 15.04.2017.

country had made. Serbia, its administration and the society, have done a lot of work on this, thereby demonstrating that they have undertaken to carry out credible reforms towards the modernization of the country and for the overall good of the citizens. The process has the power to transform and change whole society.”<sup>517</sup> Under the current research, we place Serbia with EP (Efficient Progress) on this variable. But there is work to be done. These EU chapters are opened at an early stage of the membership process and they are the last to be closed, since they involve deep transformations in different areas as well as continuous assessment of the undertaken reforms. And, as much as of everything else, this variable requires a strong and committed political will to reforming and granting the trust of the citizens in those reforms, since the results may not be felt on a short term period. That is precisely a problem very much felt in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SP, Slow Progress), the lack of trust of the citizens in the country’s institutions and specially in the ruling elites capacity of solving problems; in fact, the functioning of the judiciary remains a serious problem regarding its independence from governments which lack transparency and own distorted visions from what means the rule of law. The case of Croatia is different. As an EU Member, the country has gone through major transformations during its accession process and in the present, the situation of independence and impartiality of the judiciary is far better than in the past, thus being placed with “C” (consolidated), but still poses some challenges. As a program organized by the Croatian Association of Judges, the University of Zadar, the US Embassy and the Prague headquartered CEELI (Central and Eastern European Law Initiative) Institute argued, Croatia needs some debate on “whether national judges are sufficiently informed on the ECHR case-law developments; the complexity of questions related to the direct adjudication of human rights issues in national judicial practice; and the extent to which there is harmony of the ‘European constitutional order’ in domestic contexts”<sup>518</sup>.

Focusing on fighting hate speech and promoting reconciliation, the current research acknowledges that, from what was argued in previous chapters, no country studied is in a position to be granted a positive classification, thus here classified as SP (Slow Progress), with Bosnia (‘D’, deadlock) being the most complex case and facing the most serious obstacles to promoting reconciliation (the Two Schools Under One Roof in the Federation is just one of many examples). Even Croatia, a EU country, faces considerable challenges regarding these issues and the comparison with Serbia and Kosovo may not be rather favorable, when one considers what has happened in Croatia with the use of cyrilic alphabet and Serbian language in minorities populated areas, in the past few years.

When the variable considered is the role of the CSO, the civil society sector,

---

<sup>517</sup> <http://serbianmonitor.com/en/featured/30515/rule-of-law-and-human-rights-serbia-interview-with-nicolas-bizel-eu-delegation/>. Accession on 15.04.2017.

<sup>518</sup> Published on 29.11.2016. Available at <http://ceeliinstitute.org/tag/croatia/> Accessed on 17.04.2017.

improvements are rather positive in Bosnia, Kosovo and Croatia (all of them with an EP classification), with Serbia lagging behind (SP, Slow Progress), mostly due to the criticism regarding the relation between public institutions and civil society organizations, namely the politization of the latter and political interference as well as political or even legal obstacles to external funding. As mentioned in chapter IV (4.6), “everything in this sector still excessively depends on the government and on the political sphere”. One should not forget, however, that due to the funding sourced from EU integration in the case of Croatia and the investment made in the civil society sector in the case of Bosnia and Kosovo due to the international missions in post-conflict situations, Serbia stays as the only studied country whose CSO sector has not been granted with major investments from the international community.

Media independence is still a major problem throughout the region as the reader can infer from the analysis on chapter four, with SP in Croatia and Kosovo, D in Bosnia (as the Freedom House 2016 report argues, “the constitution and the human rights annex to the Dayton Accords provide for freedom of the press, but this right is not always respected in practice. While a large number of independent broadcast and print outlets operate, they tend to appeal to narrow ethnic audiences, and most neglect substantive or investigative reporting.”) and R (Regression) in Serbia (“the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), a regional media organization partly funded by foreign grants, came under attack by Prime Minister Vučić and other officials on several occasions in 2015 after it published reports critical of the government. There were a number of instances in which journalists were physically attacked in 2015. Most such attacks go unprosecuted. Self-censorship is a worsening phenomenon that journalists attribute not only to harassment that can follow critical or investigative reporting, but also to economic pressures, such as the risk of losing advertising contracts, in connection with such reports. While there is no official censorship in Serbia, media outlets are thought to be aligned with specific political parties, and the public broadcaster Radio Television of Serbia remains subject to strong government influence.”, as it is claimed in the same report<sup>519</sup>).

The main reasons to these, broadly speaking, negative classifications are related to lack of freedom and freedom violations that have been occurring on a very regular basis. Florian Bieber and Marko Kmezić, in a 2015 report, argue that “the region is brewing with incidents of media freedom violations, which bring under attack not just the basic right to freedom of expression, but also the state of democracy in the region”<sup>520</sup>. The Freedom House 2015 report<sup>521</sup>, as well as Reporters without Borders World Press Freedom Index also so trace

---

<sup>519</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2016>. Accessed on 31.03.2017.

<sup>520</sup> Published in August 2015. <http://www.biepag.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/BIEPAG-Media-Freedom-in-the-Western-Balkans.pdf>. Accessed on 17.01.2017.

<sup>521</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2015#.WaaRuVWGM7Y>. Accessed on 17.01.2017.

down some disappointed conclusions about the media sector in the region. Dunja Mijatović, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, also quoted in the above mentioned report authored by Bieber and Kmezić, argues that the state of the media freedom in the Balkan is worse now than in the 1990s, during the Yugoslav disintegration wars. The findings from our survey point in the same direction, since, as argued in chapter V, “not even half of the respondents evaluate the quality of the media as positive (39,77%)”<sup>522</sup>.

The role of the churches and religion, when related to post-conflict societies and promote reconciliation, has been object of analysis in 4.8 and 4.9 sections, adding to the answers linked to this issue in our survey (“a decline in the importance of religion in the construction of national identity as there is a substantial majority of respondents, around 63.6%, who attribute this dimension with little or no importance.”), enabled the researcher to the elaborate classification, as above: slow progress (SP) in the cases of Bosnia, Serbia and Kosovo and regression (R) in the case of Croatia.

Which conditions require fulfilling in order to achieve reconciliation in the Former Yugoslav republics or post-Yugoslav space? The introduction to this dissertation states that this not only constituted the central research question but also the thread guiding the research. There was also mention of a crucial complementary question, derived from the first: Is interethnic reconciliation actually possible in the former Yugoslavia?

From all the readings, the people interviewed and quoted in the text and those many who, for reasons of space and not to lack of relevance and importance of their testimonies, are not quoted here – the annexes contain a list of the interviewees -, from the survey completed by over 270 students throughout the past couple of years in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, from the author’s observation in crucial – and not so crucial – moments of the social and political life of the cases studied, this thesis holds the grounded conviction that interethnic reconciliation is possible in the former Yugoslavia. Furthermore, the author also understands how a widely diffused and published perception of the conflicts in the 1990s as mere ethnic disputes has since exacerbated differences between local communities and peoples, underestimating the role played by particular interests and power struggles with deep impacts on the lives of citizens.

Arriving at the concluding section of this text, the present thesis argues that whenever and wherever societies attain certain social, political and economic conditions, reconciliation not only becomes possible but indeed probable. At the same time, this author refutes the inevitability of ethnic wars when understood as a consequence of alleged idiosyncratic qualities or characteristics or some innate identity of the communities involved, as was so

---

<sup>522</sup> <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>. Accessed on 17.01.2017.



commonly alleged about the Balkans in general and the former Yugoslavia in particular. But what are, after all, the conditions for achieving reconciliation in post-conflict societies?

As Refik Hodzic declared in chapter four, “operationalizing and measuring a concept as fluid as ‘reconciliation’ is very difficult to do with the current social scientific toolkit”. In fact, in keeping with the meaning adopted by projects such as the Joint History Project, that sees reconciliation, as quoted from Dana Johnson, as “in the practical terms of managing differences”, we may come to perceive it more theoretically as “patterns of conditions nurtured in order to allow social harmony in the daily life of multi-ethnic societies” (2011: 430).

How can practices on the ground help in promoting reconciliation processes? What are the perceptions and expectations of young people, in particular university students, regarding those processes? These are the questions answered by this current and concluding chapter.

In the afore mentioned interview with the author, scholar Severine Autesserre points out examples such as “building a market in the community that can be shared by people as human beings and not as enemies” but insists on the fact that progress can be better achieved if there are not so many mistakes committed by people linked to the international missions on the ground: “when we’re disrespecting someone the message you’re sending is that it is ok to do so”, when it should be exactly the opposite. Following Mary B. Anderson in *Do No Harm* (1999), arguing that the micro level of warfare relates to the macro level and that when people in post-conflict environments are not respected, the message being sent is that you do not need to respect others, so you are not promoting reconciliation; Autesserre concludes by saying that “it is important to promote activities such as organizing conferences, but more important is the way you do it”.

Bearing in mind this dissertation’s author refusal to accept the inevitability of ethnic wars as a consequence of alleged idiosyncratic qualities or characteristics or some innate identity of the communities and nations of the Balkans in general and the former Yugoslavia in particular, one would firstly point to the long periods of peace and mutual understanding that these nations have lived through, for instance, between 1948 and 1989, or more recently, since 1999 (when overlooking relatively minor incidents, namely in Kosovo, and the several months conflict between pro-Albanian separatists and Macedonian forces in 2001).

Media editorial independence, both from the political as well as from the economic powers in society, constitutes a fundamental value for journalism, not only for investigative reporting but also for democratic citizenship. But the focus must go beyond media independence.

Of the students who responded to this dissertation’s survey, not even half of them evaluate the quality of the media as positive (39.77%; whereas 26.6% rank the media as good,

then very good according to 9.85% and excellent for 3.28%), though surprisingly there are fewer those who evaluate the media negatively (35.39%, whereas it is bad for 21.53% and very bad for 13.86%). For almost one in four of respondents (23.7%) the quality of the media proves neither good nor bad. When questioned about the media quality regarding its nationalistic tone and contents, the respondents returned what this author also understands as a surprising result, as the excessive of nationalistic tone and content in the mainstream media in the former Yugoslavia is far too evident. Thus, it was to the author's surprise that university students find it either essentially appropriate (36.86%) or even not sufficient (24%). Only one out of four (25.18%) deemed the tone and contents as excessive.

Projects such as the regional TV show "Vicinity", a joint media project between the European Fund for the Balkans and the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE), represents one good example of just what might be done to promote reconciliation and democratic citizenship. The show received a special mention award in the Media category at the European Citizenship Awards 2016 for its "commitment and involvement in promoting an active citizenship and a vision of Europe based on solidarity and inclusiveness". It is also a rare example of a regional TV-product which is broadcasted in the Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian-speaking countries of Southeast Europe and beyond it and because of that it has received a big exposure and wide audience". When the students surveyed under this research were asked which factors would allow for stronger and more effective reconciliation among the countries and the peoples of the former Yugoslavia, the strengthening of criminal punishment of 'hate speech' stands out as the most appreciated factor (3.12 on a 1-5 scale).

The refugee crisis, increasing securitization and border controls in some European countries, not only but particularly from the Visegrad group, has shifted the agenda and priorities in relation to the region that some, as Judy Dempsey in her text for the Carnegie website, see as Europe's backyard. Clearly, more than twenty years after the end of the war in Bosnia and after more than sixteen since the war in Kosovo, international missions are being downsized and reshuffled; local authorities, organizations and representatives are increasingly assuming their responsibilities as otherwise donors may be compelled to rethink their role in the region; and there is the blow to enlargement policies in the EU following the decision by the UK to leave the club of 28 countries.

BiH, Kosovo and Serbia, despite ongoing processes, are aware that full accession has now become a harder task. Important to our reflection is trying to acknowledge the impact these latest developments may play in the region, and specifically in the cases studied and their civic society sectors. These sectors may have more difficulties in advancing programs for democratic reforms and development of the fragile institutions and governance of their countries since even EU countries are tending to shift the focus towards the need for stability

in order to keep problems as far away from their own borders as they can.

For a long period, the EU has opted for short-term measures in the Balkans rather than mid and long-term strategies that would better help consolidate democratic changes and policy reforms. Now, with the emphasis on the stability of its external borders, the EU, is dealing with political figures who, if not moved by the same nationalist goals of the generation who dragged Yugoslavia down into war, still do not also represent the emergence of civic political leaderships that the region so needs and that this author personally understands as a fundamental step to promoting reconciliation, besides - and because of - social development. As Dimitrijevic told this author back in 1999, “Our problem is a problem of elites, not that much a problem of society. The population in its professional and private lives, follows the same values as people in western European countries: car, house, job, holidays in Italy or Greece; this is not Iran of collective property. Our society is European, the system is medieval and depends from the elite, so we need to change the elite”.

The need of the emergence of civic political leaderships is of major importance in this region. Young, democratic and reformist leaders, who can distance themselves – in words and acts – from the nationalist stands that have so much defined politics in the Western Balkans in a recent past. Leaders that do not see NGOs and the CSS in general as foreign agents or traitors that need to be reined, leaders that value accountability and are willing to be scrutinized beyond the electoral moments, instead of leaders acting with impunity and based on the control of the press. People that focus on transparency and on fostering structural changes to help improving the living conditions of the citizens, regardless ethnic background, religious, gender or any other distinctive categories. As Sanela S., psycho-therapist, formerly working with OSCE and USAID, would tell the author, in Sarajevo, back in 2005: “reconciliation is possible but these parties (SDA, SDS, HDZ) are manipulating people using religion as an instrument for such manipulation. But even during the war people communicated with each other, they did business, but there was always manipulation from the top. As long as we have the same people, the same three nationalist parties at the top, we can not expect a better future”. To achieve such a transformation on the political elites is not an easy task. Even from a generational point of view, the renewal of the political class and system in these countries was only partial. Due to the impact they played to unfold national political projects, if one concentrates attention on the main political personalities and, taking into account the turning point that could/should have been the year 2000 when the Milošević regime was thrown out in Belgrade, we arrive at the following conclusions: Aleksandar Vučić was then, in fact, a very young man, but at the time of being ousted from the Serbian government as Minister of Information in the late Milošević’s government (1998-2000), years after joining the Serbian Radical Party (SRS) in 1993, wartime in Bosnia.

The current Serbian president, Tomislav Nikolic, was in the federal government of Slobodan Milošević in 2000. He had served as the Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia from 1998 to 1999 and was Deputy Prime Minister of FR Yugoslavia in the coalition government (SPS+SRS+JUL) from 1999 to 2000.

In Kosovo, the first Prime Minister in 2000 was Hasim Thaçi, "Gjarpëri" - The Snake, now President of a country in search of global recognition. He was one of the top KLA commanders who, in July 1997, were tried *in absentia* and convicted by the District Court in Pristina for terrorism association and sentenced to 10 years in prison, a verdict upheld by the Supreme Court of Serbia on 12 March 1999. Two years later, after launching the rebellion against Serbian forces in his hometown region, the Drenica valley, he was participating in the Rambouillet negotiations as leader of the Kosovar Albanian team. He named himself Prime Minister within a provisional government and his name has been involved – without trials or concrete proofs insofar and mainly by Serbia based media – in criminal activities such as ordering the assassination of leaders of rival armed factions in the late 1990s, financing KLA activities by trafficking illegal drugs into western Europe, extorting money from businessmen under the guise of "taxes" for his self-appointed government.

In BiH, Bakir Izetbegovic, son of the late Alija Izetbegovic, the founding father of Bosnian independence in 1992, has been the Bosniak member of the tripartite presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2010, as well as president of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA). By 2000, four years after the DPA in Bosnia, he was entering politics, as deputy head of the SDA party Caucus in the Assembly of the Sarajevo Canton. The other members of the tripartite presidency, the Bosnian Croat Željko Komšić was born in Sarajevo to a Bosnian Croat and Bosnian Serb mother, killed by a sniper during the siege of Sarajevo, served in the BiH army during the war and received the Golden Lily — the highest military decoration awarded by the Bosnian-Herzegovinian government. In 2000, he was elected the head of the municipal government of Novo Sarajevo, a highly populous part of the Bosnian capital. He often gets considered as one of the most popular politicians in Bosnia regardless of ethnicity. In fact, even in the survey under this dissertation, Željko Komšić emerges as the most consensual of the current crop of politicians. The Serb member of the Bosnian presidency, as of writing, Mladen Ivanić, was president of the center-right Bosnian Serb Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) from 1999 to 2015.

In Croatia, the current head of state, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, elected with the support of her party, the HDZ, is the first female Croatian President and by 2000, had not yet entered into politics as she was then obtaining her master's degree in international relations from the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Zagreb and before attending the George Washington University as a Fulbright scholar. She was elected to the Croatian

Parliament in the 2003 elections. She would be the first woman in Europe to defeat an incumbent President (Ivo Josipovic, in January 2015).

