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THE VIEW FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA ON FRANJO TUĐMAN’S “BOSNIAN POLICY”

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What Franjo Tuđman thought and wrote about, and his policies toward Bosnia and Herzegovina were and still are much debated. Thousands of newspaper articles, hundreds of analyses, and dozens of books have been written about Tuđman’s attitude toward Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of them are grounded in the myth of the “partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina” which Tuđman allegedly arranged with Serbian President Slobodan Milošević. This is the favorite theory of Bosniak nationalists, Tuđman’s opponents in Croatia, Yugo-nostalgists, and all of those who attempt to justify all that transpired in Bosnia and Herzegovina in this manner. The latter category in particular includes all European/British diplomats who considerably contributed to the wartime horrors in Bosnia and Herzegovina and who cannot come to terms with Yugoslavia’s collapse. But it is precisely the accountability for the collapse or partition of Yugoslavia that is ascribed to Tuđman. Even when he is accused of “partitioning Bosnia and Herzegovina.” However, rarely, if ever, is any consideration given to the manner in which the political and social elite of Bosnia and Herzegovina treated Tuđman and where the roots of these accusations lie.

Introduction

The fanning of the flames of Serbian nationalism during the 1980s did not immediately provoke a political response on the Croatian side. The Serbian elite, spurred by an arduous political and economic crisis, decided to strength-

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en its own position and impose its will on others. Scholars, nationalists, workers and communists all worked to the same end. Upon assuming control of the League of Communists in Serbia, Slobodan Milošević promised to solve the Serbian national question in Yugoslavia. The Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ) promulgated in 1974 was brought into question. The aggressive nationalism of the Serbs in Serbia (and beyond) was often concealed by appeals to Yugoslavism and/or civil society, and calls were made for unity, functionality and normality, while a war against the bureaucracy was declared. Serbian nationalists initiated the anti-bureaucratic revolution, which revoked the constitutions and toppled the leadership of its internal provinces, and then they set their sights on their equivalents in Yugoslavia's constituent republics. This was a revolution aimed at overthrowing the statist elites in the republics. The Slovenes were the first to respond to this unitarism, letting it be known that they would not allow any reduction in the sovereignty that they already exercised. The Slovenian communists secured the support of Slovenian nationalists, as well as the sympathy of the democratically oriented public in almost all of Yugoslavia. In Croatia, silence reigned. The repression which quelled the Croatian national movement in the early 1970s left a deep mark. This Croatian silence was broken by Franjo Tuđman. He became the most persistent and clearest advocate of Croatian national interests and Croatian independence. His arrival on the political scene during 1989 gave the proponents of (unitary) Yugoslavism a pretense to justify the appearance of Serbian nationalism and its spread, and simultaneously a potential rationale for halting democratization and banning political parties, and maintaining the monopoly and rule of the Yugoslav League of Communists. Nonetheless, the processes under way in Europe, regardless of Yugoslavia, could no longer be controlled, much less halted. Communist regimes in Europe were falling one after the other, and those which failed to accept this change met with an inglorious end.

The communist leadership in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the associated political public watched the onset of democratization and multi-party politics with trepidation. The democratization of Yugoslavia jeopardized its survival. At a time when communist empires were collapsing and nation states were being formed, the legitimacy and survival of Bosnia and Herzegovina itself were called into question. The crisis of the Yugoslav political system brought into sharp focus the fragile construction of society in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its statehood. To this one should also add the burden of tradition which rested on the shoulders of the ruling elite. The revolutionary method of seizing power and the related horrifying crimes and many years of repression, with numerous victims and the lives of many families destroyed, aroused a great fear of democratization and loss of power among the ruling communists. When the traditional aversion to novelty and change is also taken into consideration, then the resistance to democracy mounted in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be better understood. Because of all this, the "miniature Yugoslavia" as Bos-

nia and Herzegovina was endearingly called during the golden years of the Yugoslav federation, experienced greater difficulty in enduring change than its larger parent. Among ruling circles, the absence of Bosnian-Herzegovinian legitimacy was substituted with dogmatic communism and Yugoslavism. The socialist order which ensured a monopoly of power and Yugoslavism as the political framework that guaranteed survival were unquestioned values which the ruling communist structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina defended tenaciously, thereby actually preserving their own position.

National relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina were far from the well-known formulation contained in the Resolution of the Territorial Anti-fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in World War II, according to which Bosnia and Herzegovina was "Serbian, Muslim and Croatian." Political Serbianism was compensated with Yugoslavism. A large portion of the Muslims viewed Bosnia and Herzegovina as their national republic. Yugoslavia guaranteed this experience for them. Ties with the Muslims in Sandžak and Kosovo were important to them, and they were pleased with Yugoslav foreign policy, which through the non-aligned movement established very close relations with Muslim states. Political Croatianism was curtailed, and any manner of its manifestation was associated with the pro-fascist Ustaša and interpreted as an attempt to restore the pro-Axis Independent State of Croatia (NDH). It is then no wonder that the appearance of Franjo Tuđman was met with a lack of understanding, revulsion and hatred among the political public and communist ruling structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the Croatian side, however, he was awaited as a messiah, someone who would lead the Croats to freedom.

