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COLLECTIVE IDENTITY AND LOYALTY TO NATIONAL STATES IN THE BALKANS

ABSTRACT

Question of loyalty to national state rises in the context of presence of different cultural – ethnic and religious collective identities in it. We explore how states were formed in the Balkans and why multinational states, former Yugoslavia being the most tragic example, failed to win loyalty of large minorities. Just as in 19th century Europe, dissolution of regional communist regimes revamped nationalism as a battle for democratic society and ethnic (or religious in Bosnia and Herzegovina) self-determination. Proclaimed democratisation, again or additionally (like in former Yugoslavia) emphasized divisions among collective identities. Civic nationalism although sometimes promoted by political elites was never rooted in the Balkans and different groups (most prominent collective identities are ethnic and religious) tried to homogenize and expand space they control.

Key words: Nationalism, Loyalty, Ethnic and Religious identity, the Balkans, Religious and ethnic minority.

End of the communist ideology and relax of the censorship in once communist societies brought back into surface importance of previous collective identities based on religion and ethnicity in Eastern Europe. Economic transition in central European countries, independence in other (Baltic States, former USSR republics becoming states for the first time) induced spirit of national and religious fervour. All of these was utterly strengthened in dissolving Yugoslavia were some countries were to become independent for the first time in history (Slovenia, Macedonia), or after many centuries (Croatia except for the Nazi puppet state experience in Second World War).

While globalisation progressed in politics and in economics the beginning of the New World Order is marked by several wars and many of them based on ethnic or religious

conflicts with the further expansion of ethno or cultural nationalism (to be distinguished from political nationalism as a creation of a state – from nationalism that according to Gellner is: *the general imposition of a high culture on society*) and localism across the globe.[2]

Until 1990s dominant ideological strife between communism and capitalism vanished. But the new one was rising. It is confrontation among globalism and modern society (political nationalism, classical democracy as a rule of majority and rule of law, importance of religious traditions as markers of society). One of the manifestations of this struggle was and is a *new spiral of violence* against sovereignty and modern world order (achievements confirmed after the Second World War), started with the wars against Iraq, Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina (NATO bombings in 1995), against Yugoslavia in 1999, Iraq again in 2003...[3] Armed conflicts in the Balkans were evolving or are presented as based on interethnic and interreligious premises, and are used as such to promote new wars designed as humanitarian. Interethnic and interreligious, or simply feudal wars were the outcome of humanitarian interventions (aggressions) against Iraq and Libya.

Yugoslav wars and in minor measure, conflicts and war over Nagorno-Karabakh in South Caucasus exploded as conflicts and grievances based on collective identity, be it ethnic or religious. Their common denominator is being part of a former socialist or communist lager and the fact that within the dissolution process internal administrative lines were to become borders not resembling ethnic or religious borders. Thus, *with the little help of the friends*, from the outside (NATO and EU in Yugoslavia, and Russian Federation in Nagorno-Karabakh), the conflict have started and have been solved or frozen again with the help of foreign actors. Similar conflicts were particularly present in the Balkans and in the Central and Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. They occurred in previous centuries in Germany, France, and Great Britain.

Regarding the Yugoslav wars many aspects were studied: role of the foreign factors, of internal animosities, role of cultural politics and of economic factors. Vesna Stanković Pejnović, from Zagreb Faculty, listed arguments used to explain the dissolution of Yugoslavia: 1) economical, 2) nationalism, 3) Culture, 4) Role of international policy (foreign influence), 5) Role of personalities (of politicians), 6) Institutional deficiency [4] Although she managed to list most or all of the arguments, she failed to offer bi-partisan analyses

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[2] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism: New Perspectives on the Past*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983, p. 60.

[3] See more on these violence and their impact for the world disorder in: (Radmila Nakarada, Kosovo Case – A Unique Arbitrariness) Радмила Накарада, „Случај Косова: јединствена произвољност", *Социолошки преглед*, vol. XXXXI (2007), no. 3, стр. 305-326.

