

phase of its development. That new phase is, primarily, to mean a de-dogmatization of the historical science and its emancipation from a negative heritage. It should also mean a change in the evaluation and scientific judgments. Instead of having a situation in which the evaluation judgments determine the scientific ones, the scientific judgments should be primary, while the evaluation judgments are to be a consequence of the scientific ones.

A new phase is to mean a turn from the ideological historiography towards a scientific one, from the objectivistic to a critical one, from the positivistic to a theorizing and theoretical one, from the individualizing and partializing to a globalizing and totalizing one, from the independent and self-satisfying to an integrating historiography.

The new phase should mean an advance of the historical science to a synthetic level, to a level of theoretical syntheses and achievement of higher level truths. It should understand an advancement of the methodology of historical research and an expansion of contacts and of the cooperation with related scientific disciplines. As a matter of fact, the synthetic phase requires not only a unification of the individualizing and globalizing methods, but also the application of interdisciplinary criteria in the process of scientific research.

The synthetic level of science means that the principle of coordination in the research and presentation of events is to be replaced by the principle of subordination. This means that instead of placing the events and facts next to each other, i.e. in the foreground, only the most essential fact is to be placed in the fore-

ground, while the others are to be derived out of it, and then ranked accordingly. More particularly, it would mean that the attitude towards the occupier is to be taken as the primary standpoint and the highest criterion, so that the military and political movements and protagonists can be characterized from that point of view, i.e. according to the fact whether and to what an extent have they practically contributed to the military defeat of the enemy.

In order to be raised to a synthetic level, the historical science must be, to a certain extent and in a certain way, a philosophy of history. This philosophical dimension of the historical science would enable it not only to overcome the positivism and the limits of empiricism and facticism, but also to justify the events, and better to understand the internal connections, as well as to help it advance to the level of totality.

Beside these global tasks, the historical science also has some specific tasks today, which are to be pointed out.

There are four such essential tasks to be achieved by the historical science of today. The first task is to study and objectively to evaluate all over again the things which have not been given due attention so far. The second task is to revise, and even to abandon the standpoints and judgements which have not withstood the test of time, or which are denied, or even refuted by the new documents or knowledge. The third task is more precisely to determine and supplement the things which have not been sufficiently founded or duly explained. The fourth task is to put more emphasis on the significance of the outstanding events, which have not been given due attention so far.

## YUGOSLAVIA

### The Yugoslav Successor Wars: Did We Fan the Flames?

Carl G. JACOBSEN

Euroasian Security Studies, Carleton University, Canada

As Yugoslavia's successor wars flare up, again, so does the demonizing of enemies and whitewash of friends. Yet the self-serving propaganda of civil war combatants and their allies is rarely borne out by history. With one-sided media coverage threatening to draw others into the carnage, it is time for a review,

time to recognize our own mistakes and bias.

The 1991-92 rush to recognize the former republics of Yugoslavia and the USSR within their existing boundaries was perceived as a moral imperative. Obstacles of international and national law were set aside. The haste was a post Cold War yet quintessen-

tially Cold War reflex, assuming the secessionists' democratic credentials. In Yugoslavia's case these assumptions were reinforced by a Croatian PR campaign that effectively set the moral tone and agenda – though pragmatic reasons of *real-politik* lurked beneath the surface (see below).

The recognitions of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia were startling in that they contravened the recognizing countries' own rules for recognition. The new states did not have uncontested control of their territories; in some cases minority-dominated and other regions opposed independence. The recognitions contravened the Helsinki Accords that sanctified existing European boundaries – and stipulated that these could be changed only with the consent of the affected state(s), in this case, Yugoslavia.

Slovene, Croat and selected others were granted self-determination as a natural right. Yet the international community had previously been unwilling to concede such rights to other minority ethnic populations. Since fighting its own Civil War to deny secession the United States – and its Allies – consistently opposed secessionist aspirations elsewhere, even where these enjoyed popular support.