The Media Image of Franjo Tuđman created in Bosnia and Herzegovina

One of Franjo Tuđman's statements and its interpretation can serve as an illustration of the attitude toward him in the pro-regime media in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the first convention of his party, the Croatian Democratic Union (known by its Croatian acronym, HDZ-*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica*) held on February 24, 1990, Tuđman said: "In putting forth our demands, we kept in mind that according to its current Constitution, Bosnia and Herzegovina is also a national state of the Croatian people."¹ On the next day, in the first news piece on the HDZ convention, the Sarajevo-based daily *Oslobođenje* reported that Tuđman said Bosnia and Herzegovina was the national state of the Croatian people. Even though only the word 'also' is absent, the meaning

¹ Franjo Tuđman, "Programske zasade i ciljevi HDZ-a," *Zna se HDZ* (Zagreb: Izvršni odbor HDZ-a, 1992), p. 13.

of his statement was entirely altered.² On Monday, February 26, the first commentary on the convention and Tuđman's appearance was published. In a text under the headline "Totalitarianism," printed on the front page of *Oslobođenje*, Tuđman is described as "scandal which has to be confronted face forward, because he is the reality and he wants power."³ The principal threat represented by Tuđman was the threat to Yugoslavia, and the fall of Yugoslavia also heralded the collapse of its central republic, the 'miniature Yugoslavia,' Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During the 1970s and early 1980s, Tuđman was compared to Dobrica Ćosić. Such a comparison was first made by General Kosta Nađ of the Yugoslav People's Army (*Jugoslavenska narodna armija* - JNA).⁴ The difference was that Tuđman was social pariah who was imprisoned due to his "nationalism," while Ćosić remained one of the most prominent figures on the Serbian and wider Yugoslav social scene. In the propaganda campaigns conducted at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s, attempts were made to minimize Tuđman's significance by characterizing him as the counterpart to the Serbian rally-organizer from Kosovo, Miroslav Šolević. This was initiated by the former Yugoslav journalist, later Milošević's information minister, Aleksandar Tijanić. In this same fashion, Tuđman was later similarly compared to Vuk Drašković, Vojislav Šešelj and Radovan Karadžić.⁵ In the media controlled by the Bosnian-Herzegovinian authorities, Tuđman was portrayed as a radical nationalist and serious threat to the communist idea and Yugoslav unity. His party was called a party of "ominous intent," a party dangerous to Yugoslavia. The comparisons between Tuđman and Milošević began after Tuđman assumed authority. After the comparison phase, the phase of equating Tuđman and Milošević began. The event exploited most often for this purpose was their meeting in Karađorđevo, which acquired all of the features of a political myth.

An entire series of propaganda pieces on Karađorđevo were published in Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of these was certainly the booklet *Bosna i Hercegovina i Bošnjaci u politici i praksi dr. Franje Tuđmana* (Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Politics and Practice of Franjo Tuđman), with the subtitle *Bosna mora nestati* (Bosnia Must Disappear). The publisher was the radical Bosniak-Muslim nationalist organization called the Council of the Bosnian Intellectual Congress (*Vijeće Kongresa bošnjačkih intelektualaca* - VKBI). The introductory text was written by the journalist Fahrudin Đapo, one of the more prominent propagandists of Bosniak nationalism. Thus, Đapo wrote of the meeting in Karađorđevo: "At this meeting, at that place that would become the symbol

² "Mahanje nacionalnim barjacima," *Oslobođenje* (Sarajevo), 25 February 1990, p. 3. Byline: Dejan Zdravec.

³ "Totalitarizam," *Oslobođenje*, 26 February 1990, p. 1. Byline: Ljiljana Smajlović.

⁴ Franjo Tuđman, *Usudbene povjestice* (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 1995), pp. 767-768.

⁵ "Priče iz divljine: Komu, zapravo, mogu dobro poslužiti razni Draškovići i Tuđmani," *Danas* (Zagreb), 16 January 1990, pp. 10-11. Byline: Milan Jajčinović.

of the political conspiracy against Bosnia and Herzegovina, the *normalization of Croatian-Serbian relations* was negotiated, which in translation means: the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the creation of a small *buffer zone* or *statelet of Bosnia* between those antagonistic states.⁶ This sentence confirmed the hypothesis that the collapse of Yugoslavia also meant the collapse of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the 'miniature Yugoslavia.' But it also showed that Bosniak nationalists saw a threat to their interests, and their vision of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the normalization of Croatian-Serbian relations.

This booklet includes excerpts from Tuđman's texts and statements, and from statements or "testimony" by his opponents. Only that which could "compromise" Tuđman and Croatian policy toward Bosnia and Herzegovina was included. Therefore, in one place excerpts of analyses by Ivo Pilar, Krunoslav Draganović (1903-1983) and Dominik Mandić (1889-1973), a letter from Mate Boban to Cardinal Kuharić, Tuđman's interpretation of Croatian-Serbian relations in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and a statement by Paddy Ashdown or Tim Judah were all thrown together. Ashdown, who became notorious for his deception with "Tuđman's napkin" and Judah, who coined the term "Yugosphere," and who twenty years after Yugoslavia's collapse is attempting to restore some sort of Yugoslavia. All of these are "reliable witnesses" and "objective contributions on Tuđman's policies toward Bosnia and Herzegovina." What the compilers of this propaganda piece almost did not mention was the official policy of Franjo Tuđman, the president of the Republic of Croatia.