Even in those cases where there appears to be a generational renewal in the top political leadership, from the political approach to some crucial issues by the ruling elites and their political action, the studied countries are still in need of a stronger commitment to civic and democratic values, respect for the freedom of the press, fostering a sustainable civil society sector with respect for minorities rights. The commitment to civic identity values may be a step forward. In Pristina, Kosovo, interviewed by the author, friend and OSCE official Senad Sabovic, once said: “The Balkans in general has never really strongly developed this concept of civic identity and the wars of the 1990s didn’t really help to an allegiance to your country, regardless of your ethnicity. What we saw in Bosnia doesn’t help, what we’re seeing in Kosovo (conversation in 2007) doesn’t help. All in all I am confident to say that I am Kosovar, civically speaking, that I am citizen of Kosovo, but this is my case individually speaking. I think there is still work to be done to develop this concept of civic identity, which doesn’t have to be mutually exclusive, that if a Serb calls himself a Kosovar he stops being a Serb; actually, the civic identity should not, in any way, diminish the ethnic identity”. The point or challenge has always been how to make those two forms of identity live harmoniously together.

When questioned about the quality of the political class in their countries, the respondents to the survey under this dissertation awarded very poor evaluations. 66% reported negative opinions (36% bad; 30% awful) about the political class that is neither good nor bad to less than one out of four (23,72%). Only 8.75% hold positive opinions but there were no answers evaluating the political class of the respective country as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’.

It is common sense to say that people get the politicians they deserve. After all, we elect them. In the summer of 2016, in the local elections in Bosnia, according to Balkan Insight, “five people who were convicted of war crimes, corruption, kidnapping and abuse of office have been elected as mayors”<sup>523</sup>. Among the elected, there is the regionally very well known Fikret Abdic, “who was jailed for 15 years for committing war crimes during the 1992-95 conflict, and will now be the mayor of Velika Kladusa for the next four years” (ibid). In wartime, he fought against Bosniaks, cooperating with Serb and Croat forces in Bosnia and Croatia. War crimes were committed at the prison camps run or controlled by Abdic in the Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia, which held, at some points, over 5,000 prisoners.

Confronted with the election of people such as Abdic, Murat Tahirovic, of the Association of Victims and Witnesses of Genocide said it was a shame that he could have run

---

<sup>523</sup>Published on 04.10.2016. <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-elects-war-criminal-corrupt-officials-as-mayors-10-04-2016>. Accessed on 15.01.2017.

for office in the first place: “For BiH itself, the fact that a person like Abdic has won an election means nothing, but the fact that we had elections won by a person like him demonstrates that only nationalism can win in BiH,” said Tahirovic (ibid). The fact is that Bosnia’s electoral law allows people who have been convicted to run for office, except when they have been charged by the ICTY. As Balkan Insight reports, “besides the five candidates who were convicted under second-instance verdicts, 14 more candidates, who were either accused of or under investigation for various crimes, won mandates in Sunday’s municipal polls”.

Nevertheless, the recent local elections in BiH produced what external eyes could simply see as a move forward in overcoming ethnic hatred and actually a step towards achieving reconciliation: a Serb candidate was elected mayor of the traumatized Bosnian city of Srebrenica, defeating the Bosniak Camil Durakovic incumbent mayor of the city “which saw more than 7,000 of its Bosniak residents massacred by Serb forces in 1995 and has remained a political flashpoint ever since”. However, in fact, Mladen Grujicic, president of a Bosnian Serb victims’ group called “the Organisation of Families of the Captured, Killed Fighters and Missing Civilians of Srebrenica”, was backed by all Serb parties, whilst the former mayor Duraković had the support of all pro-Bosniak parties. This means that the ethnic divide persists as the reaction of Munira Subasic, the president of the Mothers of Srebrenica and Zepa Enclaves association, testifies: “Even if Grujicic wins, he will never be my mayor,” she told BIRN. In her opinion, that cannot happen as the elected mayor “denies the crime of genocide. He denies the killing of children. His entire campaign has been based on nationalist rhetoric and denial”. Nevertheless, Grujičić’s statements after victory to TV N1 were of pacification and reconciliation, saying “he respects all victims of war and insisted that Serbs and Bosniaks can live in peace in Srebrenica” (ibid.), adding that “Serbs and Bosniaks respect each other extraordinarily and they look to the future together”. Easing predictable tensions, “Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic said meanwhile that the new leadership in Srebrenica should continue to commemorate the crimes committed by Serb forces”. In his words, “the crime happened and the fact that a Serb will run the municipal administration does not mean that we in Serbia will forget what happened in the war”.

On the same night of 3rd October, the President of Republika Srpska and leader of the SNSD Milorad Dodik, declaring victory in the majority of RS’s municipalities, “celebrated the results with a microphone in his hand, performing a folk song with the following lines: "Ne može nam niko ništa jači smo od sudbine, mogu samo da nas mrze oni što nas ne vole" [No one can touch us, we are stronger than the faith, those who don’t like us can only hate us]”.

What happened in the local elections in Srebrenica does not alone represent any shift in the popular mindset or the emergence of the civic political leaderships the region so much

needs. That will take time, of course, and it will take, above all, sustainable and vigorous investment in education and training and qualifying a new generation of public officials endowed with civic values, willing to work across ethnic lines, promoting interethnic professional relationships, empowering minorities in each community, objecting to the use of hate speech in public administration, especially in the educational system, as well as in the media and in crucial areas for youth, such as sports and popular culture<sup>524</sup>.

Political and economic integration in regional and international spheres. A regional trade bloc or even a political union between the countries of the former Yugoslavia, with the addition of Albania, might constitute, from our perspective, an alternative to the EU integration project should the Enlargement policies get definitively removed from the table as early reactions to the British Brexit referendum might suggest. In fact, regional cooperation already exists but across different forums that urgently require strengthening as there is acknowledgment even among politicians of the precarious nature of regional stability: “The tensions that have returned to the Western Balkans are at the most dangerous level since the end of the wars of the 1990s. Serbian PM Aleksandar Vucic told Italian *La Repubblica*, noting that he had been warning German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Italian PM Matteo Renzi and other European officials of this for months”. In a remark directed to Zagreb, the Serbian Prime Minister said that “the tensions are provoked by all those who speak in favor of EU integration and then wait for any opportunity to set traps for their neighbours”. Furthermore, the Bosnians from both entities were not spared from Vucic’s criticism: “The Bosnian Serbs say they are pro-EU while speaking the worst about the Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims), who say 'we are big, the Bosnian Serbs are stupid' (...) Let us stop those hostilities in the name of the future - there is more hatred among us than there was 21 years ago”.

The EP rapporteur for Serbia, David McAllister, is optimistic that “Croatia's next PM and Serbian PM Aleksandar Vucic will follow a policy of good-neighborly relations”, while also hoping that both “will engage with reconciliation in the region” as the news agency Tanjug reported. In McAllister’s words: “To have sustainable, long-lasting stability, we need a policy of good-neighborly relations and reconciliation in all countries of the Western Balkans and I would always ask responsible politicians from whatever country, from whatever political party, to refrain from nationalistic attitudes”.

Serbia is expected to open all chapters in the EU accession process by 2018, and the chapter on education, culture and youth is one of those due to be opened by the end of 2016. “Europe is waiting for Serbia”, at least in Warsaw as went the words from Polish Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski on a visit to Belgrade in October 2016. However, objections

---

<sup>524</sup> Ivan Vejvoda: “Responsible leadership is needed at the state level, but also in the families, in the communities, in the media, in the sports arena”. Interview with the author, Belgrade, June 2013.

very much still lie in the way. First of all, the lack of understanding on the definitive status of Kosovo.

The problem for Serbia and other EU candidates is that “the EU is going through the same process as the former Yugoslavia”. This claim comes from professor Florian Bieber from the University of Graz. The US Politico.com website coined the term Eugoslavia to describe the EU’s current crisis and internal divisions. Nevertheless, Bieber also recalls that “the EU does not have its Milošević. Without such a person or a party that uses nationalism and escalated relations, there is less likelihood of disintegration”. But one could also argue that the EU has its Viktor Orban and the difference may not be so big after all.

Political, economic and security factors, which necessarily need a boost to regional cooperation in the western Balkans, are significantly and mutually interlinked: regional stability and security are key factors for economic development<sup>525</sup>, which, in turn, fosters stability and security in the region.

Western Balkan countries in general, and specifically those on which this dissertation has been focusing (Croatia, BiH, Serbia, Kosovo) cannot afford to miss the opportunity for integration and cooperation in wider spaces than their national borders, especially in a moment when “Southeast European countries are registering higher growth and a decline of high unemployment rates”, the World Bank has said. “Serbia, as the largest economy in the region, has made the biggest contribution to this trend”, according to the Western Balkans Country Director for Southeast Europe, Ellen Goldstein.

Regional cooperation, and specifically political dialogue in the region, is therefore a key factor for stability but may also serve as a catalyst for reconciliation and good political relations between neighboring states and nations; thus, a good way of helping overcome nationalism and intolerance and nurturing mutual understanding.

What is the path to development? Beyond deepening the regional ties, development in the Western Balkans must be focused on - and the results of the survey under this research are there as evidence in pointing to ‘Employment’ as the single biggest concern of respondents – establishing the conditions to boost youth employability in order to stop the brain-drain that has tended to turn into a structural feature of the Western Balkan economies. As the author heard from Valentina, a law student, in Zagreb 2013, a couple of months before the Croatian EU integration, which meant “more opportunities to study and work in other countries”. Her friend Barbara wants the same thing: “Go anywhere. Here we do not have opportunities to work and demonstrate what we are, maybe in another place we can do it better”, she says.

---

<sup>525</sup> Economic development, since “the entire region is in economic distress”, in the words of the researcher and Balkanist Tanya L. Domi, from The Harriman Institute, at the University of Columbia, in New York, “is the Achilles heel” (from a roundtable, in May 2015).



Greater transparency, accountability, decentralization in public administration and self-government, as well as in the branches of the local judiciary, also account for steps that simply must be taken to develop these societies.

Setting up truth and reconciliation commissions. No country in the world, from South Sudan to Norway, is exempt from problems, internal contradictions and inequalities and, on the positive side, virtues, advantages and distinctive features. Countries can set good examples for each other. South Africa does, in fact, provide a good example when one talks about truth and reconciliation commissions.

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was set up by the Government of National Unity led by Nelson Mandela “to help deal with what happened under apartheid. The conflict during this period resulted in violence and human rights abuses from all sides. No section of society escaped these abuses. The TRC was based on the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, No 34 of 1995.” The regime known as Apartheid, based on racial distinction, ethnic violence and segregation and discrimination of non-white and non-Afrikaaner population, had left deep marks on South African society.

According to Priscilla Hayner (2011: 11-12), the author of *Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions* (Routledge), “a truth commission is focused on the past, rather than ongoing events; investigates a pattern of events that took place over a period of time; engages directly and broadly with the affected population, gathering information on their experiences; is a temporary body, with the aim of concluding with a final report; and is officially authorized or empowered by the state under review”.

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SA-TRC) became a benchmark in transitional justice. There is profound interest in reading its conclusions dispelling the “myth that things can be done with magic dust, to bring people together and then they just start working together. There are stages, actually, in reconciliation.” The Commission chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu acknowledged that reconciliation “does not come easily. It requires persistence. It takes time; (...) is based on respect for our common humanity; (...) involves a form of restorative justice which does not seek revenge, nor does it seek impunity. In restoring the perpetrator to society, a milieu needs to emerge within which he or she may contribute to the building of democracy, a culture of human rights and political stability”. The Commission concluded that the “full disclosure of truth and an understanding of why violations took place encourage forgiveness”, as well as the “readiness to accept responsibility for past human rights violations”. As many years ago, in 2000, Novi Sad, Serbia, the author was told by Djana Milosevic, actress and Infant theatre festival director, “our collective first effort should be making History transparent. We have the right to know

what happened. People must know what certain government did, what the army did, people have the right to acknowledge so that they can forgive” (Alexandre, 2002: 186).

Reconciliation, concluded the SA-TRC, does not “wipe away the memories of the past. Indeed, it is motivated by a form of memory that stresses the need to remember without debilitating pain, bitterness, revenge, fear or guilt. It understands the vital importance of learning from and redressing past violations for the sake of our shared present and our children’s future. Reconciliation does not necessarily involve forgiveness. It does involve a minimum willingness to co-exist and work for the peaceful handling of continuing differences”. And the latter is a point of extreme importance and should be taken into account in each and every reconciliation process, whether there is a commission or not: the peaceful handling of continuing differences. In the last two points of the conclusions chapter, the report submitted in July 1995 to President Mandela, states that reconciliation requires that all people (South Africans, in this case) “accept moral and political responsibility for nurturing a culture of human rights and democracy within which political and socio-economic conflicts are addressed both seriously and in a non-violent manner”; besides, it requires a “commitment especially by those who have benefited and continue to benefit from past discrimination, to the transformation of unjust inequalities and dehumanising poverty”. The latter also conveys a crucial factor when there is the need for reconstructing the bonds of a society fractured by conflicts or segregation.

Healing the wounds of the past, giving dignity to victims, it can be said that the SA-TRC allowed for the emergence of a post-apartheid “rainbow nation” led by Nelson Mandela. Since then, although the SA-TRC was not the first but in fact a very symbolic case of success, commissions of truth and reconciliation have been spreading throughout the world. More than twenty were established in the two decades following the report of the Commission led by Desmond Tutu in addition to countries such as Chile or Nepal where new commissions continued the work that the respective governments felt that previous commissions had not carried out in terms of fully accounting for the past. Even if originally established in developing countries, the example also nurtured the creation of these commissions in the most advanced and developed countries, such as Germany and Canada. The first focusing on human rights violations in the former East Germany, the latter on the relations and legacies of Indian residential schools and indigenous-settler relations.

In the former Yugoslavia, there was a short-lived Commission of Truth and Reconciliation, set up by the then federal President Vojislav Kostunica in March 2001, but it never reported as the country that founded it ceased to exist. The mandate was for three years to culminate in a report with the scope of its mandate the causes of conflicts in the territories of the Former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is worthwhile remembering that at the time, former president Slobodan Milošević was on trial at The Hague on war crimes, crimes against

humanity and genocide. Having a former head of state standing trial at an international court somehow made it more difficult for the Commission to fulfil its objective of full cooperation with the ICTY.

In early 2003, Yugoslavia formally dissolved and became the states of Serbia and Montenegro. This effectively ended the Commission as it was relying on a mandate from the president of Yugoslavia, an office that no longer existed. From what is known, the Commission never conducted interviews or hearings and never published any kind of report. The author of the research understands that there was a lack of political will; otherwise the mandate of Kostunica's commission could have been transferred to the new state, even if divided into two: one for Serbia and the other for Montenegro should there not have been any agreement on a joint new commission to disclose truth and reconciliation in these now former Yugoslav territories.

Gentian Zyberi (2012: 11-12)<sup>526</sup>, in "The Transitional Justice Process in the Former Yugoslavia: Long Transition, Yet Not Enough Justice", lists the role of organizations promoting the creation of the TRC in the former Yugoslavia, such as the Coalition for a Regional Truth and Reconciliation Commission, RECOM (or REKOM), "a network of NGOs, associations, and individuals". This Commission, still very valid, "would be tasked with establishing the facts about all victims of war crimes and other serious human rights violations committed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia in the period from 1991 to 2001".

It is our understanding that RECOM, authoring a narrative provided by the civil society of the whole region, might be more easily accepted either than the accounts of wartime produced by states on patriotic and nationalist bases or via the lens of external actors, such as the ICTY.

The initiative was backed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in January 2011 and, as already stated in this dissertation, by some governments and heads of states. The proposed statute of RECOM included "recommending measures to help prevent the recurrence of human rights abuses and to ensure reparations to the victims". The financing of such mechanism, the time factor – as Zyberi (2012: 12) claims, in first place, that "the memory of many witnesses has generally faded and some of them are no longer amongst us; second, under the current Statute RECOM would operate for a period of three years, which is a very limited time frame for accomplishing its wide-ranging objectives" -, and the lack of cooperation from state authorities were the main obstacles to RECOM seeing the light of its existence more fruitfully. By the end of 2014, "more than 580,000 people from all over the

---

<sup>526</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256020741\\_The\\_Transitional\\_Justice\\_Process\\_in\\_the\\_Former\\_Yugoslavia\\_Long\\_Transition\\_Yet\\_Not\\_Enough\\_Justice](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256020741_The_Transitional_Justice_Process_in_the_Former_Yugoslavia_Long_Transition_Yet_Not_Enough_Justice). Accessed in 22.10.2016.

former Yugoslavia supported the initiative for the establishment of RECOM with their signatures” (ibid.).