The recognition of secessionist states' former administrative borders, meant that the right to self-determination was not extended to *their* minorities. This ignored the ramifications of these borders' origin. In Yugoslavia as in the USSR they were not congruent with ethnic space. They were drawn to satisfy the agendas of the respective dictatorships. In some cases they incorporated other ethnic groups precisely so as to make secession impracticable (as in Croatia, Bosnia and Soviet Georgia); in others they did it to buy whoever's allegiance was less certain (as when Stalin gave Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan), as compensation for perceived loss (as when Stalin gave Vilnius to Lithuania), or as reward for loyalty (as when Khrushchev gave Crimea to Ukraine). Many of these were borders whose recognition would prescribe war rather than peace.

This was particularly true in Croatia. Croatian Serbs had no need of Belgrade propaganda. President Tudjman's embraced the checkerboard emblem of World War 2 Croatia, a Nazi puppet state which the Nuremberg Tribunal judged guilty of genocide against Serbs, Jews and Gypsies. He suspended police and judicial authorities in districts that voted against him. He promulgated a draft constitution that omitted Serbs from the list of constituent peoples (Western pressure forced amendment, but it was too late). A pale blue "black book" listed Serb names in Western Slavonia, as Germany and Egypt once marked Jewish doors. The first ethnic cleansing, ordered by Croat commanders – sparked the ensuing civil war, and Krajina Serb secession. Clearly, to expect Serbs to accept this Croatia's sovereignty was akin to expecting Jews

to accept a Germany that embraced the Swastika. It made war inevitable.

It would also be true in Bosnia. The 1991 Bosnian Assembly Muslim-Croat vote for independence saw Serb walk-out, followed by a Serb referendum that voted overwhelmingly for Yugoslav affiliation. The consequent illegality of the breakaway decision (Bosnia's constitution stipulated inter-ethnic agreement as precondition for change) was ignored by its champions. Nevertheless, many Serbs, evincing inculcated Yugoslav non-nationalism, seeing the bloodshed in Croatia, and confident in most Muslims' secular credentials, were willing to accept the momentum to independence.

The acceptance evaporated when Muslim President Izetbegović withdrew his signature from the Lord Carrington brokered Lisbon agreement that divided Bosnia into three regions (he was supported by US Ambassador Warren Zimmerman). Izetbegović, true to his earlier *Islamic Declaration* (a fundamentalist clarion call) and friendship with Ayatollah Khomeini, then used Iranian sponsored Mojaheddins from Lebanon in preemptive offensives against Serb communities in eastern Bosnia and Bijeljina – embedding Serb paranoia.

Warren Zimmerman later reconsidered. George Kenney, the US State Department official who resigned, demanding *more* support for Izetbegović, also reconsidered; he now sees Izetbegović's government as a "clique of nationalist politicians...inexperienced, corrupt". So would James Baker, the Secretary of State who also sponsored the original recognitions: he now bemoans the acceptance of Yugoslav dismemberment – and acknowledges that Slovene and Croat use of "force to seize their border posts...triggered the civil conflict..."

Yet the Zimmerman intervention was but the first US intervention to shore up the Izetbegović government, and sabotage attempts to explore compromise solutions – and effectively resuscitate the Carrington formula. Washington provided covert military aid prior to the Muslim offensive out of Bihać in 1994, and to their ceasefire-breaking 1995 attacks against the northern Serb "corridor". US officials called for airstrikes against Serbs, and encouraged Iranian arms shipments in defiance of the UN embargo – all justified by asserted Serb culpability. Yet the selective manufacturing and gross exaggeration of this theme undercut its moral authority. The contrived moral parameters and the question of more pragmatic, underlying interests of geo-politics and economic advantage are addressed below.

But there is one other aspect of the legalization of Yugoslav dismemberment that deserves attention. It was not merely aberrational in terms of previously developed international law. It was also soon assigned to remain aberrational – as seen in later atti-

tudes towards the separatist Parti Québécois of Canada's Quebec province. Quebec, of course, is a close analogue to Croatia: its deeply split French majority coexists with federalist Anglo and immigrant communities (who with French federalists are Canada's "Yugoslavs"), and with Aboriginal groups that constitute clear majorities within their regions.

Following the PQ's 1994 election victory, on a platform that promised an independence referendum, Ottawa pointedly referred to international legal opinion that granted self-determination rights only to colonized peoples, not to components of democratic states. Ottawa proceeded to declare that in the unforeseen circumstance of a Quebec majority vote to secede, the right to do so, if nevertheless granted, must also extend to then-likely separatist majorities in Quebec's northern Cree and other communities. The PQ is adamant that Quebec's minorities do not have analogous self-determination rights, echoing Croatia's stand against the Serbs.