Another propaganda booklet by the same publisher explained what Croatian policies in and toward Bosnia and Herzegovina should have been. This was a text by journalist Drago Pilsel entitled *Hrvati i Bosna i Hercegovina* (Croats and Bosnia and Herzegovina). Pilsel cited Ivan Lovrenović and agreed with him that "among the first steps, it is vital to initiate the process of relativizing the political, national identity, for if this becomes impossible than Bosnia is impossible." The relativization of the political national identity means nothing more than the relativization of Croatian identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serbian identity in the Republic of Srpska cannot and will not be relativized, while politically the Bosnian identity has become synonymous with the Bos-

⁶ *Bosna i Hercegovina i Bošnjaci u politici i praksi dr. Franje Tuđmana; Bosna mora nestati* (Sarajevo: Vijeće Kongresa bošnjačkih intelektualaca, 1998), pp. 5-9. For a time, Fahrudin Đapo wrote for the Croatian weekly newspaper *Nedjeljna Dalmacija*, where he was notable for his texts critical of Bosnian President Alija Izetbegović. Later he became editor of *Bosanski pogledi*, the official bulletin of the Muslim Bosniak Organization (MBO) headed by Adil Zulfikarpašić. Đapo was also the editor of the daily newspaper *Avaz*. He became an editor on Bosnian federal television, FTV, and then one of the main propagandists of the Bosniak nationalist member of the Collective Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Haris Silajdžić. During 2010, he also became the editor-in-chief of the private Bosnian television broadcaster *TV1*. This company was founded with British/Bosniak Muslim capital and it supports Silajdžić. A scandalous fact is that as a member of the Presidency, Silajdžić was accompanied on official travel by the private *TV1*, but not by the public broadcasters FTV or TVBiH.

niak identity. The assertion on the use of "relativization of identity" completely conflicts with the principle of affirmation and equality of the nations upon which Bosnia and Herzegovina was created. Pilsel once again expands on Lovrenović's claim that "all established Croatian structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina – political and spiritual – nonetheless agree on one thing: the declarative struggle for the absoluteness of the Croatian identity."⁷ All except for Lovrenović, who was later joined by a handful of Croats who acceded to the relativization of their own identity in the struggle against "integral Croatian identity."

These texts by Bosniak nationalists are paradigmatic. They illustrate the approach to the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to the relationship between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Instead of a more consistent application of affirmation and equality of the constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is a preference for relativization of national identity, actually the relativization of the Croatian national identity. Instead of analysis of the official standpoints and decisions of the institutions of the Republic of Croatia vis-à-vis Bosnia and Herzegovina, a mass of irrelevant and worthless (for serious analysis) statements, hearsay, calumny and so forth are gathered. Instead of serious works based on scholarship in the fields of historiography, sociology and political science, there is a stack of propaganda pieces and accusations leveled against Croatian policies and Franjo Tuđman. Almost all set forth from the alleged "agreement in Karađorđevo," which is viewed as a complete certainty that nobody even questions.

The "Division" of Yugoslavia at Karađorđevo

What actually happened at Karađorđevo? Croatian President Franjo Tuđman and Serbian President Slobodan Milošević met at the Croatian-Serbian border in Karađorđevo on March 25, 1991. On the same day, the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug released the story, while on the next day, March 26, 1991, it was also carried on the front page of Sarajevo's *Oslobođenje*. The meeting was not secret, but the federal authorities were not aware of the details of this conversation, nor did they exercise any control over the two presidents of the republics that were most crucial to the fate of Yugoslavia, and thereby to their own political careers and fates. The meeting was held two months after a compromising video on Croatian Defense Minister Martin Špegelj was aired on television and after President Tuđman sent a letter to U.S. President George Bush in which he warned of the danger of a "catastrophe in Yugoslavia," which was being prepared by the JNA and the "Marxist communist" Slobodan Milošević. In March, immediately prior to the meeting, many texts were writ-

⁷ Drago Pilsel, *Hrvati i Bosna i Hercegovina* (Sarajevo: Vijeće Kongresa bošnjačkih intelektualaca, 1998), p. 8.

ten and much debate proceeded on “Tuđman on trial for high treason” due to his letter to Bush. The meeting in Karađorđevo was held immediately after the armed conflict between the Croatian police and Serb rebels in Pakrac. Finally, the meeting in Karađorđevo was held just a month after the head of the Bosnian collective presidency Alija Izetbegović announced (February 23, 1991) that Yugoslavia essentially no longer existed, and that all that remained was a tripartite federation. This constitutional form was described by Izetbegović such that Croatia and Slovenia would be entirely independent, while the firm core of a new state would consist of Serbia and Montenegro, while Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia would be somewhere in between. Bosnia and Herzegovina would nonetheless be much more tied to Serbia than Croatia, which provoked a sharp response in Bosnia and Herzegovina and led to accusations that Izetbegović had betrayed Bosnia and Herzegovina and left it to Milošević.⁸

Roughly ten days prior to this meeting, the presiding member of the Presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Borisav Jović, and the country’s top military leadership held a “joint session of the Presidency of the SFRJ as the Supreme Command with the Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces” from March 12 to 16, 1991, in an attempt to suspend the legal authorities and proclaim a state of emergency in the entire territory of the SFRJ. This meeting ended with Jović, Bućin and Kostić tendering their resignations, while Slobodan Milošević announced that he no longer recognized the decisions of the SFRJ Presidency. Immediately before this session of the Armed Forces Supreme Command, which was supposed to result in the assumption of authority by the JNA, the army drafted the “Plan for the Overthrow of the Authorities in Slovenia and Croatia and a Resolution to the Crisis.” Among other things, this Plan included the following: “In Croatia, the Serbian Krajina must be institutionally and politically reinforced and its secession from Croatia must be endorsed (not publicly but effectively). Organize mass rallies in Croatia against the HDZ, mobilize Bosnia and Herzegovina ‘for Yugoslavia,’ and promote the concept of rallies in Macedonia to depose the pro-Bulgarian leadership. Move toward mass rallies of support in Serbia and Montenegro. Ban all public assembly in Kosovo...”⁹

A considerable amount is known about that part of the plan pertaining to Croatia. The Serbian Krajina was functioning and had practically “seceded” from Croatia until the military/police operations conducted in August 1995. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, everything supportive of Yugoslavia was truly “mobilized.” The most potent display of Yugoslavism was the disruption of the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina by demonstrators carrying pictures of

⁸ Ivica Lučić, “Karađorđevo, politički mit ili dogovor?,” *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 35/2003, no. 1: 7-36.