[4] Vesna Stanković Pejnović, The Breakup of Yugoslavia, Teme G. XXXIV Br. 2 Str. 413 – 751, Niš april - jun 2010; See for religion: Гуськова Е.Ю, *Религиозный фактор в современном балканском кризисе*: *Государство и церковь в XX – начале XXI века: эволюция взаимоотношений, политический и социокультурный аспекты*, Опыт России и Европы. 2011; Jelena Guskova, *Istorija Jugoslovenske krize* I i II, IGAM 2003; Smilja Avramov, Genocid u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945, 1991... I i II, IGAM 2008.

("nationalism is ideology without ideas"[5] is one of the examples of her bias approach) in paper and to consult most of the literature.

While many international actors were interested in the opportunity provided by the outbreak of the Yugoslav wars, failure of Yugoslavia to organise loyalties of some or most of the groups toward the Federation was often not examined or presented in oversimplified and misleading manner in foreign media and among many academicians. Work of Dušan T. Bataković, or of Andrew Baruch Wachtel (Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia, 1998), important collections of papers (like "20 Years since the Breaking - Up of the SFRY"), and despite some omissions also Robert M. Hayden presented more structured review of the historical process or/and political background of the dissolution and the wars.[6]

What remains underscored is the issue of loyalty toward the state and collective identities in the Balkans, focused on the former Yugoslavia. Our thesis is that the process of political fragmentation and partial state dissolution goes in pair with non or low acceptance of the state by national minorities or non majority groups.

After describing the processes of formation of nation in the former Yugoslav territories, that belong to the same type as Central and East European – blood and soil, language bondage (while Western Europe nations are based on political community and institutionalism), we will proceed to the issue of loyalty of ethnic and religious groups toward current national states in the Balkans.

Traditional collective identity and transformations in the Balkans

Marry Caldor many years ago observed: "The main implication of globalization is that territorial sovereignty is no longer viable."[7] The weakening of the sovereignty is two sided process of fragmentation: 1) at the supra-national level: creation of macro-regions; 2) at the local level: political decentralisation. This process undoubtedly affects changing the sense of belonging of the parts of the population.[8] Belonging, one of the focal characteristics of

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[5] Vesna Stanković Pejnović, "The Breakup of Yugoslavia", op., cit, p. 615.

[6] Andrew Baruch Wachtel (Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998; Dr Branislava Knežić, dr Jovan Ćirić, *20 Years Since the Breaking - Up of the SFRY*, Institute of Comparative Law, pp. 329. D.T. Batakovic, "Frustrated Nationalism in Yugoslavia" *Serbian Studies*, vol. 11, No 2, Washington 1997, pp.67-85; Robert M. Hayden, *Blueprints for a House Divided: The Constitutional Logic of the Yugoslav Conflicts*, University of Michigan 1999.

[7] M. Kaldor, *New & Old Wars – organized violence in a global era*, Polity Press, Cambridge (UK) 2001, p. p.87.

[8] Sheila L. Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging, The Politics of Identity in a Changing World*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Oxford 2004, pp. 52, 53, 54.

nationality and of citizenship (both expressions of a state sovereignty) changes due to globalisation process. Political and cultural fragmentation is fostering local identities as opposed to dominant national or ethnic background. States formed after the dissolution of Yugoslavia already had developed various levels of ethnic and religious identity receiving impetus for the disintegration or at least of the mistrust among the communities. Slovenian communists, whose ideas were the basis for several constitutions of the socialist Yugoslavia, after the adoption of the last SFRY constitution in 1974, one of the longest in the world (406 articles) stated ,, "Yugoslavia won`t be neither federation neither classical confederation but community of peoples… In that community the growth of the independence of peoples (ethnic nations) is bigger than that in classical federation or in confederation."[9] Kardelj, who even in 1969, said that Yugoslavia is neither federation neither confederation, could be interpreted as saying that Yugoslavia is even more loos union than some confederation could be.