This time, however, US and other Western commentary evince little sympathy. Perhaps we now recognize what our shortsighted haste wrought. And therein, perhaps, also the germ to an end to the Yugoslav carnage. Dare we – *can we* – go back, and insist that rights given one people must be extended to another?

\* \* \*

Historically, war blame and crime designations mirror particular interests. There are contexts such as the Nazis' Buchenwald or the Croat Ustasha's Jasenovac of World War 2 where crimes transcend interests and compel judgements. But attempts to cast the Yugoslav successor wars as such a context are contrived. One must therefore seek other rationales.

In Yugoslavia one preponderant interest was to placate and integrate united Germany, Croatia's sponsor. The Bush administration embraced the recognition option only after it became clear that the European Community would recognize Zagreb. The European Community was itself initially disinclined. Germany's recognition advocacy was supported by only two governments. The rest, including London and Paris, acquiesced only after German pressure, and concessions on the Maastricht Treaty – the European Union next step then being negotiated.

The other preponderant US interest, was to nurture Muslim ties, to meet the charge that Baghdad was bombed because it was Muslim (would we do the same to a Christian "outlaw"?), to protect Kuwaiti and other contracts (Kuwaiti reconstruction contracts alone total over \$100 billion), safeguard oil interests, and, not least, to counter fundamentalist Iran. The latter concerns also dictated support for those whose very fear of Iran (the Kuwaitis, Saudis and Benazir Bhutto) compelled embrace of pan-Islam's new defining banner. As Turkey scrambled to counter Iran's

attempted end run into its former dominion another escalatory factor was added.

Moral parameters were set by Croatia's highly successful PR campaign. Their preemptive investment was extraordinary; on some US and Canadian TV stations they outspent Coke and Pepsi combined. Croats learned from Kuwait. The now infamous nurse's testimony to Congress about babies torn from incubators, front-paged by the *New York Times* and others was later exposed as false, but by then the war it fuelled was over (she was in fact the daughter of Kuwait's Washington Ambassador; the incubators were there at war's end; the falsehood was spread by Wall Street's Ruder Finn). Croatia engaged Ruder Finn. Once again selective and manufactured "news" was featured by the media, with contrary evidence suppressed by minds already set.

Croatia's nationalists set the war's parameters and historical context. Both were further reinforced when Islamic and US contributions allowed the Izetbegović government to launch its own Wall Street campaign in 1993 (the Belgrade government finally secured a US PR outlet in 1994, though at far lower funding levels, but Krajina and Bosnian Serb governments remained without, for both political and fiscal reasons).

Conflict participants' one-sided presentations of horrors are not exceptional. The daily arrival of faxes from Ruder Finn to *New York Times*' and others' journalists might be expected to have some impact. Nevertheless, media leaders' apparent disinterest in seeking out a more balanced overview of the totality of horrors – for civil wars are never one-sided – is exceptional. It besmirches moral judgement, and bespeaks other interests.

Documentation of bias is extensive. The trade embargo against Serbia was justified by Yugoslav army involvement in Bosnia, though a UN report confirmed its withdrawal to Serbia (the report's release was withheld until after the Security Council vote). The continuing presence in Bosnia of Croatian military units occasioned no protest.

The sanctions devastated Serb civilian industry, the poor and refugees; dialysis machines and other equipment ceased to function; medicines and diapers disappeared. They did little damage to Serb military potential (their military industry was self-sufficient), or to the elite. Far from rallying opposition to Serb President Milošević, the sanctions reaffirmed the Serb "Massada complex", and fuelled the electoral success of harder, nationalist parties. They destroyed the legitimacy of Milošević's pro-Western opposition, and gave primary opposition status instead to Serb neo-fascism. The fundamentalist dynamic that had perverted Croat and Muslim cultures was now ensconced in Serbia also. Western media evinced scant reflection.

The theme of Serb military preponderance was itself misleading. Tito prepared Yugoslavia for a Peo-

ple's War against a worst-case Soviet invasion. This included population-wide training, Vietnam-modelled tunnelling under cities and countryside, and dispersed arms caches designed to guarantee all localities the ability to perpetuate resistance even when cut off.