⁹ Borisav Jović, *Poslednji dani SFRJ* (Belgrade: Politika, 1995), p. 277.

Tito and Yugoslav flags on April 6, 1992, after the first shots had already been fired in Sarajevo. The demonstrations were led by the trade unions, and they were being backed by much stronger Yugoslav political forces. The same forces controlling the tanks which had been halted a year earlier in Polog, and those that were not halted in October 1991 when they demolished Ravno and six other villages in the eastern part of Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina fell apart at the same time as Yugoslavia and not immediately down ethnic lines, rather along the lines of support for or opposition to Yugoslavia. Almost all Serbs supported Yugoslavia, as did most of the Bosniak Muslims, while most Croats and a minority of Muslims opposed Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was the point around which alliances and coalitions were formed and broken in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the time. Most of the Bosniak-Muslim elite were Yugoslav-oriented. From the head of the Islamic community, Jakub Selimoski to Alija Izetbegović and his Young Muslims (Omer Behmen) or their opposition at the time, Adil Zulfikarpašić and Muhamed Filipović, to say nothing of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) of Nijaz Duraković and others. Rasim Kadić, the liberal leader, formerly head of the Socialist Youth Alliance of Bosnia and Herzegovina, did not even want the Parliament to raise its hands in favor of Bosnian independence. All Croatian delegates, and all HDZ delegates, voted for a sovereign and independent Bosnia and Herzegovina on January 25, 1992.¹⁰

Thus, the Yugoslav elements, and later the Bosniak-Muslim nationalists, would accuse Tuđman (together with Milošević) of breaking apart Yugoslavia and then, when this dismantling of Yugoslavia became legitimate, they repackaged this accusation into guilt for the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was in fact a consequence of Yugoslavia's collapse. Here is how the myth of the "partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Karađorđevo" was constructed. On the day after the meeting in Karađorđevo, on March 26, 1991, the Associated Press (AP) carried a comment on the meeting by the vice president of the SFRJ Presidency at the time, Stipe Mesić, who said that the Yugoslav republic leaders would reach an agreement on the future of the country not later than May 15, 1991. Sarajevo's *Oslobođenje*, carrying Mesić's statement, wrote: "Mesić confirmed that after the 'secret meeting' between the presidents of Serbia and Croatia, Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman, Prime Minister Ante Marković is under pressure." *Oslobođenje* called the meeting secret, even though Tanjug reported on this the same day, immediately after the meeting. *Oslobođenje* carried this information and printed it the next day, while Mesić spoke about the meeting to American reporters on the day after it was held. All of this clearly demonstrates how the political myth would be subsequently constructed. Some of the first media speculation on the content of the meeting in Karađorđevo was published in the pro-Yugoslav newspapers *Borba* and

¹⁰ Ivica Lučić, "Od demokratskih promjena do rata u SR Bosni i Hercegovini," *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 40/2008, no. 1: 112-113.

Nedjelja. The Sarajevo weekly *Nedjelja*, in its March 31, 1991 edition (six days after the meeting in Karadžorđevo) cited reports in Belgrade's *Borba* and wrote that somewhere on the Serbian-Croatian border, in Karadžorđevo, Tuđman and Milošević met, "which confirms that Yugoslavia is in fact a hostage to relations between Serbia and Croatia." According to the article's uncredited author, the objective of this meeting was to depose Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Marković, for the following reasons: "The fact of the matter is that Tuđman and Milošević personify politics that belong to the nineteenth century, the politics of national programs and obsolete nation states, while Marković personifies modern, market-oriented politics which, if not torn down by the former duo, could take Yugoslavia into Europe, and bring Europe to Yugoslavia."¹¹

However, since advocacy of Yugoslavia was becoming increasingly compromised by unitary demands and increasingly dubious to anyone who was not a Serb, the content of the meeting in Karadžorđevo was redefined. Increasing attention was accorded to the collapse of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was a logical and predictable consequence of Yugoslavia's democratization and collapse. Tuđman was practically being asked to unconditionally defend the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which indirectly meant backing down from an independent Croatia and seeking the survival of some type of Yugoslav federation. There was a consensus between West and East on the preservation of Yugoslavia. Their interests coincided here. One of the vital arguments against the independence of Croatia was Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Croats in that country who would remain outside of the territory of the nation state. In his "Message to the Croatian People and All Citizens of Croatia" delivered on November 24, 1991, Tuđman said: "An essential mainstay for the relentless and conquering Yugo-Serbian policies toward Croatia were almost all, particularly the most important, international factors which for various reasons maintained a policy of preserving Yugoslavia. Ultimately, the Yugo-Serbian policy was predicated on the fact that Croatia would be compelled to concede and remain within the Yugoslav framework due to the existence of the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well."¹² Today this same argument is employed to oppose the idea of creating a Croatian federal unit (a third entity) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For, this idea's opponents proclaim, any entity boundaries cannot encompass all Croats in a potential Croat entity.