Its purposes still remains as valid as necessary to the process of reconciliation in the countries of former Yugoslavia, “by increasing mutual understanding of past events and giving more attention to victims and missing persons” (2012: 14). The author agrees with Zyberi as regards how the TRC might, in this way, prove far more effective than the ICTY itself.

In the current research, according to our survey of university students from Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia and Kosovo, when asked about the factors that would allow for more effective reconciliation among countries and peoples from the former Yugoslavia, the “Creation of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions” was ranked at 2.71 on a 1-5 scale, but nevertheless considered less important than factors such as the aforementioned strengthening of criminal punishment against ‘hate speech’ (3.12), the trial and conviction of war criminals (2.86), the return of properties to their pre-war owners (2.79).

The TRC may have the power of challenging previous and dominant narratives or versions of past events, and hence the reason they gain no sympathy from state authorities except in their capacity to absorb all the lack of political will available in order not to implement them. However, examples such as those from Guatemala, where the Historical Clarification Commission corrected the former military government's version of the past, and The Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor, which aimed to foster a different narrative to that prevalent under Indonesian occupation from 1975 to 1999, together reaffirm the validity of the TRC.

Despite the importance this researcher attributes to the TRC, one should nevertheless bear in mind certain limitations that this model may display, especially when failing to achieve their purposes and ending up producing only selective justice or nurturing still further impunity and, thus, correspondingly further traumatising victims.

In *Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions*, Priscilla B. Hayner (2010), writes that at transitional moments, “a state and its people stand at a crossroads. What should be done with a recent history full of victims, perpetrators, secretly buried bodies and official denial? Should this past be exhumed, preserved, acknowledged, and apologized for? How can a nation of enemies be reunited, former opponents reconciled?”<sup>527</sup> Transitional justice, allowing victims to learn about and know the truth, seeing perpetrators punished and receiving financial reparations, recognizes the rights of victims, promotes civic values and is, therefore, a powerful tool for strengthening the democratic values of a society. However, states should never forget that transitional

---

<sup>527</sup> See also Kritz, Neil J. (1995), *Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes*, Volume 1, US Institute of Peace Press.

justice will not get completed if there are no positive impacts on the need to reform those institutions that proved unable to prevent crimes and abuses or even were actually responsible for them happening.

A transitional justice process must include measures that pave the way for reinforcing economic and social justice as the lack of economic and social justice – which this author considers a malign, though modern, form of structural violence - that often nurtures the ground for the eruption of conflicts that lead to crimes and mass violations of human rights and the very need for transitional justice in post-conflict contexts. To sum up, it is necessary to address the structural causes of the social discontent and tensions that led to conflicts. Compensation for victims is one, but far from the whole, part of this story of achieving economic justice, which can happen within, but desirably also across borders. Following Barkan, “the choice should always focus on the individuals and alleviate suffering before fighting for political principles”.

The International Center for Transitional Justice is an international non-profit organization specializing in the field of transitional justice. From their knowledge, we thus infer that reparation initiatives may take multiple forms, from the most common “financial compensation to individuals or groups; guarantees of non-repetition; social services such as healthcare or education; and symbolic measures such as formal apologies or public commemorations”; for instance when former Serbian president Boris Tadić went to Srebrenica and apologized in the name of the Serb people for the crimes committed there. Some other non-Balkan examples include: “from 1996 to 2008, the Chilean government paid more than \$1.6 billion in pensions to certain victims of the Pinochet regime, and established a specialized health care program for survivors of violations. These were accompanied by an official apology from the President. The reparations can happen in places where there was a genocide: “the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia ordered symbolic and collective reparations in the court’s first conviction for crimes against humanity. The court ordered that the names of victims of a notorious prison be listed in the Court’s website, as well as the apologies issued by the convicted person”. Nevertheless, sometimes reparations are understood as a way of buying the victims’ silence. The ICTJ acknowledges - correctly, in our view - that establishing a link between reparations and “other forms of recognition, justice and guarantees of non-repetition—as recommended by the United Nations Basic Principles on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation—can also contribute to their effectiveness”.

Youth employability. This is an outstanding but crucial issue: 57.5% youth unemployment rate (among 15-24 year olds) in BiH, a cause of turmoil in 2014, 49.5% in Serbia (with no dissociated data from Kosovo) and 45.9% in Croatia.

When respondents in a simple – and with the substantial aforementioned limitations –

survey tell us that their positive opinions towards the EU still outweigh the negative and that 60% have an overall positive opinion about their countries joining the EU but, on the other hand, leaving the country is a feasible reality to over two thirds of respondents, it should make states think about the conditions they are creating – or the lack of them – to prevent the most qualified of their youth from emigrating, deepening and reinforcing the brain-drain that has become one of the region’s most common features.

Moreover, when asked to evaluate (from 1 to 10) their degree of concern regarding a group of topics, employment stands out as among the highest (average 7.46), lagging behind the topic “family” but ahead of topics such as peace, security, justice, and other less valued topics (politics, 5.43, as the less valued).

While bordering on half (43.4%) of respondents have high and/or sufficient expectations of finding a job compatible with their and/or area of expertise, that expectation is low for a significant minority (36.1%), almost none for 10.94% and none for 4.74%, with an overall majority of negative expectations of 51%. Innovation, vocational education and training are required to boost youth employment and help to change current policies.

De-nationalization of schoolbooks. This is a critical but fundamental issue in our view. That the countries from the former Yugoslavia seriously invest in programs of de-nationalization of schoolbooks and promote inclusive classrooms, instead of the segregation that happens in Bosnia with the model of “two schools under one roof”, as detailed in chapter five, remains absolutely necessary. Similarly, removing nationalist approaches from History books, especially when relating to contemporary contents, in particular World War Two and after.

The issue of the de-nationalization of schoolbooks is neither something specific to the Balkans, nor to Europe. In the United States, Joseph Moreau, in his *Schoolbook Nation: Conflicts Over American History Textbooks from the Civil War to the Present* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), explains that the questioning of the way History is taught is present even in non post-conflict societies, but that questioning is in any case essential in societies mature enough to look in the mirror and reflect on their pedagogical practices: “Will a richer understanding of the way history has been taught and learned, change the tenor of our debates over the curriculum? Probably. It might well have made for a more thoughtful, less partisan discussion of the standards”, questions Moreau (2003: 24).

This author argues “censorship of textbooks does remain a serious problem, but (...) the proliferation of new media, particularly the Internet, has made it increasingly difficult for individuals and pressure groups to control the flow of historical information into the classroom” (2003: 337). This is extremely important to acknowledge, since the massification of the Internet is making it ever more difficult for governments or governmental agencies or bodies to sweep uncomfortable issues of the past out of schoolbooks.

Bearing this in mind, and the mass consumption of the Internet in the Western Balkans, it came as a surprise to this dissertation's author that, in the research survey, more than half (51.45%) respondents think that the nationalistic tone and contents in the teaching of History is adequate and 24% think it still remains insufficient. Less than one in five responses (15.69%) find the nationalistic tone and contents as excessive. Bearing in mind the nationalistic narratives in History books throughout the region, the results of the survey reveal a mindset of university students which is somehow disturbing when one considers a context of building inclusive and tolerant post-conflict societies. Nevertheless, when asked if they admit a joint contemporary History curricula in the countries of the former Yugoslavia, over 60% accept or would consider this. Only 22.26% do not accept this idea /proposal.

Countries from the Western Balkans, especially those still on the EU accession process, should develop knowledge networks fostering exchanges (why not of History curricula) between communities and the respective civil societies in general as one means of engaging "their countries in the wider global community" as duly and accurately advocated by The Civic Education Project (CEP), an international non-profit organization that has "supported grassroots efforts to promote pluralism and international standards in social science education in transitioning countries since 1991" .

Focusing on education in post-conflict societies, a commonly accepted history is not a simple task as countries stick to narratives of self-glorification and self-victimhood as key instruments for promoting their own national cohesion. To produce a substantial transformation in such a crucial dimension to reconciliation requires, above all, the political will (pressure from international institutions and/or donors may be of good help) necessary to the implementation of policies that invest in teacher training and in the promotion of both critical thinking, and comparative approaches to history.

Bearing all in mind, this dissertation argues that the countries and entities in the region, with committed international support when and if needed, should embrace a process of reconciliation, in the sense of acknowledging the past and managing the differences "allowing social harmony in the daily life of multi-ethnic societies" as said by Johnson (2011: 430).

One could describe this intended process as 'reconcivication', reconciling communities through civic values without putting aside differences of approaches between ethnic groups or nations, besides prevailing conflicting narratives and diverse legacies which they have gone through, making each group or nation come to terms with its past and acknowledging the suffering caused to others, regardless the alleged fairness of the struggle that was underneath the traumatic events. Though it is here laid as an original concept, it nevertheless pays its tribute to events, theories and authors. In the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, one can read that "philosophical interest in reconciliation as a moral and political

value grew in the 1990s in response to its invocation during South Africa's dramatic transition from apartheid to democracy", although "particular conceptions of reconciliation vary across a number of dimensions"<sup>528</sup>. In Murphy (2010), we can learn, as Kendy M. Hess writes in a review article, that "in a world rife with civic values, we've seen an increasing interest in the question of how to restore civic communities after they have failed"<sup>529</sup>. As Bar-On (2007:81), an Israeli psychologist, therapist, Holocaust and conflict and peace researcher, this thesis argues that reconciliation in post-conflict societies should be based in simultaneous "top-down and bottom-up processes"; even if departing from leadership, it can only be truly effective when approaching the grassroots levels as it relates to suffering that was shared, traumas that were commonly lived through, as different may have been the intensity of those traumas and the degree of collective responsibility that may have or not been assumed. The author of the dissertation fully agrees with Martina Fischer (2004: 415), when saying that "the need for reconciliation is emphasised in particular for societies that have gone through a process of ethno-political conflict, as these are marked by a loss of trust, intergenerational transmission of trauma and grievances, negative interdependence (as the assertion of each group's identity is seen as requiring the negation of the other group's identity) and polarization". Moreover, taking into account that ethno-political antagonists live in close proximity, "not addressing these legacies means risking that they will form the causes of new spirals of violence" (ibid). Fischer (2004: 416), a line followed by this dissertation, is influenced from Bar-on and his view that "reconciliatory processes have a psycho-social component as well as a legal one, as within a reconciliatory process several issues have to be addressed simultaneously: specifically, the unresolved issues regarding perpetrators and victims. Storytelling may take an important role in this, but must be accompanied by punishment of the perpetrators, compensation of victims, formal agreements between the parties and economic and educational initiatives to change the status quo in asymmetric contexts".

Bearing all this in mind, reconcivication – making people to work together, despite differences and grievances and doing it with a common and sustained effort of not obliterating but also not overestimating each own and reciprocal traumatic narratives - can assume different and diverse forms: independent media and media projects working across ethnic lines; fueling grassroots projects across ethnic lines to give voice to common needs and aspirations, as the "fight for the commons" has so accurately demonstrated in Bosnia, opening new ways of doing politics; internationally supported political think-tanks in which potential upcoming leaders, summoned across the ethnic divide, could be asked to come up with ideas

---

<sup>528</sup> <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/reconciliation>.

<sup>529</sup> <http://ndpr.nd.edu/news/a-moral-theory-of-political-reconciliation/>



for mid and long-term public policies to the region, opening new fields of research to political science itself; strengthening of the political commitment to the EU accession, even if at some point in time the winds from Brussels and some member-states' capitals may not blowing in that direction; draft legislation that may promote youth employability and guarantee fiscal benefits to companies that employ across ethnic lines, specially minorities of a given territory; setting up of national TRC's and organize transnational platforms of diffusion of testimonies and conclusions to empower the sharing of diversity of experiences; the above mentioned denationalization of school books, generalizing the experience of Joint History Projects throughout the region, with appropriate tools and resources, as well as providing specific training to teachers in dealing with, and teaching, conflicting visions of past historical events; promotion of multiethnic sports teams, as well as multiethnic artistic and cultural productions, all these are measures recommended to the countries in the region.

Mariano Aguirre, director of NOREF (Norwegian Center for Conflict Resolution) argues that “in a post-conflict reconciliation, the long term strategic objective, would be to reach a social pact between the different social actors and groups with different identities, in an increasingly and significantly inclusive state. The more inclusive a country's legal regime is, the more possibilities it will have for people to achieve a system of life in which there is coexistence through reconciliation; it is also important that it be a distributive state, fair and not according to identity lines”<sup>530</sup>. Roger Myerson, from the University of Chicago, Nobel 2007 in Economics, specialist in Game Theory and Analysis of Conflict, argues that “it is worth thinking as hard as we can to try to identify policies that may mean that post-conflict interventions can be beneficial”, but when it comes to reconciliation, Myerson claims that local elections should precede presidential elections, “should be the first thing to happen without delaying other forms of democracy”<sup>531</sup>.

Robert Donia in the debate “Faith Communities”, at the ASN Congress in Columbia University<sup>532</sup>, told us that beyond trying to promote “reconciliation for its own sake”, we would better “try to make people to work together”, in the expectations that when people are working together they have better chances of developing relationships among themselves. In fact, reconciliation may be much more about intention than necessarily about effects, and people in multiethnic post-conflict communities may be developing reconciliation in their daily practices, without being conscious they are doing reconciliation after all; for instance, if they trade with someone from the other community, if they assist a citizen from another ethnicity in a public service, when footballers pass the ball to each other in ethnic mixed teams. This is also reconcivication. Reconciliation is not given by decree, steps and

---

<sup>530</sup> Interview with the author, in Lisbon, 2014.

<sup>531</sup> Interview with the author, at FLAD, in Lisbon, 11.09.2012.

<sup>532</sup> New York City, 24.04.2015.

measures have to be taken in order to foster it and sustain it in time. The generations ahead of us will appreciate.

## REFERENCES

- Adler, Patricia and Peter Adler (1994), "Observational Techniques", in Denzin, N.K., Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London, Sage Publications.
- Aitken, Stuart C. (2001), *Geographies of Young People: the morally contested spaces of identity*, Routledge, London and New York.
- Alexandre, Ricardo (2002), *Por Uma Vida Normal: Guerra e Paz na Jugoslávia*, Porto, Campo das Letras.
- Almeida, João Ferreira and José Madureira Pinto (1976), *A Investigação nas Ciências Sociais*, Biblioteca de Textos Universitários, Editorial Presença, Lisboa.
- Annan, Kofi (2001), The Nobel Peace Prize Lecture in Oslo, United Nations, 10 December 2001.
- Anderson, Benedict (1991), *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London, Verso.
- Anderson, Kirk and Svetlana Breca (2005), "Educational Reform in the Balkans: Getting Past the Conflict in Kosovo", *International Electronic Journal For Leadership in Learning*, Volume 9, Number 8.
- Appadurai, A. (2000), "The Grounds of the Nation-State: Identity, Violence and Territory", in K. Goldmann, U. Hannerz and C. Westin (editors), *Nationalism and Internationalism in the Post-Cold War Era*, London: Routledge, 129-42.
- Arsenijevic, Damir (2014), *Unbriable Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Fight for the Commons* (Southeast European Integration Perspectives), Baden-Baden, Germany.
- Bar-On, Dan (2007), Reconciliation Revisited for More Conceptual and Empirical Clarity, in: Janja Bec-Neumann (ed.), *Darkness at Noon. War Crimes, Genocide and Memories*, Sarajevo: Centre for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies, 62-84.
- Barkan, Elazar and Alexander Karn (2006), *Taking Wrongs Seriously, Apologies and Reconciliation*, Stanford University Press.
- Barth, Frederik (1969), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Boston: Little, Brown, 9-38.
- Bauman, Gerd (1999) *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic and Religious Identities*, London: Routledge.
- Bennett, Andrew and Elman, Colin (2006), "Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods", *Annual Review of Political Sciences*, Volume 9, 455-76.
- Bieber, Florian (2006), *Post-War Bosnia, Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance*, New York, Palgrave.
- Bieber, Florian (2011), "New Universities in the Balkans: European Visions, UFOs and Megatrends", available from [www.balkaninsight.com](http://www.balkaninsight.com). Published 03-10-2011. Accessed on 24.03.2013.
- Billig, Michael (1995), *Banal Nationalism*, London, Sage.
- Bitti, Pio Ricci and Bruna Zani (1993), *A Comunicação Como Processo Social*, Lisboa, Imprensa Universitária, Editorial Estampa.
- Brown, Chris and Kirsten Ainley (2005), *Understanding International Relations*, Third Edition, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