When Yugoslavia's successor wars erupted the new nationalist militias were often better organized and always more cohesive than the Yugoslav Army. The YA was multi-ethnic, under multi-ethnic command; as individuals and units defected to the new formations it was confused and crippled. Through the Croatian campaigns, including the final storming of Vukovar, it was in fact the Serb militias that most effectively engaged in battle.

The theme of Bosnian Muslim military paucity, trumpeted by some US Congressmen and media, is similarly mistaken. Aside from the well-stocked depots, Bosnian Muslim space contains more of Bosnia's former military industries than does Srpska – the Serb secessionist state. Many of these are further located in the UN-designated "safe havens", which explains why most Muslim offensives have struck out from *them*. The Yugoslav inheritance has since been considerably enhanced.

The return of the now cohesive Serbian-Yugoslav army would involve forces of another order. With that Army on the sidelines, however, Srpska's arms advantage underwhelms. It is noteworthy that while the *New York Times* and other proclaim dire Muslim shortages, British, Canadian and other UN contingents' daily military briefings document the greater frequency of *Muslim* offensives. Srpska's artillery inheritance from the former federal Army is, in most cases, irrelevant.

Most death and damage is in fact caused by mortar shelling. All sides have converted ambulances to instantly mobile mortar carriers, easily 'protected' by civilian human shields. These are *not* forces that are vulnerable to air attack.

Then there were the rape stories. Rape is integral to war; it is the rogue soldier's unholy price for death's threat. The less disciplined, more brutal and brutalized sin. But the mass rape charge, told by a Serb conscript in Muslim custody, and splashed on front pages and screens, was preemptive; it denied attention to scrupulously documented non-governmental Serb investigation of atrocities against Serb women. It also contained provable falsehoods, excised by the *New York Times* and other trend setters.

Graphic images of Serb horrors are front page fodder, yet the horrendous images they counterpose – some witnessed by this author – are "not fit to print". Indeed, *what you see does* affect you; and thus it matters where you go!

So also with stories of "concentration camps". Some individual outrage was sincere: American Jewish leader Eli Wiesel, taken to a camp by Serb hosts, shocked by the crowding, demanded and received the

commander's promise that all would be released; when the promise was rescinded, Wiesel issued a scathing indictment. Yet Croat and Muslim internment camps not visited by Wiesel were scarcely better, and he would later re-consider his apportioning of blame (after receiving US Holocaust Survivors documentation). Other outrage was open to the charge of manipulation. *Time* magazine featured a "camp victim" whose emaciated features reflected the ravages of tuberculosis.

Coverage of war crimes evidence and prosecution was analogous. The UN-approved forms with which Western governments seek war crime witnesses are telling. They require no corroboration. Like Nazi, Soviet and McCarthyite inducements to snitch, they encourage the false, and blur the true.

UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright and Canada's Colonel Fenrick (the UN's pointman on war crimes) evince interest only in allegations against Serbs. Lack of money and mandate are said to preclude further-ranging effort. This is the Salem Witch Trials revisited. It mocks due process, and our most basic norms of ethics, morality and civilization.

Preemptive PR techniques have featured prominently. Izetbegović's story of massacre of Bijeljina's Muslims rallied support to his government. Yet colleagues and I visited Bijeljina, recording local Muslim testimony. They told of mujaheddin sent to take the city and area, assuming support from co-religionists, to sever Srpska's lifeline to Serbia. Word went to Arkan's militia. It intercepted and killed the mostly foreign force. Local Muslims were among those who guided him. This Civil War is more complex than most realize. Arkan is far from lily-white. But on this issue, the most archetypal of UN "cases", the evidence points elsewhere.

The *New York Times* and others recently featured a "defector" who told of Bijeljina cleansing in 1992. Yet at the time of our '93 visit, the city's three largest enterprises had Muslim directors (the reverse could not be said of any Muslim government town); a locally raised Muslim battalion fought with Serb forces. What amazes, today, is not the later appearance of extremism here also, with vandalism against mosques and the departure of some Muslims, but that extensive Serb-Muslim co-operation nevertheless remains evident.