Use of the Karadžorđevo Myth

After Yugoslavia collapsed – despite the policies of those who supported it – and a high number of casualties and great destruction of property ensued,

¹¹ See: I. Lučić, "Karadžorđevo politički mit ili dogovor", 7-36.

¹² Franjo Tuđman, "Najtragičniji dani Hrvatske," *Zna se HDZ u borbi za samostalnost Hrvatske* (Zagreb: Izvršni odbor HDZ-a, 1992), p. 175.

those at fault, the culprits, had to be found. And these were the Croats and the Croatian president who "did not back down." He was guilty because he did not want to remain in Yugoslavia and because he asserted that Bosnia and Herzegovina was a state with three constituent nations of which the Croats were one. Such emphasis on identity called in the question "the possibility of Bosnia," according to the advocates of relativizing identity. Among the Croats, the statehood of Bosnia and Herzegovina was generally not questioned. Its internal order was questioned. The absolute majority of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina supported it as a union of three equal, constituent nations, as they voted in the Parliament when the decision on the referendum came up for a vote, and later in the referendum itself. A minority joined the Bosniak Muslim nationalists who advocated the relativization of the existing Croatian national identity and the creation of the Bosnian political identity.

Davor Perinović, an orthopedist from Sarajevo and the former staff member of the American military hospital in Berlin, was elected the first chairman of the HDZ of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but he was quickly replaced. His controversial behavior, political radicalism and lack of tact aroused the dissatisfaction of many party members.¹³ As a result, his election was openly contested, and finally he was dismissed at a session of all HDZ bodies held in Zagreb on September 7, 1990.¹⁴ After his dismissal, Perinović replaced his fierce Great Croatian and even chauvinistic rhetoric with legalistic phrases.¹⁵ He singled out Tuđman as the person most responsible for his replacement and accused him of "anti-Muslim and anti-Bosnian" policies, and of "compromising" with Serbian President Slobodan Milošević on the "partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina."¹⁶ This was in September 1990, long before the meeting in Karađorđevo ever happened, before any talk of the "partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina." The most apparent was the crisis in the Yugoslav federation and the peril of its "partition." Western countries, like those in the east, supported Yugoslavia, the United States first and foremost.

Slaven Letica, a former advisor to President Tuđman, was the first in Croatia to put forth the idea that the topic of the meeting in Karađorđevo was the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina. After he left the President's Office on March 1, 1991 and spent a month in the United States as a guest of the U.S. government, on June 14, 1991, Letica published an article in the news magazine *Globus*, under the headline "The Partition of Herceg Bosna." In it,

¹³ "Gepek pun povijesti," *NIN* (Belgrade), 24 September 1993. In an interview (after his dismissal), Perinović boasted that among his patients were the U.S. ambassador to Moscow and many CIA agents.

¹⁴ "Isključen dr. Perinović," *Vjesnik* (Zagreb), 9 September 1990, p. 5. On Perinović's dismissal, see: "Slava kratkog vijeka," *Oslobođenje*, 12 September 1990, p. 5.

¹⁵ Željko Garmaz, "Zna se HDZ," *Valter* (Sarajevo), no. 33, August 1990, pp. 14-15.

¹⁶ "Jastrebovi nad Herceg Bosnom!" *Oslobođenje*, 11 May 1990, p. 4.

he wrote: "The rumors or 'rumors' on the partition of Herceg-Bosna began circulating among the Yugoslav public already after the first meeting between Tuđman and Milošević in Karađorđevo (...) The course of events over the past several days demonstrates that the 'partition of Bosnia' is an entirely realistic option. Many statements by politicians, and two in particular, point to this. Muhamed Filipović publicly stated that he knows for certain that Tuđman and Milošević not only discussed the partition of Bosnia, rather they already 'reached an agreement on its partition.' Even more important is the statement by Milan Kučan made during a press conference in Ljubljana on June 6, 1991 (after the meeting in Stojčevac) that 'there is a possibility of altering the republic borders, but this should by all means be done by agreement, with the consent of the local populations.'"¹⁷

Letica's arguments to back his conclusion that Tuđman and Milošević "partitioned Bosnia" are statements made by Milan Kučan and Muhamed Filipović. It was later established that Kučan actually had an arrangement with Milošević over Slovenia's secession, which makes him an unreliable witness.¹⁸ An even less reliable witness is Muhamed Filipović. He claimed that he knew for certain that "Tuđman and Milošević, not only discussed the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but they even reached an agreement on its partition." Filipović gave this statement to a reporter for the Belgrade news magazine *Vreme*, and it was published on June 10, 1991.¹⁹ The foundation for this agreement, according to Filipović and Zulfikarpašić, was alleged or actual information from the upper echelons of British diplomacy. Almost twenty years later, Filipović has still not provided any evidence that would back his claim. Instead, he demonstrated that he was an extreme chauvinist who despises Croatia and the Croats, but also that he was a person with no credibility.²⁰

Filipović's statement introduced an additional dose of Muslim suspicion of the Croats, and this served as a pretense for his negotiations with Karadžić and Milošević to achieve a historic agreement between the Muslims and Serbs. The heads of the Muslim Bosniak Organization (MBO – *Muslimansko bošnjačka organizacija*), Muhamed Filipović and Adil Zulfikarpašić, in agreement with Izetbegović, launched talks with the Serbian political leadership on July 16, 1991. An agreement was in fact reached. First between Zulfikarpašić and Karadžić, and then with Milošević, who pledged to immediately appoint Muslims as commanders of those JNA corps that were posted in Bosnia and

¹⁷ Slaven Letica, *Obećana zemlja* (Zagreb: Globus, 1992), pp. 241- 249.