- Brown, Michael E., editor (1996), *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Centre for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.
- Brown, Zeta (2016), (Ed.), *Inclusive Education: Perspectives on pedagogy, policy and practice*, Routledge.
- Brubaker, Rogers (2004), *Ethnicity Without Groups*, President and Fellows of Harvard College.
- Bryman, Alan, *Social Research Methods*, Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Burg, Steven L. and Paul S. Shoup (2000), *The War in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, M.E.Sharpe: Amronk.
- Bush, Kenneth D., Diana Saltarelli (2000), *The Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict: towards a peacebuilding education for children*, Florence, UNICEF, Innocenti Research Centre.
- Castells, Manuel (2009), *Communication Power*, Oxford University Press Inc., New York.
- Chafetz, Janet Saltzman (2006), Editor, *Handbook of the Sociology of Gender*, University of Houston, Houston, Texas.
- Chandler, David (1999), *Bosnia, Faking Democracy After Dayton*, Virgínia, Pluto Press.
- Chandler, David (2002) Editor, *Rethinking Human Rights, Critical Approaches to International Politics*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Coelho, João Nuno (2001), *Portugal, a equipa de todos nós, Nacionalismo, futebol e os media*, Edições Afrontamento.
- Cohen, Lenard S. (1995), *Broken Bonds: Yugoslavia's Disintegration and Balkan Politics In Transition: State Collapse in South-Eastern Europe: New Perspectives on Yugoslavia's Disintegration*, Westview Press, British Columbia.
- Collin, Matthew (2004), *This is Serbia Calling, Rock'n'Roll radio and Belgrade's Underground Resistance*, 5 star edition, London.
- Colovic, I. (1996a), "Društvo mrtvih ratnika," *Republika* 145–146(August): I-IV.
- Connolly, William E. (2006), "Then and Now: Participant-Observation in Political Theory", in Dryzek, John S., Bonnie Honig and Anne Phillips (eds.), *The Oxford Handbooks of Political Science*, Oxford, New York, 827-843.
- Connor, Walter (1972), "Nation-building or nation-destroying", *World Politics*, volume 24, pp. 319-55.
- Coppieters, Bruno and Richard Sakwa (Editors), (2003), *Contextualizing Secession, Normative Studies in Comparative Perspective*, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford.
- Costa, António Firmino (1986), "A Pesquisa de Terreno em Sociologia", Cap. V, in *Metodologia das Ciências Sociais*, Augusto Santos Silva and José Madureira Pinto (orgs.), Porto, Edições Afrontamento.
- Creswell, John W., (2003), *Research Design, Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed methods Approaches*, Sage Publications, London, Los Angeles, Singapore, New Dehli.
- Daalder, Ivo H. (1996), in Michael E. Brown, *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Centre for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, p. 67.
- Danesh, H. B. (2011), *Education for Peace Integrative Curriculum series*, volume 4, International Education for Peace Institute, Victoria BC, Canada.

- Donia, Robert J. (2000), A Quest for Tolerance in Sarajevo's Textbooks, *Human Rights Review*, 1(2), pp. 38-55. Available from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12142-000-1003-1>.
- Davidson, Douglas (2009) "Recapitulating Yugoslavia: Culture, Politics and State-Building in Bosnia and Herzegovina", Policy Brief, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, July 31, p.3.
- Dedaić, Mirjana N., Nelson, Daniel N. (Eds.) (2003), *At War with Words*, Mouton De Gruyter, Berlin, New York, p.13.
- Denzin, Norman K. (editor) e Lincoln, Yvonna S. (editor), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Sage Publications, s/l., 1994
- Djokic, Dejan (editor), (2003), *Yugoslavism – Histories of a failed idea, 1918-1992*, Hurst&Company, London.
- Dragicevic-Šešić, M. (1994) Neofolk kultura: publika i njene zvezde, Sremski Karlovci: Izdavacka knjiarnica Zorana Stojanovica.
- Dragnich, Alex N. (1995), *Yugoslavia's Disintegration and the Struggle for Truth*, East European Monographs, Columbia University Press.
- Drakulic, Slavenka (2010), *Não Fariam Mal a Uma Mosca*, editora Pedra da Lua, Lisboa.
- Duara, Prasenjit (1996) 'Historicizing National Identity, or Who Imagines What and When', in G. Eley and R.G. Suny (eds), *Becoming National*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 151-77.
- Duffield, Mark (2001), *Global Governance and the New Wars, The Merging of Development and Security*, London and New York, Zed Books.
- Dérens, Jean-Arnault (2012), "O Fim do Sonho Europeu nos Balcãs", IIª Série, 5, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Edição portuguesa.
- Dryzek, John S., Honig, Bonnie and Phillips, Anne (2006), *Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Duffield, Mark (2001), *Global Governance and the New Wars, The Merging of Development and Security*, London and New York, Zed Books.
- Đokic, Irena and Sumpor, Marijana (2015), "The Role of Croatian Civil Society Organisations in the European Union Accession Process", Zagreb, Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations Croatia Office.
- Evans, Richard J. (2009), *The Third Reich at War*, Penguin Press; New York, pp. 158-159.
- Falk, Richard (1999), *Predatory globalization. A critique*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Ferguson, Yale H., Mansbach, Richard W. (2004), *Remapping Global Politics: History's Revenge and Future Shock*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Fischer, Martina (2004), Austin, Alex, Fischer, Martina, Ropers, Norbert (Eds.) *Transforming Ethnopolitical Conflict: The Berghof Handbook*, SpringerVs.
- Fraenkel, Carlos (2015), *Teaching Plato in Palestine – Philosophy in a Divided World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.
- Gallagher, Tom (2003), *The Balkans after the Cold War: From Tyranny to Tragedy*, Routledge, London and New York.
- Gallagher, Tom (2010), *Key Issues in Coexistence and Education*, Coexistence International, Brandeis.

- Galt, Rosalind (2006), "Yugoslavia's Impossible Spaces", *The new European Cinema, Redrawing the Map*, Columbia University Press, New York, pp. 123-173.
- Galtung, Johan (1996), *Peace by peaceful means. Peace and conflict, development and civilization*, Oslo, International Peace Research Institute.
- Galtung, Johan (1990) Cultural violence, *Journal of peace research*, 27(3), 291-305.
- Galtung, Johan (2004), *Transcend and Transform An Introduction to Conflict Work*, Pluto Press, London.
- Geldenhuis, Deon (2009) *Contested States in World Politics*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gellner, Ernest (1964), *Nationalism*, Londres, Weidefeld & Nicholson.
- Gellner, Ernest (1983) *Nations and Nationalism (New Perspectives on the Past)*, Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press.
- Gerring, John (2007), "Is There a (Viable) Crucial-Case Method?", *Comparative Political Studies*, Volume 40 Number 3, March 2007, 231-253.
- Gerstenfeld, Phyllis B. (2013) *Hate Crimes: Causes, Controls, and Controversies*, California State University, Stanislaus, London, UK, Sage.
- Giddens, Anthony (1985), *The Nation-State and Violence, Volume Two of A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Glenny, Misha (1992) *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War*, London: Penguin, p. 170.
- Goffman, Erving (1982), *Estigma - Notas sobre a Manipulação da Identidade Deteriorada*, 4<sup>a</sup> ed., Zahar editores, S.Paulo.
- Gorupa, Radmila (2013), *After Yugoslavia, The Cultural Spaces of a Vanished Land*, Stanford University Press.
- Gould, Roles, (1958) "Sociological fields observations", *Social Forces*, 36, pp. 217-223.
- Goulding, Daniel J. (2002), *Liberated Cinema: The Yugoslav Experience, 1945-2002*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.
- Grujic, Marija (2009), *Community and the Popular Women, Nation and Turbo-Folk in Post-Yugoslav Serbia*, Central European University Department of Gender Studies, Budapest.
- Hammersley, Martin and Paul Atkinson (1983), *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, Tavistock, London.
- Hatzopoulos, Pavlos (2008), *The Balkans Beyond Nationalism and Identity, International Relations and Ideology*, I.B. Tauris, London and New York.
- Hayner, Priscilla B. (2010), *Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions*, Routledge, New York.
- Held, David (1995) *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Stanford, CA/Cambridge: Stanford University Press/Polity).
- Hobsbawm, Eric and Terence Ranger, editors, (1983), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press.
- Hodge, Carole (2006), *Britain and the Balkans 1991 until the present*, London, Routledge.
- Holbrooke, Richard (1999), *To End a War*, The Modern Library, New York.
- Hupchick, Dennis P. (2004), *The Balkans, From Constantinople to Communism*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ignatieff, Michael (1993), *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.

- Ingrao, Charles and Emmert, Thomas A., Editors, (2009) *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies, A Scholars' Initiative*, United States Institute of Peace Press Washington, D.C., West Lafayette, Indiana, Purdue University Press.
- Jackson, Robert (2003), editor, *International Perspectives on Citizenship, Education and Religious Diversity*, London and New York, Routledge Falmer.
- Jackson, Robert (2004), *Rethinking Religious Education and Plurality, Issues in Diversity and Pedagogy*, London and New York, Routledge Falmer.
- Jacquín-Berdal, Dominique (2002), *Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Horn of África, a Critique of the Ethnic Interpretation*, New York, The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Jelaca, Dijana (2014), "The Genealogy of Dislocated Memory: Yugoslav Cinema after the Break", University of Massachusetts - Amherst ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst, Doctoral Dissertations.
- Jelavich, Charles (1990), *South Slav Nationalisms – textbooks and Yugoslav union before 1914*, Columbus, Ohio State University Press.
- Jennissen, Roel (2011), "Ethnic Migration in Central and Eastern Europe", *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, ASEN, Vol 11, Nr. 2, pp. 252-270.
- Johnson, Dana (2011), *Rewriting the Balkans: Memory, Historiography, and the Making of a European Citizenry*, Scholar Research Brief, Research Country: Serbia, University of Massachusetts-Amherst.
- Johnston, Douglas and Eastvold, Jonathan (2004), in *Religion and Peacebuilding*. New York: SUNY Press.
- Judah, Tim (1997), *The Serbs, History, Myth & the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press.
- Jukic, Elvira (2011) "Dodik calls on denial of bosnian national day", disponível em <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/dodik-calls-on-denial-of-bosnian-national-day>. Published on 24.11.2011; accessed on 16.06.2012.
- Kaldor, Mary (2006), *New and Old Wars, Organised Violence in a Global Era*, 2nd edition, Malden, Polity Press.
- Kaprinis, Kosmas (2007), *The Politics of History Education in the Balkans: The Young Generation as Transmitter of Reconciliation*, Ethics Center Student Fellows, 2007.
- Karahasan, Dzevad (2012), *Sarajevo – Exodus of a City*, Sarajevo, Connectum.
- Keman, Hans (1993) 'Comparative Politics: a distinctive approach to political science?', in H. Keman (ed.), *Comparative Politics. New Directions in Theory and Method*. Amsterdam: VU University Press, pp. 31–57.
- King, Elisabeth, 2014, *From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda*, Cambridge University Press, New York.
- Kmezić, Marko (2015), "The Western Balkans and EU Enlargement: Lessons learned, ways forward and prospects ahead". Paper requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs, European Union.
- Kokic, Ivana Batarelo, Vukelic, Anton, Ljubic, Maja (2010), "Mapping policies and practices for the preparation of teachers for inclusive education in contexts of social and cultural diversity", European Training Foundation.

- Koulouri, Christina (2009), History Teaching and Peace Education in Southeast Europe, *Hitotsubashi Journal of Arts and Sciences* 50, Hitotsubashi University, pp. 53-63.
- Kulyk, Volodymyr (2011), "Language Identity, linguistic diversity and political cleavages", *Nations and Nationalism*, volume 17, Journal of the Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism, ASEN.
- Kushi, Sidita, Kushi, Odeta (2015), "Seven Years of Kosovo's Hollow Sovereignty", <http://neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1496-seven-years-of-kosovo-s-hollow-sovereignty>. Published in 18.02.2015. Accessed in 18.03.2015.
- Kuzio, Taras (2002), "The myth of the civic state: a critical survey of Hans Kohn's framework for understanding nationalism", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 25 No. 1 January 2002 pp. 20–39.
- Lampe, John R. (2008) 'Responses to Aleksa Djilas, 'The Academic West and the Balkan Test', *JSEB*, Vol. 9, No. 3, December 2007', *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 10:1, 113 – 120.
- Leganger-Krogstad, Heidi (2003), Dialogue among young citizens in a pluralistic religious education classroom, in Robert Jackson, *International Perspectives on Citizenship, Education and Religious Diversity*, London & New York, Routledge Falmer.
- Leicester, M. (1992), Antiracism versus the new multiculturalism: moving beyond the interminable debate, in Lynch, J., Modgil, C., Modgil, S. (eds), (1992), *Cultural Diversity and the Schools: Equity or Excellence? Education and Cultural Reproduction*, London: Falmer Press.
- Lenkova, Mariana (1998), *'Hate Speech' in the Balkans*, Vienna, The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF).
- Leydesdorff, Selma and Rogers, Kim L. (1999), *Trauma and Life Stories, International Perspectives*, Routledge, New York.
- Mann, Michael (1986), *The Sources of Social Power, A history of power from the beginning to A.D. 1760*, volume 1, London School of Economics and Political Science, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Macdonald, Raymond A.R., Hargreaves, David J, Miell, Dorothy (2002), Editors, *Musical Identities*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Maffesoli, Michel (1996), *The Time of the Tribes: The Decline of Individualism in Mass Society*, SAGE, New York.
- Malesevic, Sinisa (2006) *Identity as Ideology: Understanding Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Pallgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Malesevic, Sinisa, and Haugaard, Mark, (2007) *Ernest Gellner and Contemporary Social Thought*, Cambridge University Press, New York.
- Malley-Morrison, Kathleen, Mercurio, Andrea, Twose, Gabriel (editors), (2013) *International handbook of peace and reconciliation*, New York, Springer, p. 612.
- Marvin, C. and D.W. Ingle (1999) *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- May, Stephen (ed.), (1999), *Critical Multiculturalism: Rethinking Multicultural and Antiracist Education*, London: Falmer Press.