When President Clinton tentatively authorized bombing of Serb positions in May 1993, *Newsweek's* cover showed a Srebrenica boy wounded by Serb artillery, with no mention of the fact that 150 UN trucks sent to evacuate him and others had been forced to leave empty; the Muslim commander wanted human shields. The inside story began with three and a half pages of photographs most presumed to be victims of Serbs, yet the locales noted in their captions identified them, late in the text that followed, as vic-

tims of Muslim-Croat fighting. *Time's* cover claimed to show a Serb shooting a wounded man in Brčko. Yet the incendiary picture was taken by *Reuters* a year earlier, in Slovenia, not Brčko. The soldier was not Serb, and his gun was not shooting.

The *New York Times'* Pulitzer Prize winning Bosnia correspondent talked of Bosnia's 1000 years of inter-ethnic and religious peace, betraying a historical ignorance so profound as to make flat earth believers look omniscient. But then the *Times* was and is wondrously consistent: it blames Serbs when the evidence so warrants; it also blames Serbs when UN ground commanders find reason to believe Serb accusations that Jihad (Holy War) fanatics have perpetrated massacres on their own to "prove" Serb perfidy.

This kind of "reporting" was and is no aberration. Again and again the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, France's *L'Express* and *L'Observateur* and other Western media leaders offered photographs of armed men carrying visible Croat and Muslim identification, with captions identifying them as Serb. Pictures of Vukovar devastation were captioned Dubrovnik; pictures of an apparently resurrected Dubrovnik are not "fit to print".

Stories of Serb "cleansing" abound; but no mention of the now-disappeared one third of Mostar's pre-war population who identified themselves as Serbs or Yugoslavs; no mention of Srebrenica's pre-war Serb population, or other cities'. Nor of the irony that the single most sweeping ethnic cleansing of the Bosnian wars was of Muslims by Muslims; the 5th Corp's Fall 1994 offensive against dissident Muslims in Bihać made at least 55,000 homeless.

Horror at the Serb offensive in Eastern Bosnia in April 1993; no mention of the Muslim offensive that first swept the region in April 1992. Horror at the Serb offensive against Bihać in late 1994, and Serb shelling

of Tuzla and other "safe havens" now; no mitigating coverage of the fact that each responded to Muslim government offensives that thrust out from these "havens", contravening truce agreements.

Horror that Serbs expect to retain a larger proportion of land than warranted by their percentage of the population; no mention of the fact that they owned a similar proportion before the war (because they were predominantly farmers, while Muslims tended to be urban), or that this larger proportion was the least endowed in industry, power and other resources. Lands are not synonymous. An acre of Saharan sand does not equal an acre of Manhattan real estate.

Support for "self determination" for Croats and Muslims, but not for Serbs. Serb aspirations for a united nation, once approved by Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Roosevelt (with more generous territorial swath than today's "spoils of war"), are labelled Greater Serbia, and illegitimate. Greater Croatia, extended by Nazi Germany and Tito to incorporate ancestral Serb lands, is a natural right. So is Greater Muslim Bosnia, incorporating both Serb and Croat lands (Presidents Wilson and Roosevelt recognized Bosnia as essentially Serb).

\* \* \*

By now all have been polarized, all have committed "crimes". Such is the nature of civil war(s). But two questions need to be asked:

As we celebrate victory in World War 2, is it in our interest to support a Croat government that names its capital's main squares and avenues after those convicted at Nuremberg?

As Washington bans trade with Iran, urging others to follow, is it in our interest to support a Muslim government in Europe that is Iran's client more than ours - or are we paying too high a price?

## Europe and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia

Radmila NAKARADA

Institute for European Studies, Belgrade

A comment often made by visitors who come to these distressed lands is "You are obsessed with history, you must stop living in the past". These voyagers do not understand that we are living at the heart of unburied history. History has never fully become the past. As distant as we journey back we discover shadows of today. If we go back to Byzantine, we see the reflection of our own religious divisions. ONE

Keynote address at the International Conference "Europe and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia" held at the Institute for European Studies in Belgrade, 16-17 June 1995.

becomes, over and over again, mutually hostile two's, three's.

We reexperience existential threats and one of its consequence - widespread anti-intellectualism, we relive the seeking of the shelter in myths in the face of unbearable humiliation.

If we walk back to a more recent past, we recognize the old dreams that are being redreamed, the pain of dreadful violence, magnified by new wounds, the intervening external factors that have participated decisively in shaping our options.