¹⁸ Sabrina P. Ramet, *Tri Jugoslavije, Izgradnja države i izazov legitimacije 1918.-2005.* (Zagreb: Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2009), p. 479.

¹⁹ See: Dušan Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest*, (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1999), p. 801.

²⁰ Several books and articles in the relevant journals have been written on Filipović's superficial and arbitrary statements and numerous falsehoods. See, *inter alia*: Tarik Haverić, *Čas lobotomije* (Sarajevo: Rabic, 2007); Darko Perija, "Historija bosanske duhovnosti 1," *Status* (Mostar), winter 2007, no. 12: 207-217.

Herzegovina as a gesture of good faith. The MBO's leaders agreed that Bosnia and Herzegovina would remain in a "rump Yugoslavia," while the leaders of the Serbian Democratic Party backed down from cantonization, i.e., the regionalization of Bosnia and Herzegovina.²¹

The story about the alleged "agreement between Tuđman and Milošević" over the "partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina" also spread to opposition circles in Croatia. It served to weaken or politically disqualify President Tuđman, and it even became part of the presidential elections in Croatia in 1992. This story also suited the Serbian and pro-Yugoslav circles throughout the former Yugoslavia, who through such claims gave support to Yugoslav (Milošević's) policies, either directly or through countries and foreign power centers favorably disposed toward Yugoslavia. The latter acknowledged and reinforced (un)successful politicians and dismissed officials of the HDZ, who thereby attempted to give their political defeat in the struggle to seize power as a principled withdrawal, and thus ensure their political survival. Among these were Stjepan Mesić, Josip Manolić, Josip Boljkovac, Žarko Domljan, Petar Kriste and others. Former high officers of the JNA who responded to President Tuđman's call to cross over into the Croatian Army proceeded in similar fashion. Many of them who did not satisfy their ambition or who could not deal with the fact that the Croatian Army was not the JNA and that they could not actively participate in politics and that they were under civilian control. Those were Martin Špegelj, Antun Tus, Imra Agotić, Petar Stipetić and many others. Even today, in their numerous retellings of actual or imagined events, they complain that Tuđman "did not listen to them," or that they "did not listen" to him. They still do not understand what a professional army is, and what makes it different from the party army to which they belonged until joining the Croatian Army.

The story about the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina also served to sever the Croatian-Muslim alliance in the prewar period, and to homogenize the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina and their comprehensive national (Bosniak) articulation. This should be placed in the context of Izetbegović's (Bosniak-Muslim) political equidistance, or his stance that the Serbs and Croats were the same. It is only in this context that one may understand Izetbegović's refusal to sign a military agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia and the fact that he equated the Croats and Serbs politically and in every other way, even at the time (summer 1992) when the Serbs were slaughtering and expelling Muslims, while the Croats were rescuing them and giving them shelter. The theory on an "agreement in Karadžević" also served to incriminate every political option in Bosnia and Herzegovina that was not formally "civic," i.e., actually supportive of a unitary state which ensured the Bosniak-Muslims absolute predominance in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The tactics employed by Bosniak-Muslim politicians at the beginning of the 1990s were interesting. They refused to discuss internal matters and Croatian - Mus-

²¹ "Zajednički život u zajedničkoj državi," *Politika* (Belgrade), 31 July 1991, pp. 1, 12.

lim relations with representatives of the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and insisted on talking with Tuđman and representatives of the authorities in the Republic of Croatia. And when the latter accepted such talks, then they would accuse them of “interfering in the internal affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina;” of course, when their demands were not acceded to and their desires were not fulfilled. A similar tactic was adopted by representatives of the “international community.”

Abroad, the claims of the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina was accepted and then disseminated in 1994 by certain centers which wanted to preserve/renew Yugoslavia at all costs, and it always emerged at times when the Serbs were encountering military and political difficulties. The story of the negotiated partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina was reinforced at the international level by the former U.S. ambassador in Belgrade, Warren Zimmermann, in his article “The Last Ambassador,” which was published in *Foreign Policy* (no. 2, March/April 1994). The article was carried in its entirety in the newspaper *Naša borba* from March 13 to 22, 1994.²² The text was written precisely at the time of the negotiations and signing of the Washington Agreement, and at the time when a group of HDZ members of the Croatian Parliament, led by Josip Manolić and Stipe Mesić, were preparing to stage a putsch in Zagreb. The article later grew into a book, in which Zimmermann asserted with sorrow that Yugoslavia was the first European country to disappear after the Second World War. Zimmermann wrote that as opposed to the USSR, Yugoslav communism was a domestic product, independent, successful, and comfortable, which for him was sufficient explanation as to why communism was never overthrown in Yugoslavia, in contrast to other East European states where it was deemed a colonial imposition by a foreign power.²³ “Few today mourn Yugoslavia,” Zimmermann claimed, and expressed his hope, “One day talks on the renewal of economic ties will begin, and then gradually on the formation of political framework... Someone – perhaps some great democratic leader, probably from Bosnia – might propose the establishment of a state. It won’t be called Yugoslavia, but it will have historical roots. At the inaugural ceremony, I would like someone to place a rose, just one, on the grave of the Yugoslavia that recently disappeared.”²⁴

On September 16, 1991, Zimmerman delivered a lecture in New York at a meeting of the American-Yugoslav Economic Council, in which he asserted that Tuđman made a grave error when he proclaimed Croatian independence, and that he bore as much responsibility for the war as Milošević, who was aggressively working toward the creation of a Greater Serbia. Both objectives

²² Miloš Minić, *Dogovori u Karađorđevu o podeli Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo: Rabic, 1998), pp. 40-41.