- Mayer, Tamar (2000), Editor, *Gender Ironies of Nationalism, Sexing the nation*, Routledge, London and New York.
- Mazower, Mark (2000), *The Balkans*, New York: Modern Library.
- McNair, Brian (2000), *Journalism and Democracy*, London, Routledge.
- Mesic, Stipe (2004), *Demise of Yugoslavia: A Political Memoir*, New York, Central European University Press.
- Miles, Angela (1996), *Integrative feminisms: Building global visions, 1960s-1990s*. New York: Routledge.
- Mojzes, Paul (1994), *Yugoslavian Inferno*, Continuum, New York: pp.125-7.
- Mock, Steven J. (2013) "Civil Religion as National language", in *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*: Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 109-114.
- Murphy, Colleen (2010), *A Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation*, Cambridge University Press.
- Nedeljković, Dubravka Valić and Jelema Kleut (2013), "Europe, Here and There: Analysis of Europeanization Discourse in the Western Balkans Media", Faculty of Philosophy, Regional Research Promotion Programme in the Western Balkans (RRPP), Novi Sad.
- Norris, Pippa (2004), "Global Governance & Cosmopolitan Citizens", *Globalization and Governance*, Joseph S. Nye Jr. and John Donahue (editors), Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC.
- O' Brennan, John (2009), "Enlargement Fatigue and its Impact on the Enlargement Process in the Western Balkans", London, LSE publications.
- Oliver, P. (2006). Purposive Sampling. In V. Jupp (Ed.), *The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods*. (pp. 245-246). London, England: SAGE Publications, Ltd. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9780857020116.n162>
- Owen-Jackson, Gwyneth (2008) "Political Peace – Educational War: the role played by international organisations in negotiating peace in the Balkans and its consequences for education", *Comparative & International Education, Research in Comparative and International Education*, Volume 3 Number 1, pp. 79-90.
- Ozkirimli, Umut (2003), editor, *Nationalism and its futures*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ozkirimli, Umut (2005), *Contemporary Debates on Nationalism: a critical engagement*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Parver, Corrine and Rebecca Wolf (2008) "Civil Society's Involvement in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding," *International Journal of Legal Information*: Vol. 36: Iss. 1, article 5. Available at: <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/ijli/vol36/iss1/5>.
- Pavičić, Jurica (2010): "Cinema of Normalization": Changes of Stylistic Model in Post-Yugoslav Cinema After the 1990s: *Studies in Eastern European Cinema* 1 (1): 43-56.
- Pavkovic, Aleksandar and Peter Radan (2007), *Creating New States: Theory and Practice of Secession*, Ashgate.
- Pavkovic, Aleksandar (2011), "Recursive Secession of Trapped Minorities: a Comparative Study of the Serb Krajina and Abkhazia", *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, volume 18, 3, July-September, Routledge, pp. 297-318.
- Pennings, Paul, Hans Keman, Jan Kleinnijenhuis (2006), *Doing Research in Political Science*, second edition, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

- Phayer, Michael (2000), *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust 1930-1965*, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, page 32.
- Popov, Nebojsa (1996), Editor, *The Road to war in Serbia, Trauma and Catharsis*, Central European University Press, Budapest.
- Popovic, Srdjan (2009), *Actors Without Society, The role of civil actors in the post-communist transformation*, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin.
- Privot, Michael and Martin Demirovski (2014), "The EU vote and Europe's overlooked minorities", Euobserver.com.
- Pureza, José Manuel (2000), "Estudos sobre a Paz e Cultura da Paz", intervenção proferida no âmbito do colóquio Prevenção de Conflitos e Cultura da Paz, Lisbon, Instituto da Defesa Nacional.
- Ragin, Charles C. (1987), *The Comparative Method, Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press.
- Ramet, Sabrina P. and Gordana P. Crnkovic, Editors (2003), *Kazaaam! Splat! Ploof! The American Impact on European Popular Culture since 1945*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Oxford.
- Ramet, Sabrina P. (2005), *Thinking About Yugoslavia, Scholarly Debates About the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Rattansi, Ali (1992) "Changing the subject: racism, culture and education", in Donald, J., Rattansi, Ali (eds) *Race, Culture and Difference*, London: Sage in association with The Open University, 1992.
- Rattansi, Ali (1999), Racism, "Postmodernism and Reflexive Multiculturalism", in May, S., (ed.) *Critical Multiculturalism: Rethinking Multicultural and Antiracist Education*, London: Falmer Press.
- Renan, Ernest (1990) "What is a nation?" in Homi K. Bhabha (ed.) *Nation and Narration*, New York a London: Routledge, pp. 8–22.
- Rubin, Gayle (1984) "Thinking sex: notes for a radical theory of the politics of sexuality," in Carole S.Vance (ed.), *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, Boston and London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp. 267–319.
- Seton-Watson, Hugh (1977), *Nations and States: An Inquiry to the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*, London, Methuen.
- Shoup, Brian (2008), *Conflict and Cooperation in Multi-Ethnic States, Institutional Incentives, Myths and Counter-Balancing*, London and New York, Routledge.
- Skjelsbæk, Inger and Dan Smith (2001), Editors, *Gender, Peace and Conflict*, PRIO, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo.
- Salomon, Gavriel (2003), "Does Peace Education Make a Difference in the Context of an Intractable Conflict?" University of Haifa, Center for Research on Peace Education.
- Smith, Alan (2001) "Religious Segregation and the Emergence of Integrated Schools in Northern Ireland", *Oxford Review of Education*, pp. 559-75.
- Smith, Alan (2003), Citizenship Education in Northern Ireland: beyond national identity?, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, pp. 15-31.
- Smith, Alan (2005), Investing in Systemic Change through Curriculum, Textbooks and Teachers, In: *Education, Social Cohesion and Diversity*, Washington, DC: World Bank.

- Smith, Alan (2010) "The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education, The influence of education on conflict and peace building", Background paper prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report.
- Smith, Alan and Susan Fountain and Hugh McLean (2002), "Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia", Belgrade: UNICEF, UNESCO and Open Society Institute, 2002.
- Smith, Alan and Claran Maoláin (2004), "Challenging Intolerance", in *New Directions for Youth Development*, Harvard, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Jossey-Bass, Summer, pp. 95-108.
- Smith, Alan, and Tony Vaux (2003), *Education, conflict, and international development*, London, Department of International Development.
- Smith, Anthony D. (1986), *The Ethnic Origin of Nations*, Oxford, Blackwell.
- Smith, Anthony D. (1999), *Nações e Nacionalismo Numa Era Global*, Oeiras, Celta Editora.
- Smith, Dan (1997b), *The State of War and Peace Atlas*, London: Penguin.
- Smyth, Marie and Gillian Robinson (2001), Editors, *Researching Violently Divided Societies, Ethical and Methodological Issues*, New York, United Nations University Press.
- Stavrianos, Leften Stavros (1965), *The Balkans Since 1453*, Rinehart & Company, Inc., New York.
- Stiglmayer, Alexandra (1994), *Mass Rape: The War against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, University of Nebraska Press.
- Stilz, Anna (2009), Civic Nationalism and Language, *Wiley Periodicals Inc., Philosophy & Public Affairs* 37, no. 3, pp. 257-292.
- Stojanovski, Strasko (2012) "The Multiethnic Coexistence on the Balkans: The Role of Education in Creating Conditions for Building Sustainable Peace", DOHA-International centre for interfaith dialogue and University of Sarajevo.
- Tanner, Marcus (2001), *Croatia: a nation forged in war*, Yale, Yale University Press.
- Thomas, George (2005), "The Qualitative Foundations of Political Science Methodology," *Perspectives on Politics*, volume 3, 4, pp. 855-866.
- Thompson, Mark (1999), *Forging War: The Media in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina*, University of Luton Press.
- Thorup, Cathryn L (2003), "What Works in Building Tolerance Among Balkan Children and Youth", International Youth Foundation.
- Tilly, Charles (2003), *The Politics of Collective Violence*, Cambridge, Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.
- Tobler, Judy (2003) "Learning the difference, Religion education, citizenship and gendered subjectivity", in Robert Jackson, *International Perspectives on Citizenship, Education and Religious Diversity*, London & New York, Routledge Falmer.
- Turan, Kenneth (2002), *Sundance to Sarajevo, Film Festivals and the World They Made*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles.
- Turton, David, editor (1997), *War and Ethnicity, Global Connections and Local Violence*, Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Social Stress, San Marino, Boydell Press.
- Udovicki, Jasminka (2000), *Burn this House The Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia*, Jasminka Udovički & James Ridgeway, editors Revised and Expanded, New York, 2000 Duke University Press.

- UNESCO (2001), Open File on Inclusive Education-Support Materials for Managers and Administrators, Paris, France, available from:  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001252/125237eo.pdf>.
- Uricchio, William (2008), Editor, *We Europeans? Media, Representations, Identities*, Intellect Books, The University of Chicago Press.
- Virilio, Paul (1989), *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception*, Verso, London.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel (1984), *The Politics of the world-economy, the states, the movements and the civilizations*, New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Weber, Anne (2009), “Manual of Hate Speech”, Council of Europe Publishing, France, p.4. Available from: [http://coe.int/t/dghl/cooperation/media/Meetings/Hate Speech Background Paper.pdf](http://coe.int/t/dghl/cooperation/media/Meetings/Hate+Speech+Background+Paper.pdf).
- Weber, Cythia (1995), *Simulating Sovereignty, Intervention. The State and Symbolic Exchange*, Purdue, Cambridge University Press.
- West, Rebecca, (1941), *Black lamb and The Grey Falcon*, Macmillan.
- Wheeler, Nicholas J. (2000), *Humanitarian Intervention in International Society*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Wimmer, Andreas (2004), *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict Shadows of Modernity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Woodward, Susan L. (1995), *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War*, Washington D.C., The Brookings Institution.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira (2003), “Belongings: in between the Indigene and the Diasporic”, in Ozkirimli, Umut, *Nationalism and its futures*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Zizek, Slavoj (2012), *The Year of Dreaming Dangerously*, Verso, London.
- Zyberi, Gentian (2012), *The Transitional Justice Process in the Former Yugoslavia: Long Transition, Yet Not Enough Justice*, Oxford Transitional Justice Research Working Paper, Forthcoming. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2067355>.

## ANNEX A

### YOUTH, BALKANS AND THE WORLD - SURVEY 2014-2015

#### GLOBAL RESULTS (274 Respondents)

##### i. Yugoslavia, as an ideal of a country is, in your opinion, something:

- a) Past 225/274= 82%
- b) Present 4/274= 1,4%
- c) Future 8/274= 2,9%
- d) Never existed 7/274= 2,6%
- e) Should have never existed 23/274 = 8,4%
- f) Don't know /don't answer 7/274= 2,6%

Over 4 out of 5 respondents see **Yugoslavia, as an ideal of a country, as something that is past (82%)**. 8,39% says it should have never existed and it never existed to 2,55%. Nevertheless, it is something present to 1,45% and something future to 2,91% of the respondents.

##### **ii. The disintegration of Yugoslavia was, in your opinion:**

- a) Positive 85/274= 31%
- b) Negative 135/274= 49,2%
- c) Irrelevant 23/274= 8,39%
- d) Don't know /don't answer 31/274= 11,31%

When confronted with the challenge of emitting an opinion about the **disintegration of Yugoslavia**, nearly half of these after 1991born-repondents, say it **was negative (49,2%)**, almost one third of them (30%) admit it was positive and the collapse of the former country was irrelevant for less than one out of ten (8,5%).

##### **iii. How would you rate (0-100%) the following items as having been a fundamental factor for the collapse of Yugoslavia?**

- a) National policies 12794/274= 46,69%
- b) International policies 9068/274= 33,09%
- c) National 8381/274 = 30,58%
- d) International media 6121/274= 22,33%
- e) Yugoslav politicians 12160/274= 44,37%

- f) Foreign politicians 8618/274= 31,45%
- g) Economic situation 8590/274= 31,35%
- h) The armies 8711/274= 31,79%
- i) Intellectuals 7670/274= 27,99%
- j) Tito legacy 6554/274= 23,9%
- k) (Other factor; mention please)
- l) Don't know /don't answer 48/274= 17,5%

Regarding the opinion about which were the fundamental factors for the collapse of Yugoslavia, the opinions are substantially balanced, but two factors are the most ranked: **national policies (46,69%) and Yugoslav politicians (44,37%)**. Surprisingly for the author, international media was the less important factor, according to the respondents (22,33%).

#### **iv. Is your country politically independent?**

- a) **Yes 161/274= 58,7%**
- b) No 94/274= 34,3%
- c) Don't know /don't answer 19/274= 6,93%

**More than half of the total of respondents consider their countries politically independent (58,7%)**. More than one out of three respondents (34,3%) states his/her country is not politically independent. Interesting in this question is to perceive the opinions in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because of the lack of definitive status of the former and political institutional framework of the latter. Bearing this in mind, when one ungroups the results, one can verify that out of 36 Kosovo Albanian respondents, 26 see their country as political independent and 10 consider that Kosovo is not politically independent. In the case of respondents from Bosnia and Herzegovina, from the 31 responses, 22 (a), 8 (b) and 1 (c), which means there is a substantial understanding of one's country political independence, even in contexts where that independence is somehow disputed.

#### **v. How would you evaluate your country's degree of independence?**

- a) Total 33/274= 12,04%
- b) Sufficient 81/274= 29,5%
- c) **Not sufficient 119/274= 43,4%**
- d) None 22/274= 8,02%
- e) Don't know /don't answer 24/274= 8,75%

The degree of independence of the respondents' own countries is perceived as **not sufficient by more than four out of ten respondents (43,4%)**. The degree of independence is total only to 12%.

**vi. What is your degree of satisfaction with your country's independence?**

- a) Total 24/274= 8,75%
- b) Sufficient 76/274= 27,73%
- c) Not sufficient 116/274= 42,3%**
- d) None 36/274= 13,1%
- e) Don't know /don't answer 22/274= 8.0%

The degree of satisfaction with the independence of the respondents' own countries is perceived as **not sufficient by more than four out of ten respondents (42,3%)** and none to 13,1%. The degree of satisfaction with the level of independence is total only to 8,75%.

**vii. How do you evaluate the quality of the political class of your country?**

- a) Excellent 0%
- b) Very good 0%
- c) Good 24/274= 8,75%
- d) Neither good nor bad 65/274= 23,72%
- e) Bad 99/274= 36,13%**
- f) Awful 82/274= 29,92%**
- g) Don't know /don't answer 5/274= 1,82%

The political class in the countries of the respondents is very badly evaluated by them. **66% gives negative opinions (36% bad; 30% awful) about the political class**, and it is neither good nor bad to less than one out of four (23,72%). Only 8,75% has a good opinion, but no answers were given as evaluating the political class of the respective country as 'very good' or 'excellent'.

**viii. How do you evaluate the nationalistic tone of your country's ruling politicians?**

- a) Excessive  $73/274= 26,64\%$
- b) Adequate/Sufficient  $63/274= 22,92\%$
- c) Not sufficient  $89/274= 32,48\%$
- d) None  $20/274= 7,29\%$
- e) Don't know /don't answer  $28/274=10,21\%$

To the author, the most striking figure is that only 26,64% (less than one out of three) finds the nationalistic tone of their country's ruling politicians as excessive. It is adequate to 22,92% and still **not sufficient to almost a third of the respondents (32,48%)**.

**ix. I ask you to classify (from 1 to 10) according to your preference the following historical political personalities from former Yugoslavia region. (You may repeat values, that is to say, you are free to classify more than one or everyone with minimum or, on the other way, maximum)**

- a) **Josip Broz Tito**  $1378/274= 5,02$
- b) Slobodan Milošević  $514/274= 1,87$
- c) Franjo Tuđman  $1000/274= 3,64$
- d) Alija Izetbegović  $807/274= 2,94$
- e) Ibrahim Rugova  $928/274= 3,38$
- f) Radovan Karadžić  $445/274= 1,62$

**Josip Broz Tito is the only historical personality who gets a positive appreciation, over than 5 (5,02) on a 1-10 scale.** Radovan Karadžić and Slobodan Milošević get the lowest evaluation. The over-representation of Croatian respondents may have contributed to make Franjo Tuđman with the second highest evaluation, ahead of Ibrahim Rugova and Alija Izetbegović.

**x. I ask you to classify (from 1 to 10) according to your preference the following current political personalities from former Yugoslavia region. (You may repeat values, that is to say, you are free to classify more than one or everyone with minimum or, on the other way, maximum)**

- a) Tomislav Nikolić  $528/274= 1,92$
- b) Bakir Izetbegović  $485/274= 1,77$
- c) Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović  $740/274= 2,70$



**d) Aleksandar Vučić 819/274= 2,98**

**e) Ivo Josipović 956/274= 3,48**

f) Atifete Jahjaga 721/274= 2,63

g) Zoran Milanović 711/274= 2,59

h) Isa Mustafa 686/274= 2,50

i) Dragan Čović 496/274= 1,81

j) Oliver Ivanović 479/274= 1,74

k) Haris Silajdžić 618/274= 2,55

l) Mladen Ivanic 499/274= 1,82

m) Milorad Dodik 527/274= 1,92

n) Boris Tadić 717/274= 2,61

o) Hašim Tači 601/274= 2,19

p) Don't know /Don't answer 27/274= 9,85%

The Croatian **Ivo Josipovic (3,48), social-democrat (SDP) and President between 2010 and 2015 is by far the best appreciated** political personality in the region, though with less than 4 on a 1-10 scale. It is rather relevant since he was being rather well evaluated, even before responses to the survey began arriving from Croatian universities, despite some responses from Bosnians from Croat origins. Josipovic is ahead the current Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić (2,98).

**xi. What is your native language?**

a) **Serbian 69/274= 25,1%**

b) **Serbo-croatian 7/274= 2,55%**

c) Croatian-serb

d) **Croatian 117/274= 42,7%**

e) Serbo-croatian-bosnian 4/274= 1,45%

f) Croatian-serb-bosnian 9/274= 3,28%

g) Bosnian-serb-croatian 2/274 = 0,72%

h) **Bosnian 26/274= 9,48%**

i) **Albanian 35/274= 12,77%**

j) Other (mention please) - Croatian-slovenian; 3/274= 1,09%

k) Don't know /Don't answer 2/274= 0,72%

The most relevant result in this question, in the subjective interpretation of the researcher, is the fact that **only 2,55% (7 out of 274) say their language is Serbo-Croatian, which was the official name of the language spoken in former Yugoslavia**. The weight of Croatian in this question may be overvalued, taking into account the demographic weight of Croats in the overall population of the studied cases. (Croatia – 4,25m; Bosnia – 3,82m; Serbia – 7,16; Kosovo – 1,82m; Total – 17,05m). **42.7% of the respondents indicate Croatian as their native language.**

**xii. Do you have (and where) friends in the neighbouring countries or coming from neighbouring countries? Point out positive answers:**

a) Serbia 89/274= 32,48%

b) Croatia 62/274= 22,62%

**c) Bosnia Herzegovina 102/274= 37,22%**

d) Kosovo 22/274= 8,02%

e) Macedonia 52/274= 18,97%

f) Slovenia 30/274= 10,94%

g) Montenegro 59/274= 21,53%

h) Don't know/Don't answer 18/274= 6,56%

**More than one third of the respondents have friend in/from Bosnia and Herzegovina (37,22%).** The low result of Croatia may be explained by the fact that a significant proportion of respondents were themselves from Croatia and this specific question was about neighbouring countries.