²³ Warren Zimmerman, *Izvori jedne katastrofe* (Zagreb: Globus-Znanje, 1997), pp. 12, 24, 55.

²⁴ W. Zimmerman, *Izvori jedne katastrofe*, pp. 288, 299.

were unrealistic, Zimmermann claimed.²⁵ This lecture was held only five days after the former employee of an American military hospital in Berlin, Davor Perinović, "revealed" Tuđman's "compromise" with Milošević over Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Almost three years after his dirge for Yugoslavia, Zimmermann put forward the story of the "partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina," immediately after the signing of the Washington Agreement, which halted the Croatian-Muslim war and established the Federation, while Serbian policies endured a severe blow. The English lords, Peter Carrington and Paddy Ashdown, enriched this theory, particularly Ashdown with his fabrication of a map on a "napkin" which Tuđman allegedly drew for him at a luncheon in London. This was in August 1995, immediately after the Croatian military/police Operation Storm, when Serbia lost the battle in the military field as well.

Today the theory on the "partition of Bosnia," as well as the Croatian "political original sin," together with the accusation of culpability for destroying Yugoslavia, is used with increasing frequency to discipline the government (and opposition) in the Republic of Croatia and the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, all in order to force them to accede to or to prevent them from impeding the "international community's" projects and political solutions imposed upon the states and peoples of "southeastern Europe," the "western Balkans," or the "Yugosphere." It is certainly no coincidence that the most persistent advocates of these solutions are precisely those who were once bellicose guardians of Yugoslavia and the primary "witnesses" to Tuđman's supposedly erroneous and aggressive policies toward Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The theory on the "partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina" and the assertion that Tuđman and Milošević were exactly the same were also used to (re)define the character of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, Zlatko Hadžidedić, a member of the International Institute for Middle-East and Balkan Studies (IFIMES - *Međunarodni institut za bliskoistočne i balkanske studije*), wrote in July 2010: "The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Croatia committed aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and according to the Constitution of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, no one – not even the president of its Presidency – had the right to engage in negotiations to acknowledge the outcome of this aggression."²⁶ This Institute for which Hadžidedić wrote this "analysis" is insignificant, just as his analysis has no value as it is little more than a poorly written political tract.²⁷ What is interesting, and the reason the IFIMES and its analysis according to which the Republic of Croatia was an aggressor in Bosnia and Herzegovina are even

²⁵ "Tuđman i Milošević krivci za raspad Jugoslavije," *Borba*, 26 September 1991, p. 21.

²⁶ <http://www.ifimes.org/default.cfm?Jezik=Ba&Kat=10&ID=544&Find=hadzidedic&M=7&Y=2010> (24 October 2010).

²⁷ <http://www.pobjeda.co.me/citanje.php?datum=2010-03-01&id=180531> (24 October 2010).

mentioned here, is the fact that the honorary president of IFIMES is Stjepan Mesić. He became honorary president in November 2009, when he was still the president of the Republic of Croatia.²⁸ The chairman of this same Institute's Advisory Board is Budimir Lončar, Mesić's former advisor, who is now an advisor to President Ivo Josipović.²⁹ Until the 1990s, Lončar was a federal secretary and the foreign minister of the SFRJ, to which the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina belonged.

What Bosnia and Herzegovina Truly Was/Is

At the session of the Territorial Anti-fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ZAVNOBiH) held in Mrkonjić Grad during the Second World War, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian communists, among whom the Serbs were the most numerous, created Bosnia and Herzegovina as a Yugoslav federal unit. Due to the overall balance of forces in the country, and due to the policies of the Yugoslav Communist Party concerning unitarism in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as the "dungeon of nations," they were compelled to choose federalization. The People's, and then Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was mainly a Serbian, or rather Yugoslav interest. Serbian ideologists thus abolished the accord of 1939 and did away with the Banate of Croatia, which Serbian nationalists and Yugoslav integralists simply could not accept. When Yugoslavia collapsed and Bosnia and Herzegovina was no longer a Serbian interest, the Assembly of the Republic of Srpska, meeting at the same place, Mrkonjić Grad, on July 20, 1993, proclaimed the ZAVNOBiH's decision null and void.³⁰

A considerable portion of the Muslim political and social elite saw Bosnia and Herzegovina as their nation state. They rarely expressed this in Yugoslavia, for such sentiments could subject them to criminal prosecution. These Muslim views of Bosnia and Herzegovina surfaced after the democratic changes at the beginning of the 1990s. Muslims rescinded the provisions of the ZAVNOBiH when they changed their national name and announced their pretensions to take all of Bosnia and Herzegovina as their nation state. A gathering called the Bosnian Muslim Intellectual Congress adopted a Resolution in Sarajevo on December 22, 1992 at which time the gathered Muslim intellectuals proclaimed their people the Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks). The decision of the Second Bosniak Assembly held in Sarajevo on September 28, 1993 referred to the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina as Bosniaks.³¹ The war which broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina due to the desire of the Serbian political leadership

²⁸ <http://www.ifimes.org/default.cfm?Jezik=Ba&Kat=11&ID=496> (24 October 2010).