**xiii. Do you have friends from other religious affiliation than yours? Mention positive answers, besides your own religious affiliation or non-affiliation.**

a) Orthodox 86/274= 31,38%

b) Catholic 125/274= 45,6%

c) Muslim 104/274= 37,9%

d) Jew 24/274= 8,75%

e) Other 21/274= 7,66%

**f) None 32/274= 11,6%**

g) Don't know/Don't answer 25/274= 9,12%

A substantial majority of respondents has friends from other religious affiliation other than their own. **Only 11,6% has no friends from other religious affiliation.**

**xiv: How important is religion to the construction of your national identity?**

- a) Very 86/274= 31,38%
- b) Little 81/274= 29,56%**
- c) None 95/274= 34,67%**
- d) Don't know /don't 12/274= 4,37%

There is a balance in responses when the question is to measure the importance of religion to the construction of one's national identity. It is of little importance to 29,56% of respondents, none important to 34,67% but still very important to 31,38%. But the overall results tend to show a trend to a **decrease of the importance of religion in the construction of national identity**, as there is a huge majority of respondents (around **64,23%**) who give it **little and no importance**.

**xv. Do you admit marrying someone from a different religion?**

- a) **Yes 147/274= 53,6%**
- b) No 26/274= 9,48%
- c) Maybe 63/274= 22,99%**
- d) Not likely 24/274= 8,75%
- e) Don't know/Don't answer 13/274= 4,74%

To reinforce this idea, when asked about their willingness to marry someone from a different religion, **a huge majority admits that it is possible (53,6% says Yes and 22,99% says maybe)**. Only 9,48% rejects the idea, while 8,75% admits it is not very likely.

**xvi. Countries from ex-Yugoslavia visited in the last two years (besides your own country)**

- a) Serbia 53/274= 19,34%
- b) Croatia 52/274= 18,97%
- c) Bosnia Herzegovina 78/274= 28,46%**
- d) Slovenia 71/274= 25,91%
- e) Macedonia 48/274= 17,51%

f) Montenegro 70/274= 25,54%

g) Kosovo 7/274= 2,55%

h) Don't know/Don't answer 8/274= 2,91%. Once again, it is the author's conviction that the origins of the respondents played a considerable role in the result to this question, that is, the fact that a significant proportion of respondents were themselves from Croatia and this specific question was about neighbouring countries explains the fact that Croatia is not ranked as **destination nr.1, but Bosnia and Herzegovina (28,4%)**.

**xvii. What was/were the purpose of the visit(s)?**

a) **Tourism (includes shopping) 111/274= 40,5%**

b) Work 54/274= 19,7%

c) Family or friends 79/274= 28,83%

d) Other (mention please)\_multiple reasons 5; competition btw colleges 1; embassy 1; entertainment and education 1; 8/274= 2,91%

e) Don't know/Don't answer 20/274= 7,29%

Despite the wars and the physical borders created after the collapse of socialist Yugoslavia, the university students keep on travelling throughout the region, and **only a small proportion does it by obligation (work), 19,7%**. More than 40% visits the neighbouring countries as tourists.

**xviii. How do you evaluate the quality of Education in your country?**

a) Excellent 6/274= 2,18%

b) Very good 52/274= 18,97%

**c) Good 86/274= 31,38%**

d) Neither good nor bad 74/274= 6,98%

e) Bad 72/274= 26,27%

f) Very Bad 32/274= 11,67%

g) Don't know /don't answer 7/274= 2,55%

There is some division between those who value the quality of Education in their own country as positive and those who regard it as negative. On the 'negativist' side, there is a total of 37,94% opinions (26,27% bad and 11,67% very bad) which is less than **52,53% on the 'positivist' side (31,38% good, 18,97% very good and 2,18% excellent)**. It is neither good nor bad to 6.98% of the respondents.

**xix. How do you evaluate the quality of teaching of History in your country?**

- a) Excellent 10/274= 3,64%
- b) Very good 42/274= 15,32%
- c) **Good 79/274= 28,83%**
- d) Neither good nor bad 51/274= 18,61%
- e) Bad 57/274= 20,8%
- f) Very Bad 23/274= 8,39%
- g) Don't know /don't answer 12/274= 4,37%

**Close to a majority of respondents finds the quality of teaching of History in their countries positive, around 47,79%** (Good for 28,83%, very good for 15,32% and excellent for 3,64%). It is neither good nor bad to 18,61%. It is badly valued to less than one third, 29,19% (20,8% bad and 8,39% very bad).

**xx. How do you evaluate the teaching of History in your country regarding nationalistic tone and contents?**

- a) Excessive 35/200= 17,5% + 8/74= 10,81%; 43/274= 15,69%
- b) **Adequate 104/200= 52% + 37/74=50%, 141/274= 51,45%**
- c) Not sufficient 44/200= 22% + 22/74= 29,7%; 66/274= 24%
- d) Don't know /don't answer 17/200= 8,5% + 4/74= 5,4%; 21/274= 7,66%

**51,45% of responses go along with the idea that the nationalistic tone and contents in the teaching of History is adequate** and 24% think it is still not sufficient. Less than one in five responses (15,69%) find the nationalistic tone and contents as excessive.

**xxi. Do you admit a common contemporary History curricula to the overall countries of former Yugoslavia?**

- a) Yes 99/274= 36,13%
- b) **No 61/274= 22,26%**
- c) Maybe 67/274= 24,4%
- d) Don't know /don't answer 47/274= 17,1%

Nevertheless, when asked if they admit a common contemporary History curricula to the overall countries of former Yugoslavia, a fundamental question in this survey, there is a very significant abstention (17,1%), although **over than 60% (36,13%+24,4%) see it possible or admit it**. Only less than one out of four respondents (22,26%) do not admit this idea /proposal.

**xxii. How do you perceive this idea?**

- a) **Excellent 46/274= 16,8%**
- b) **Very good 33/274= 12%**
- c) **Good 51/274= 18,6%**
- d) Neither good nor bad 35/274= 12,7%
- e) Bad 21/274= 7,66%
- f) Very Bad 3/274= 1,09%
- g) Impossible 31/274= 11,31%
- h) Don't know /don't answer 54/274= 19,7%

There is close to a majority in favor of such a measure, 47,4% (16,8% excellent, 12% very good and 18,6% good). 11,31% find it impossible to happen and **only 8,75% (7,66% bad and 1,09% very bad) show a negative feeling towards this proposal**. 12,77% finds it neither good nor bad. 22% do not know or do not answer.

**xxiii. What's your perception about the quality of Education system in the following countries and/or entities? (from 1 to 5, being 5 the most positive opinion)**

- a) Serbia 776/274= 2,83
- b) Kosovo 537/274= 1,95
- c) **Croatia 784/274= 2,86**
- d) Bosnia and Herzegovina 670/274= 2,44
- e) Federation Bosnia Herzegovina 588/274= 2,14
- f) Republika Srpska 275/274= 1,00
- g) Don't know /don't answer 10/274= 3,64%

The **perception about the quality of Education system in Croatia is valued 2,86 (on a 1-5 scale) and 2,83 in Serbia**. All other countries do not reach a positive evaluation and Republika Srpska is the worse (1). This question wanted to test the perception about the quality of education in Bosnia and Herzegovina on a state level and on the entities level, and showed that on the former the perception is better than on the latter (in RS and Federation separately the quality is worse than on the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

**xxiv. How do you evaluate the quality of media (TV, radio and newspapers) in your country?**

- a) Excellent 9/274= 3,28%
- b) Very good 27/274= 9,85%
- c) **Good 73/274= 26,64%**
- d) Neither good nor bad 65/274= 23,7%
- e) Bad 59/274= 21,53%
- f) Very Bad 38/274= 13,86%
- g) Don't know /don't answer 4/274= 1,45%

**Not even half of the respondents evaluate the quality of the media as positive (39,77%;** whereas it is good for 26,6%, very good for 9,85% and excellent for 3,28%), but are fewer those who evaluate it in a negative way (35,39%, whereas it is bad for 21,53% and very bad for 13,86%)<sup>533</sup>. For almost one in four of the respondents (23,7%) the quality of media is neither good nor bad.

**xxv. How do you evaluate the media in your country regarding nationalistic tone and contents?**

- a) Excessive 69/274= 25,18%
- b) **Adequate 101/274= 36,86%**
- c) Not sufficient 66/274= 24%
- d) Don't know /don't answer 38/274= 13,86%

The excess of nationalistic tone and content in the mainstream media in former Yugoslavia is far too evident. It was the author's surprise, that university students find it **essentially adequate (36,86%) and even not sufficient (24%)**. Nevertheless, one out of four (25,18%), finds it excessive. One of the respondents did not answer according to the proposed multiple-choice options, but instead wrote something that made the researcher reflect about the formulation of the question itself: **“Nationalistic rhetoric is irrelevant nowadays, populism has replaced it”**. This student, a Serbian male from the faculty of Philosophy at the University of Novi Sad may surely have a point.

**xxvi. What is your opinion about EU?**

- a) Excellent 22/274= 8,02%
- b) Very good 67/274= 24,45%

---

<sup>533</sup> The author admits an error in the set up of the survey in this question, since there are three categories for positive evaluation and only two for negative evaluation of the media (there should have been a category “awful”).

- c) Good 66/274= 24,08%
- d) **Neither good nor bad 75/274= 27,3%**
- e) Bad 18/270= 6,56%
- f) Very Bad 17/274= 6,20%
- g) Don't know /don't answer 9/274= 3,28%

**Positive opinions towards the EU still overcome the negative ones: 56,55%** (8,02% excellent; 24,45% very good; 24,08% good) **against 12, 76%** (6,56% bad, 6,2% very bad), since a significant proportion of the respondents, 27,3%, do not have either a good or bad opinion about the EU. Positive opinions towards EU score better, without including responses from Croatia, the only case in this research of a Member State.

**xxvii. What is your opinion regarding your country joining EU?**

- a) **Excellent 36/274= 13,1%**
- b) **Very good 62/274= 22,6%**
- c) **Good 34/150= 68/274= 24,8%**
- d) Neither good nor bad 49/274= 17,88%
- e) Bad 20/150= 33/274= 12,04%
- f) Very Bad 19/150= 20/274= 7,29%
- g) Don't know /don't answer 6/274= 2,18%

In line with the answers to the previous question, positive perceptions surpass the negative ones by large. **60,5% has an overall positive opinion about their countries joining the EU:** it is an excellent thing for 13,1%, very good for 22,6% and good for 24,8%. The negative ranks amount for almost twenty percent (19,33% - 12,04% bad and 7,29% very bad). One in each five respondents think their country joining the EU is neither good nor bad.

**xxviii. Do you plan to emigrate?**

- a) **Yes 79/274= 28,8%**
- b) No 61/274= 22,6%
- c) Maybe 121/274= 44,1%
- d) Don't know /don't answer 13/274= 4,7%



**Leaving the country is admitted by more than two thirds of the respondents.** 28,83% admit they are planning it, and 44,1% say that it is a possibility, which means 72,9% admits it, almost three out of four. Emigration is rejected by 22,6% of the respondents.

**xxix. If yes, do you admit to migrate to a country outside European Union?**

- a) Yes  $75/274= 27,37\%$
- b) No  $53/274= 19,34\%$
- c) **Maybe  $102/274= 37,22\%$**
- d) Don't know /don't answer  $44/274= 16\%$

The crisis in the Euro zone is very likely to have increased the proportion of those who plan to emigrate to a country outside EU, **64,59%, which means almost two thirds, at least admit that possibility.** Less than one out of five, 19,34% reject the idea.

**xxx. Do you admit to migrate to another former Yugoslav country?**

- a) Yes  $25/274= 9,12\%$
- b) **No  $157/274= 57,2\%$**
- c) Maybe  $66/274= 24,08\%$
- d) Don't know /don't answer  $27/274= 9,85\%$

It is **rather high the proportion of those who do not admit to migrate to another former Yugoslav country, 57,2%**, that is, clearly half of the respondents. Clearly admitting to migrate to another former Yugoslav country, only 9,12%.

**xxxi. Evaluate, from 1 to 10 your degree of concern regarding the following topics:**

- a) Peace  $1873/274= 6,83$
- b) Security  $1860/274= 6,78$
- c) **Employment  $2046/274= 7,46$**
- d) Justice  $1999/274= 7,29$
- e) Environment  $1842/274= 6,72$
- f) Public Finances  $1613/274= 5,88$
- g) Culture  $1829/274= 6,67$
- h) **Family  $2053/274= 7,49$**

- i) Religion 1239/274= 4,52
- j) Politics 1488/274= 5,43
- k) Others (mention one, please)
- l) Don't know /don't answer

On a 1-10 scale, in countries affected by wars in the past few decades, 'peace' is not the major degree of concern, but **“family” (7,49) and “employment” (7,46)**, which means a sense of normality. Only after those, come justice (7,29), peace (6,83), and security (6,78). Not surprisingly, but no less revealing, religion (4,52) is the topic which causes less degree of concern among the university students who responded the survey.

**xxxii. What's the level of your expectations in finding a job compatible with your qualifications and/or area of expertise?**

- a) High 42/274= 15,32%
- b) Sufficient 77/274= 28,1%
- c) Low 99/274= 36,13%**
- d) Almost none 32/274= 11,67%
- e) None 13/274= 4,74%
- f) Don't know /don't answer 11/274=4,01%

**Almost 43,4% of the respondents have high and /or sufficient expectations in finding a job compatible with His / Her qualifications and/or area of expertise. That expectation is low for a significant minority (36,1%) almost none for 10,94% and none for 4,74%, an overall proportion of negative expectations of 51%.**

**xxxiii. Point out your world's favorite football player from the following names:**

- a) Lionel Messi 67/274= 24,45%
- b) Cristiano Ronaldo 41/274= 14,96%
- c) Iniesta 7/274= 2,55%
- d) Neymar 7/274= 2,55%
- e) Iker Casillas 16/274= 5,83%
- f) Zlatan Ibrahimovic 31/274= 11,3%**
- g) Gareth Bale 1/274= 0,36%

h) (Other; mention please)\_ Andrea Pirlo (2), Fabregas; Drogba; Piquet, Gerard; Ronaldinho (2); Ozil, Pavel Nevdev; Zidane; Xavi, (2). 14/274= 5%

i) Don't know /don't answer 91/274= 33%

In a time when most of the world football fans would whether vote for Lionel Messi (24,45%) or Cristiano Ronaldo (14,96%), **there is a significant result on Zlatan Ibrahimovic, a Swedish from Muslim Bosnian origins (11,31%)**. This was the idea of this question: to acknowledge the degree of sympathy that could collect a foreign football player, but from Balkans' origins. There is a significant group of those who don't know or don't answer (33,21%). Results mostly collected before 2014 Brazil World Cup.

**xxxiv. Point out your regional favorite football player from the following names:**

a) Nemanja Vidic 53/274 = 19,3%

**b) Luka Modric 62/274= 22,6%**

c) Edin Dzeko 32/274 = 11,67%

d) Mario Mandžukić 32/274= 11,67%

e) Nemanja Matić 3/274= 1%

f) Xherdan Shaqiri 7/274= 2,55%

g) Miralem Pjanić 17/274= 6,2%

h) (Other; mention please) Branislav Ivanovic (2); Stevan Jovetic; Darijo Srna (6); Ivan Rakitic(2); Mladen Petric; Dragan Stojkovic, Nemanja Nikoloic; Nijo Kranjcar; 15/274= 5,47%

i) Don't know /don't answer 53/274 = 19,34%

Serb Nemanja Vidic (Manchester United), 19,3%. Bosnian Edin Dzeko (Roma) (211,67%), Croat Luca Modric (Real Madrid), 22,6%. There is a significant group of those who don't know or don't answer (19,34%). **When one details the voting by countries, it comes obvious that the option goes along national/ethnic lines. Results mostly collected before 2014 Brazil World Cup.**

**xxxv. Point out your world's favorite cinema director from the following names:**

a) Joel & Ethan Cohen 27/274= 9,85%

b) James Cameron 105/274= 38,32%

c) Alejandro Iñárritu 19/274= 6,93%

d) Jean Luc Goddard 2/274= 0,72%

e) Kathryn Bigelow 1/274= 0,36%

f) Tom Hooper 1/274= 0,36%

g) (Other; mention please) Christopher Nolan 4; Jackson 2; Luc Besson, Scorsese 2; Tarantino 8; Tim Burton 2; Spielberg; Peter Jackson, Martin Scorsese, Stanley Kubrick, Wes Anderson; Almodovar, Woody Allen = 26/274= 9,48%

h) Don't know /don't answer 93/274= 33,9%

**Jean Luc Goddard filmed about Sarajevo and was an intellectual activist against the siege to the city during the conflict in the 90's. However, that has not played any kind of special role** when respondents were asked to name their favourite cinema director. **James Cameron (38,3%) leads the preferences.** Besides, Mr. Cameron was very active in solidarity campaigns with the victims from the conflict in Kosovo in the late nineties<sup>534</sup>.