²⁹ <http://www.ifimes.org/default.cfm?Jezik=Ba&Kat=16> (24 October 2010).

³⁰ *Službeni glasnik Republike Srpske*, no. 11, Sarajevo, 23 July 1993, p. 1.

³¹ Abid Đozić, *Bošnjačka nacija* (Sarajevo: Bosanski kulturni centar Sarajevo, 2003), pp. 323-334.

to solve the national question by force so that "all Serbs live in a single state" was halted at the end of 1995 by the peace accords concluded in Dayton. Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided into the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was further divided into ten counties/cantons. Fifteen years later, Bosnia and Herzegovina is an unstable state and a deeply riven society, precisely as it was seen as far back as the 1960s, but also in the 1990s, by Franjo Tuđman. As opposed to the majority of Zagreb's intellectual and political circles, Tuđman did not see Bosnia and Herzegovina as the "Croatian bulwark" and as an obstacle to "Serbian expansion." He also did not view it from the perspective of the decisions and architecture of the Antifascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia. All of these same circles would never forgive him for this. It is precisely because of this that the reigning political and social elites in Croatia boast of their thorough implementation of de-Tuđmanization, while the Serbian political leadership renounces Milošević, just as it normally renounces failed leaders and ruinous projects. Despite all of this, and despite the fact that some time has passed since the death of Tuđman, as well as Milošević, the divisions in Bosnia and Herzegovina are deeper than ever. The principal protagonists in these conflicts are not the Serbs and Croats, but rather the Serbs and Muslims, who have become Bosniaks in the meantime. They hold authority and wield the genuine power in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is obviously divided between the Serbs and Bosniak-Muslims. It is difficult to comprehend the claims that the Croats are responsible for such divisions.

Conclusion

The modern statehood of Bosnia and Herzegovina emerged during the Second World War as a part of the process of Yugoslavia's renewal. Bosnia and Herzegovina emerged as a separate federal unit which, as opposed to all others, was not conceived as a nation state/republic of any single nation, nor as a historical fixture. It was an outcome of the Serbian-Croatian relations of the time and of the need for fortifying the federation. The collapse of the communist system and democratic change in the 1990s called the Yugoslav federation into question, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina, which functioned as a 'miniature Yugoslavia.' The fall of Yugoslavia commenced with the aggression of the Serbs, who denied the constitutional order and wanted to change it by force. The Slovenes responded, as did the Croats, but only later. International circumstances also influenced internal relations. Since Croatian nationalism was deemed the most perilous to Yugoslavia, it was treated the same in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Changes in Croatia and the arrival of Franjo Tuđman on the political scene were seen in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a clear and present danger. This explains the hostile attitude toward him among the ruling political circles, and among pro-Yugoslav circles in general. Fear of Yugoslavia's

partition was also a fear of the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The internal contradictions and passivity on the part of the international community meant that the collapse of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were accompanied by horrible suffering. Among the public, the guilt was apportioned between Serbia and Croatia. The international community remained guilt free, as did the Bosniak Muslims, who were portrayed as the greatest casualties of the war. Their political errors were overlooked, while the crimes they caused and perpetrated were forgotten. But if any even slightly more serious research is conducted, then one would have to conclude that the divisions and conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina were provoked by three opposing national policies. These were articulated within a society already divided earlier, i.e., within three defined national communities which aspired to complete their national formation. They aspired to nation states or protected national rights at a minimum. Bosnia and Herzegovina was not partitioned in Karadorđevo between the Croats and Serbs, but rather in Dayton, into the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina which became the Bosniak Muslim entity. The story about Karadorđevo was a part of the wartime/postwar propaganda, and it was used to absolve those most responsible not only for the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina but for everything that happened, and is happening still, in that country.

Sicht aus Bosnien und Herzegowina auf Franjo Tuđmans „bosnische Politik“

Zusammenfassung

Es wurde und es wird noch immer viel darüber diskutiert, was Franjo Tuđman dachte und schrieb über Bosnien und Herzegowina sowie über seine Politik diesem Staat gegenüber. Tausende von Zeitungsartikeln, Hunderte von Analysen und Dutzende von Büchern wurden über Tuđmans Verhältnis gegenüber Bosnien und Herzegowina geschrieben. Die meisten von diesen Texten wurden auf dem Mythos von der „Teilung Bosniens und der Herzegowina“ basiert, die Tuđman, wie behauptet, mit dem serbischen Präsidenten Slobodan Milošević arrangierte. Das ist die Lieblingstheorie von bosnischen Nationalisten, Tuđmans Opponenten in Kroatien, von Jugoslawien-Nostalgikern und von allen jenen, die versuchen, all das zu rechtfertigen, was in dieser Richtung in Bosnien und Herzegowina geschah. Zur Kategorie der Jugoslawien-Nostal-

giker gehören alle europäische/britannische Diplomaten, die in bedeutendem Maße zu Kriegsschrecklichkeiten in Bosnien und Herzegowina beigetragen sind und die sich mit dem Zerfall Jugoslawiens nicht versöhnen können. Aber die Verantwortung für den Zerfall beziehungsweise für die Teilung Jugoslawiens wird eben Tuđman zugeschrieben. Er wird auch wegen „der Teilung Bosniens und der Herzegowina“ geklagt. Aber sehr selten, wenn überhaupt, werden die Art und Weise in Betracht gezogen, wie Tuđman von politischer und sozialer Elite Bosniens und der Herzegowina behandelt wurde und wo die Wurzeln dieser Anklagen gegen ihm liegen.