**xxxvi. Point out your world's favourite cinema director from former Yugoslavia countries:**

a) **Emir Kusturica 82/274= 29,92%**

b) Vinko Bresan 42/274= 15,32%

c) Aida Begic 3/274= 1,09%

d) Ognjen Sivilic 4/274= 1,45%

e) Goran Paskaljević 12/274= 4,37%

f) Danis Tanovic 20/274= 7,29%

g) (Other; mention please) Zoran Calic (2); Zelimir Zilnik; Dusan Kovacevic; Antun Vordljak (2); Ademir Kenovic (2); 8/274= 2,91%

h) Don't know /don't answer 80/200= 40% + 23/74=31% = 103/274= 37,59%

**The most renowned Balkans' film director, Emir Kusturica, leads the preferences (29,92%).** There is a quite significant abstention (37,59%), but it is noticeable that the fact that Kusturica, born in Sarajevo but moved to Belgrade during the civil war in Bosnia may not be a decisive element to acknowledge student's preferences as it was a decade ago, when he was mostly regarded as pro-Serbian<sup>535</sup>. The Bosnian director Danis Tanovic, Óscar award-winning is also on high preference (16,6%).

**xxxvii. Point out your world's favourite writer:**

a) Stieg Larsson 22/274= 8,02%

b) **Stephen King 73/274= 26,64%**

c) Isabel Allende 6/274= 2,18%

---

<sup>534</sup> <http://investor.yahoo.net/releasedetail.cfm?releaseid=173628>.

<sup>535</sup> About controversies and scholarly debates around the work of Emir Kusturica see chapter 2.

d) E.L. James  $9/274= 3,28\%$

e) José Saramago  $5/274= 1,82\%$

f) Danielle Steel  $34/274= 12,40\%$

g) (Other; mention please) Agatha Christie (3), Albert Camus (4), Aldous Huxley, Alessandro Baricco, Amin Maluf, Anders de la Motte (2), Charles Dickens, Ernest Hemingway (2), Edgar Allan Poe (2), Fjodor Dostoyevsky (4), Franz Kafka, G.R.R. Martin (7), Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Goethe (2), Gore Vidal, Hesse, J.K.Rowling, Jo Nesbo (2), Jorge Bucay (2), Lee Child (2), Lev Tolstoi (2), Paulo Coelho (4), Sergej Jesenjin, Susana Elisabeth Phillips (2), Tolkien.  $51/274= 18,6\%$

h) Don't know/don't answer  $74/274= 27\%$

**Stephen King, one of world's bestselling writer, leads the preferences** among Balkans' university students who answered the survey;  $22,2\%$  followed by Danielle Steel ( $12,40\%$ ) and Stieg Larsson ( $8,02\%$ ). There was no apparent influence of the nationality of the author on the results of José Saramago (only  $1,82\%$ ). There is a significant proportion of people who don't know /don't answer ( $27\%$ ).

**xxxviii. Point out your former Yugoslavia countries' favorite writer:**

a) Ivo Andric  $96/274= 35\%$

b) Dubravka Ugresic  $0\%$

c) Aleksandar Hemon  $2/274= 0,72\%$

d) Miroslav Krleža  $83/274= 30,29\%$

e) Dragan Velikić  $0\%$

f) Ismail Kadaré  $32/274= 11,67\%$

g) (Other factor; mention please) Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj, Mesa Selimovic (3), Miljenko, Jergovic, Miro Gavran, Matija Bečković, Dragoslav Mihailovic, Stanko Vraz, Tin Ujevic (2), Vladimir Arsenjevic, Dobrica Cosic  $7/200= 3,5\%$ ;  $13/274= 4,74\%$

h) Don't know /don't answer  $47/274= 17,15\%$

**The Yugoslav Nobel Ivo Andric is pointed out by 35% of the respondents.** Most respondents from Croatia voted for Miroslav Krleža ( $30,29\%$ ) and most from Kosovo chose Albanian writer Ismail Kadaré ( $11,67\%$ ).

**xxxix. Point out your favorite world's pop/rock band/artist:**

a) U2  $37/200= 50/274= 18,24\%$

b) Radiohead  $17/274= 6,2\%$

c) Madonna  $6/274= 2,18\%$

d) Britney Spears  $12/274= 4,37\%$

e) Metallica  $25/200= 32/274= 11,67\%$

f) Muse  $11/274= 4\%$

g) Black Keys  $20/274= 7,29\%$

h) Rihanna  $41/274= 14,96\%$

i) (Other; mention please) 2Pac, AC/DC, Adam Levine, Aerosmith, Arctic Monkeys, Black Sabbath, Breaking Benjamin, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Coldplay, Dean Martin, David Guetta (2), Edith Piaff, Enrique Iglesias, Fleet Foxes, Guns'n'Roses, Hozier, Iron Maiden, John Mayer, Johnny Cash, Led Zeppelin, Manu Chao, Maroon5 (3), Nick Cave, Pink, Pink Floyd (3), Bob Dylan, Queen, Rise Against, Robbie Williams (2), Rolling Stones, Shakira (2), Shakin' Stevens, Simple Minds, Slayer, Slipknot, Steely Dan, SZA, Taylor Swift, The Clash, The National, Thompson, Elvis.  $49/274= 17,88\%$

j) Don't know /don't answer  $36/274= 13,13\%$

The Irish pop-rock stars, U2, very active in the artistic and intellectual defence of Sarajevo during the Serbian siege to the city (they even composed a song called Miss Sarajevo featuring Luciano Pavarotti) collect 18,24% of the preferences.

#### **xl. Point out your favorite pop/rock band/artist from former Yugoslavia:**

a) Crvena Jabuka  $8/200= 4\% + 3/74= 4,0\%$ ;  $11/274= 4,01\%$

b) Goran Bregovic  $7/200= 3,5\%$ ;  $7/274= 2,55\%$

**c) Bjelo Dugme  $78/274= 28,46\%$**

d) Boban Marković  $0/200= 0\%$

e) Rita Ora  $32/200= 16\% + 2/74= 2,7\%$ ;  $34/274= 12,4\%$

f) Riblja Čorba  $13/200= 6,5\% + 5/74= 6,75\%$ ;  $18/274= 6,56\%$

g) Thompson  $17/274= 6,2\% + 6/74= 8,10\%$ ;  $23/274= 8,39\%$

h) S.A.R.S  $33/200= 16,5\% + 14/74= 18,9\%$ ;  $47/274= 17,15\%$

i) (Other; mention please) Arsen Dedic (2), Azra (4), Bajaga, Darko Rundek, Dino Merlin (4), Drugi Nacin, Dubioza Kolektiv (2), Ekatarina Velika (3), Foltin, Goblini, Hladno Pivo, Jinx, Jura Stublic, Petar Grašo, Pips Chips and Videoclips, Prljavo kazalište, Psihomodo Pop, Sabri Fejzullahu, Sarlo Akrobata, Smak, Zdravko Colic, Dorde Balasevic.  $21/200= 10,5\%$ ;  $33/274= 12\%$

j) Don't know /don't answer –  $23/274= 8,39\%$

Rita Ora, born in 1990 in Pristina, to Kosovar-Albanian parents, moved to the United Kingdom when she was still a baby, but she enjoys a huge popularity among the kosovar youth and abroad. In fact, she became the artist with the most number-one singles on the UK Singles Chart in 2012. **Bijelo Dugme (trans. White Button, cited by 28,46%** of the respondents) was a former Yugoslav rock band, based in Sarajevo, considered to have been the most popular band that ever existed in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

**xli. Is there a true reconciliation between nations from former Yugoslavia?**

- a) Yes  $72/274= 26,27\%$
- b) No  $127/274= 46,35\%$
- c) Maybe  $27/274= 9,85\%$
- d) Don't know /don't answer  $49/274= 17,88\%$

Almost half of the respondents (**46,3%**) **do not believe that there is a true reconciliation between nations in former Yugoslavia**. There is reconciliation for less than one in three (26,27%) and maybe for 9,85%. 17,88% Don't know /don't answer.

**xlii. Which are the factors that would allow a stringer and more effective reconciliation among countries and peoples from former Yugoslavia? (from 1 to 5, according to increasing importance you give to each of the possible choices)**

- a) Trial and condemnation of war criminals  $785/274= 2,86$
- b) Creation of True and Reconciliation Commissions  $745/274= 2,71$
- c) Return of refugees and IDPs (internally displaced persons)  $731/274= 2,66$
- d) Return of properties to its owners previous to war  $765/274= 2,79$
- e) Strengthening of criminal punishment against 'hate speech'  $857/274= 3,12$**
- f) Other factors  $460/274= 1,67$
- g) Don't know /don't answer  $56/274= 20,43$

The factors that would allow a more effective reconciliation among countries and peoples from former Yugoslavia, though there is a significant abstention (20,4% of the respondents), would be the **Strengthening of criminal punishment against 'hate speech'** (average of **3,12 on a 1-5 scale**), followed at big distance the trial and condemnation of war criminals (2,86). Considering an academic research as a process and, as said early in the introduction to this research, that the work on the field may influence the researcher on his/her prior ideas, this one, assumes that, from the evidence from what was analyzed, people with whom one has spoken to and literature consulted, besides the responses to the survey, it would have been a

far more accurate question if a factor such as “equality of opportunities to jobs regardless ethnicity” had been included in the options above.

**xliii. Do you agree with this sentence: “There will be a lasting peace time in the Balkans”?**

a) Yes  $98/274= 35,7\%$

b) No  $47/274= 17,15\%$

**c) Maybe  $117/274= 42,7\%$**

d) Don't know /don't answer  $12/274= 4,37\%$

**The “Yes” and “maybe” answers, respectively with 35,7% and 42,7%,** altogether, lead us to an optimistic vision about a peaceful future in the region. But still 17,15% believe that there won't be a lasting peace time in the Balkans.



**ANNEX B – LIST OF INTERVIEWS UNDER THIS DISSERTATION\***

Mila Turajlic, October 2011 (Lisbon)

Ljubomir Stanisic, January 2012 (Lisbon)

Paul Collier, September 2012 (Lisbon)

Rogers Brubaker, March 2012 (London)

David Owen, March 2012 (Lisbon)

Damjan Mandelc, April 2012 (London)

Vuk Jeremic, March 2012 (Lisbon)

James Wasserstrom, June 2012 (Thessaloniki)

Indira Mandzuka, April 2012 (Sarajevo)

Vesna Pusic, April 2013 (Zagreb)

Olinka Vistica, May 2013 (Zagreb)

Andrea Doko Jelusic, May 2013 (Zagreb)

Dana Budisavljevic, May 2013 (Zagreb)

Srdjan Dvornik, May 2013 (Zagreb)

Dervo Sejdic and Jakob Finci, May 2013 (Sarajevo)

Svetlana Broz Tito, May 2013 (Sarajevo)

Ivan Vejvoda, May 2013 (Belgrade)

Nicholas Kralev, October 2013 (Lisbon)

Daniel Inerarity, December 2013 (Lisbon)

Anthony Beevor, June 2014 (Lisbon)

Mark Mazower, June 2014 (Lisbon)

Luís Moita, July 2014 (Lisbon)

Mariano Aguirre, July 2014 (Lisbon)

José Manuel Pureza, July (Lisbon) and September 2014 (Coimbra)

Robert Meyerson, September 2014 (Lisbon)

Zoran Zivkovic, September 2014 (Lisbon)

Dale Buscher, March 2015 (New York City)

Damir Arsenjievic, April 2015 (New York City)

Robert Donia, April 2015 (New York City)

Aleksandar Hemon, May 2015 (New York City)

Irena Skoric, May 2015 (New York City)

Zlatko Filipovic, May 2015 (New York City)

Damir Pozderac, May 2015 (New York City)

Muamer Celik, May 2015 (New York City)

Rialda Zukic, May 2015 (New York City)

Sanida Lukovic, May 2015 (New York City)

Djana Jelaca, May 2015 (New York City)

Laura Silber, May 2015 (New York City)

Susan Woodward, May 2015 (New York City)

Kurt Bassuener, May 2015 (New York City)

Milica Uvalic, May 2015 (New York City)

Jack Snyder, June 2015 (New York City)

Severine Autesserre, June 2015 (New York City)

Elazar Barkan, June 2015 (New York City)

Elisabeth King, June 2015 (New York City)

Jenifer Trahan, June 2015 (New York City)

\*Audio recording of the interviews can be provided to the jury members upon request.

**ANNEX C – OTHER INTERVIEWS AND FROM “POR UMA  
VIDA NORMAL”\*\***

Radovan Karadžić , 1996 (Pale)

Captain Dragan, 1999 (Belgrade) (+)

Sasa Mirkovic, May 1999 (Belgrade) (+)

Vladimir Jovic, May 1999 (Belgrade) (+)

Jovan Cirilov, May 1999 (Belgrade) (+)

Maja Makaric, May 1999 (Belgrade) (+)

Vojin Dimitrijevic, May 1999 (Belgrade) (+)

Vesna Pesic, May 1999 and October 2000 (Belgrade) (+)

Vojislav Kostunica, June and October 2000 (Belgrade) (+)

Vuk Obradovic, October 2000 (Belgrade) (+)

Momcilo Perisic, October 2000 (Belgrade) (+)

Miodrag Vukovic, October 2000 (Podgorica) (+)

Borka Pavicevic, October 2000 (+) and June 2005 (Belgrade)

Zoran Djindjic, May 1999 (Herceg Novi) (+)

Zeljko Raznatovic Arkan, May 1999 (Belgrade) (+)

Natália Milanovic, June 2000 (Brzovica, Kosovo) (+)

Bernard Kouchner, June 2000 (Pristina) (+)

Ramush Haradinaj, June 2000 (Pristina) (+)

Misa Vidic, June 2000 (Belgrade) (+)

Hashim Thaçi, 2000 (+) and 2007 (Pristina)

Stevan Nikšić, June 2000 (+) and 2005 (Belgrade)

Boris Pavlovic, June 2005 (Belgrade)

Jovana Cerbanovic, June 2005 (Belgrade)

Olivera Batajic, June 2005 (Belgrade)

Jovan Divjak, June 2005 (Sarajevo)

Sulejman Tihic, June 2005 (Sarajevo)

Sanela Lakovic, June 2005 (Sarajevo)

Frederico Silva, June 2005 (Sarajevo)

Dunja Potocnik, June 2005 (Zagreb)

Fatmir Sejdiu, February 2007 (Pristina)

Raul Cunha, February 2007 (Pristina)

Dardan Sejdiu, February 2007 (Pristina)

Ulpiana Lama, February 2007 (Pristina)

Leon Kipred, February 2007 (Pristina)

Joachim Rucker, February 2007 (Pristina)

Oliver Ivanovic, June 2000 (+) and 2007 (Mitrovica)

Vehbi Beqiri, June 2000 (Mitrovica south) (+)

Boris Tadić, February 2007 (Belgrade)

Bozidar Djelic, February 2007 (Belgrade)

Slavenka Drakulic, May 2010 (Lisbon)

\*\* Audio recording from most interviews can be provided to jury members upon request; those published in the book “Por Uma Vida Normal” (+) can be provided in Word format besides the book reference in page 327.

## ANNEX D – TABLES OF UNIVERSITIES PER COUNTRY

	Public	Private
Universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Sarajevo	Sarajevo (5)
	East Sarajevo	Banja Luka (3)
	Banja Luka	Travnik (2) Mostar
	Mostar (2)	Tuzla
	Zenica	Medjugorje
	Bihac	Slobomir
	Tuzla	Bjeljina
	Travnik Lukavica	Kiseljak Gorazde

Source: <http://www.4icu.org/ba/>;

	Public	Private
Universities in	Zagreb	Zagreb
Croatia	Osijek	Split
	Pula	Dubrovnik
	Dubrovnik	
	Zadar	
	Rijeka	
	Split Koprivnica	

Source: <http://www.4icu.org/hr/>;

	Public	Private
Universities in	Belgrade (2)	Belgrade (6)

Serbia	Novi Sad	Novi Sad
	Novi Pazar	N.Pazar (Foundation)
	Kragujevac	Sremska Kamenica
	Nis	

Source: <http://www.4icu.org/rs/universities-serbia.htm>

	Public	Private
<u>Universities in</u>		
Kosovo	Pristina	Pristina (8)
	Mitrovica	
	Prizren	
	Pec	
	Ferizaj	
	Gjakova	
	Gjilan	
	North Mitrovica	

Sources: <http://www.uni-pr.edu/Ballina.aspx?lang=en-US>.

<https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2015/06/jar-english-2014.pdf>.



**ANNEX E (MAPS)**

1. Former Yugoslavia by republics



<http://maps.nationmaster.com/country/yu/1>

## 2. Former Yugoslavia by ethnic groups



<https://goo.gl/images/XGOWbg>



### 3. Bosnia and Herzegovina



<http://maps.nationmaster.com/country/bk/1>

4. Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina by entities



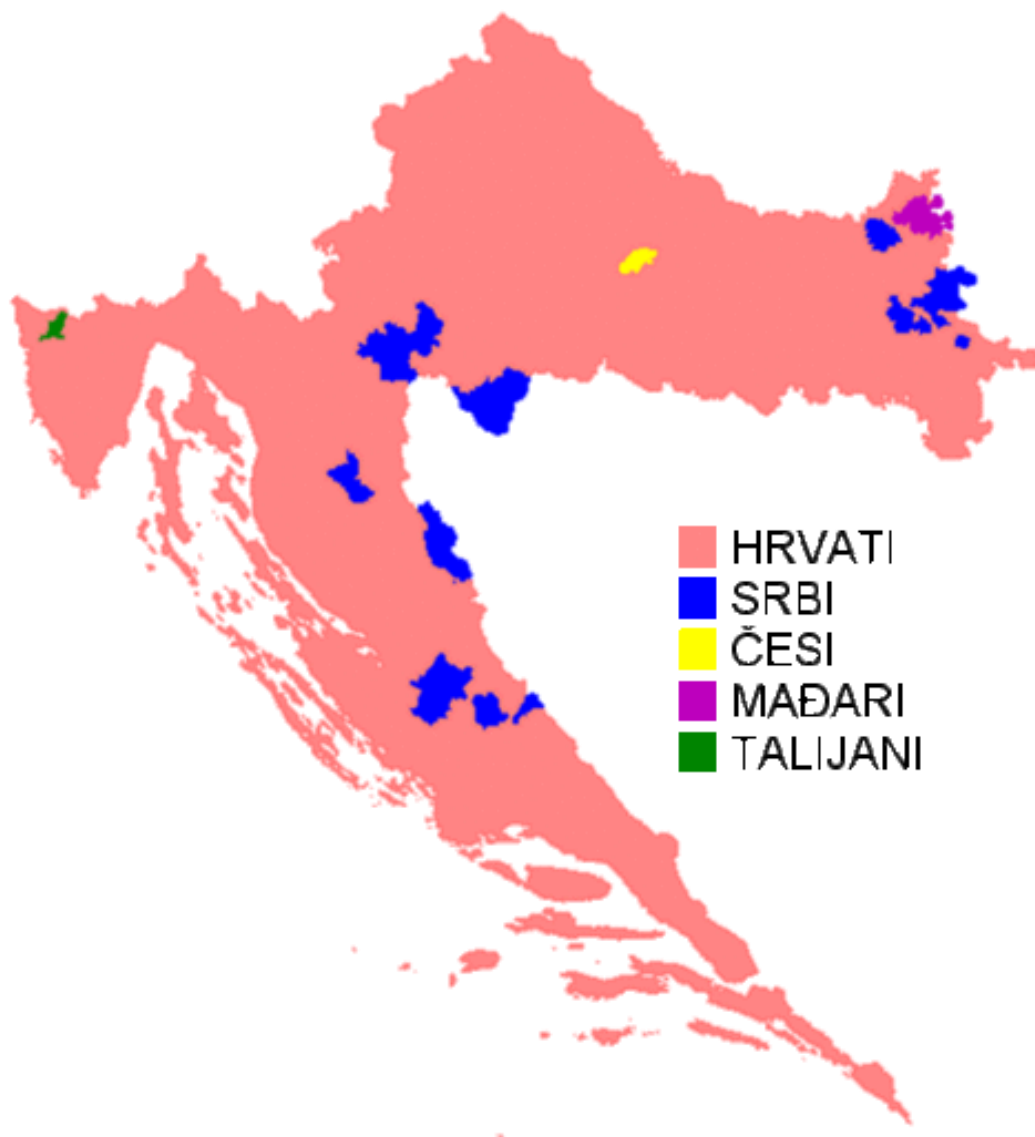
<https://goo.gl/images/5Um49o>

5. Map of Croatia:



[http://www.besttourism.com/img/items/big/6795/Croatia\\_Map-of-Croatia\\_7763.jpg](http://www.besttourism.com/img/items/big/6795/Croatia_Map-of-Croatia_7763.jpg)

6. Map of Croatia by ethnicity:





<https://goo.gl/images/UfKO14>

7. Map of Croatia by ethnicity before the war and secession:



▲ Fig. 1: Map of Croatia during the war.

In red: Serb occupied and ethnically cleansed of non-Serbs areas of Croatia 1991 - 199

<https://goo.gl/images/uK5J9N>

8. Map of Serbia



<http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/serbiaandmontenegro.html>



## 9. Map of Serbia by ethnicity

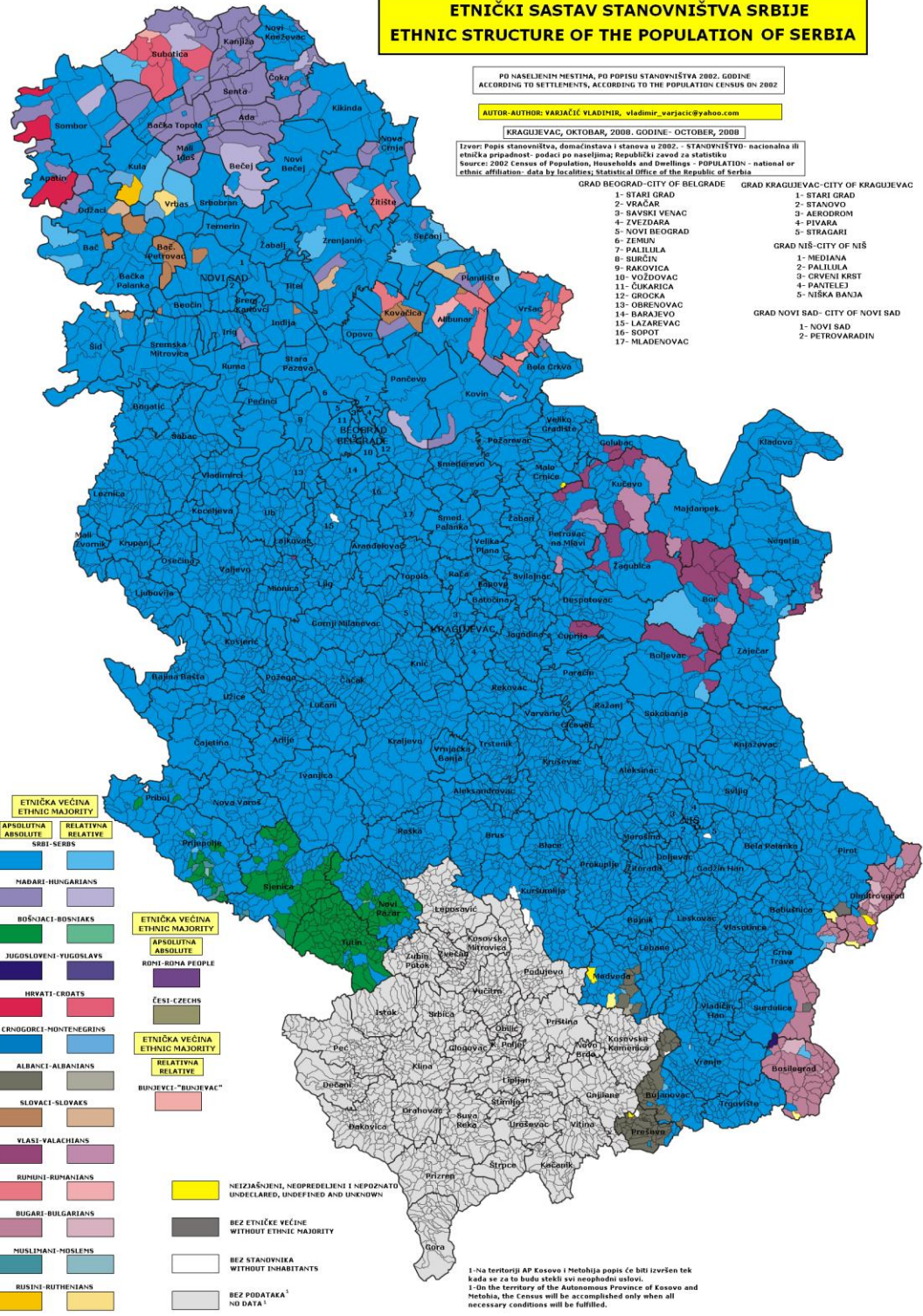
## ETNIČKI SASTAV STANOVNIŠTVA SRBIJE ETHNIC STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF SERBIA

PO NASELJENIM MESTIMA, PO POPISU STANOVNIŠTVA 2002. GODINE  
ACCORDING TO SETTLEMENTS, ACCORDING TO THE POPULATION CENSUS ON 2002

AUTOR-AUTHOR: VARJAČIĆ VLADIMIR, vladimir\_varjacic@yahoo.com

KRAGUJEVAC, OKTOBAR, 2008. GODINE- OCTOBER, 2008

Izvor: Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava i stanova u 2002. - STANOVNIŠTVO- nacionalna ili etnička pripadnost- podaci po naseljima; Republički zavod za statistiku  
Source: 2002 Census of Population, Households and Dwellings - POPULATION- national or ethnic affiliation- data by localities, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia



[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Census\\_2002\\_Serbia\\_ethnic\\_map\\_\(by\\_localities\).png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Census_2002_Serbia_ethnic_map_(by_localities).png)

10. Map of Kosovo



<http://www.lahistoriaconmapas.com/atlas/landkarte/Kosovo-Karte-St%C3%A4dte.htm>

11. Map of Kosovo by ethnic groups in the 1990s

## Ethnic Majorities 1991



Yugoslav Census (1991)		
Albanian	1,596,072	81.6%
Serbian	194,190	9.9%
Muslim	66,189	3.4%
Roma	45,745	2.3%
Other	53,989	2.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,956,185</b>	

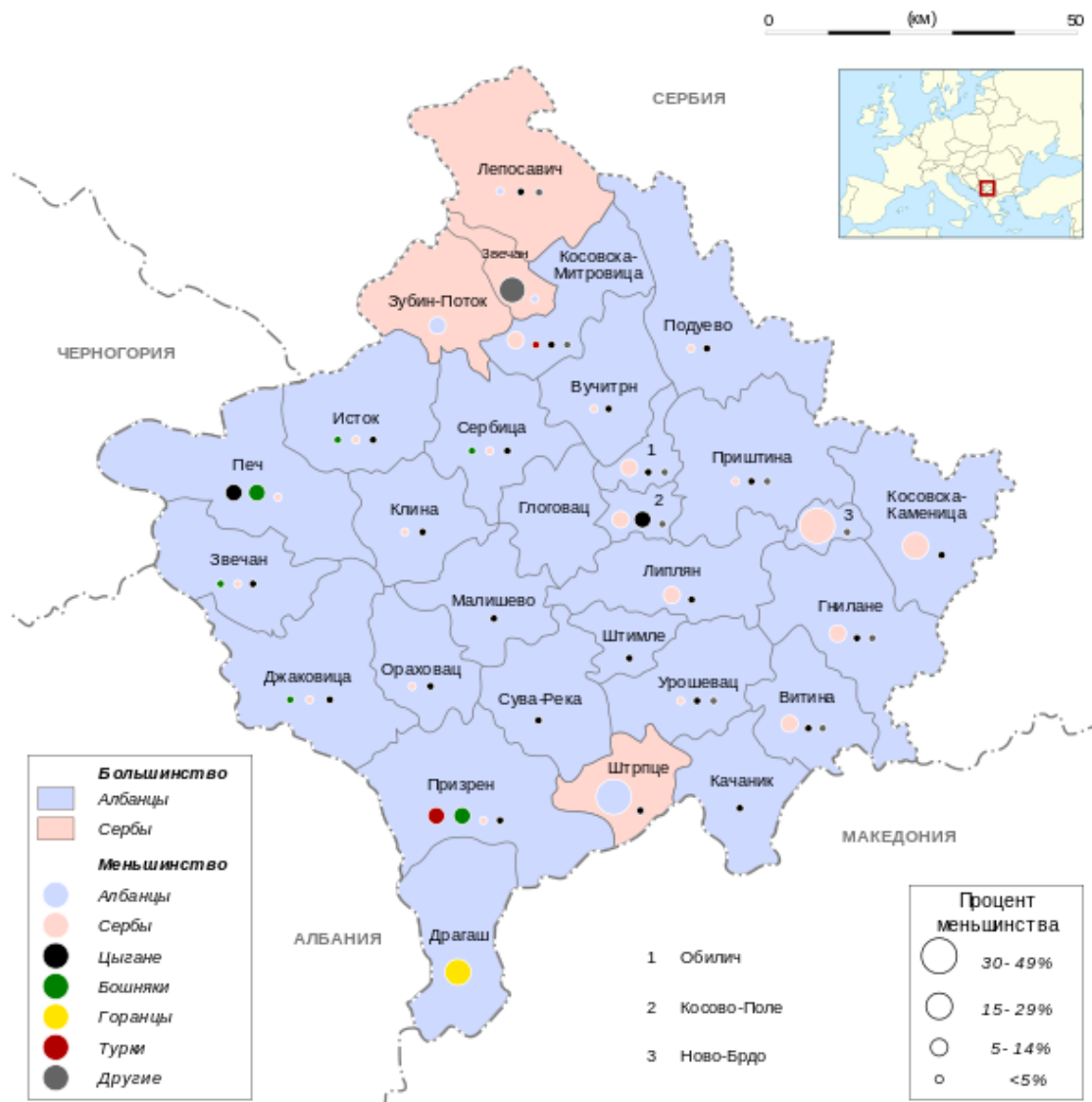
NOTE  
The majority of ethnic Albanians boycotted the 1991 census. The table on the left reflects official estimates made by the Yugoslav Institute of Statistics.

**HCIC KOSOVO** Humanitarian Community Information Centre  
 Pristina, Kosovo - 10 February 2000  
 Sources: NIMA, Yugoslav Institute of Statistics, UNHCR

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/ks-maps.htm>

12. Map of Kosovo by ethnicity 2005





[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kosovo\\_ethnic\\_map\\_2005-ru.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kosovo_ethnic_map_2005-ru.svg)

**ANNEX F – LIST OF FILMS**

From the author's Balkans film collection in DVD (title/director):

Perfect Circle – Ademir Kenovic  
Pretty Dyana – Boris Mitic  
UNMIK Titanik – Boris Mitic  
Kosovo: Crimes de Guerra - Charles Bnamé  
Terra de Ninguém – Danis Tanovic  
Vizantijsko Plavo – Dragan Marinkovic  
Lembras-te de Dolly Bell – Emir Kusturica  
O Pai Foi em Viagem de Negócios - Emir Kusturica  
No Tempo dos Ciganos - Emir Kusturica  
Life is a Miracle - Emir Kusturica  
Gato Branco Gato Preto - Emir Kusturica  
Super 8 Stories - Emir Kusturica  
Arizona Dream - Emir Kusturica  
Tango Argentino – Goran Paskaljevica  
Tudja Amerika - Goran Paskaljevica  
Jugofilm – Goran Rebic  
Cinema Komunisto – Mira Turajlic  
Vukovar: Independent from the Truth – Veran Matic  
Vampiri Su Medu Nama – Zoran Calic