Traditions and values of the world that capitalist-western societies were taught to cherish (unlike communist societies) are gradually designed as biased, discriminative, parochial (with pejorative connotation), and retrograde. One of them is patriotism and to collective identity linked values (religious, cultural and other observance of tradition, namely respect or practice of the old rituals). As opposed to them, the forces behind globalisation are emphasising global and individual identity, rights of minorities and moral relativism. Propagated individual identity is ultimate expression of egomania and hedonism as opposed to any collective responsibility that guarantees mutual respect and behaviour, especially sacrifice directed toward the collective good. Global identity for the moment is just an excuse for not feeling empathy and responsibility for the members who share with the individual common cultural, ethnic or religious background. Former Yugoslavia and in particular Serbia offers abundance of examples for this. Many members of the civil society nurture auto-chauvinistic discourse (self-hatred), which turns out to be quite lucrative for the material standard.[10]

Further erosion of the traditional collective identity toward some impersonal global or cosmopolitan belonging never produced loyalty, as Kissinger notes: "… now the notion of sovereignty is under attack or in the process of change in many parts of the world. Europe, which originated the concept of the nation-state, has voluntarily surrendered part of its sovereignty to the European Union. But the European Union has not been able, up to now, to generate the political loyalties that the nation-state did."[11] While the Western nation states

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[9] "Ustava 1974 - korak k "republiki združenega dela"", Dnevnik 25. avgust 2011, Internet, http://www.dnevnik.si/slovenija/v-ospredju/1042467877, retrieved on 08/03/2013.

[10] See how Civil Society in Serbia, which portrays Serbia and the Serbs as the culprit for the wars during the 1990s, is financed by the interested parties-Western governments, from public and private funds from the West. In: Slobodan Janković, "Role of CSOs and Think Tank Institutions in Regional Cooperation in Balkans", in: (ed) Caner Sancaktar "Role of CSOs and Think Tank Institutions in Regional Cooperation in Balkans", TASAM, Istanbul: Tasam Yayinlar›, 2010, pp. 91-102.

[11] Dr. Henry Kissinger, "The Intellectual Underpinnings of the Trilateral Partnership in the 21st Century" the Trilateral Commission 2009 Plenary Meeting Tokyo, Japan, April 26, 2009, p. 2.

were losing, or mildly and politically correct put, were *sharing* more and more of theirs sovereignties, the Balkan countries fought for small national sovereign countries. Of course, interest of Western countries was heavily involved in all that happened. Still, without internal predisposition for the conflict, foreign game setters could not achieve 1) the rearrangement of NATO as peace-loving humanitarian instrument, 2) energised unified Germany that wished to prove its new force and 3) building of European Union common foreign policy, which achieved only visible results in the Balkans.

Since the proclamation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croatians and Slovenes (Renamed Yugoslavia in 1929) on December the 1st 1918, achieved by the victorious Serbia in First World War, this country had strong secessionist and autonomist political currents, particularly among Croats and Slovenes.

This predisposition for the dissolution was announced even by one of the highest ranking Yugoslav communists – Edvard Kardelj, mastermind of the administrative lines between republics that became borderlines in the 1990s back in 1958 professed belief that Yugoslavia is only a temporary solution for Slovenia (also for Croatia). Until 1962 Communist Party (renamed Union of Communists in 1952, with branches in six republics and in two Serbian autonomous provinces) and Tito preserved politics of state unity out of pragmatic reasons. Communists needed to establish and strengthen central institutions in order to maintain power and control over society. Since then, slow and irresistible confederalisation took place. Some authors argue that the policy of confederalisation started since 1965 some previously and others from 1974, when new Kardelj`s constitution was proclaimed.[12] It was cemented in 1972 but even prior to that, communist parties had become the bearers of nationalism. Tito argued against Yugoslav nationalism after 1962, claiming it is a mask for the Serbian hegemony. Tito and the Party changed many policies over time, maintaining only one – fight against perceived and by communist proclaimed Serbian hegemony. In the end SFRY had 8 communist unions (each republic had its own and Serbia had three communist unions of central Serbia, of Vojvodina and of Kosovo) gathered in federal one. There were eight members of the confederated Yugoslavia (officially Socialist Federal Republic) and eight economies. Serbia had less power than any other republic because the provincial governments had power of veto over local Serbian government and not *vice versa*. Old communist plan announced in 1924, when Communist Party rejected Yugoslav character, was further elaborated in the years 1925-1928 with the culmination of the fourth Party congress in Dresden (Germany) in 1928. Then Communist Party of Yugoslavia called for the destruction of Yugoslavia and the creation of the Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Macedonia (to be united with parts of Greece and Bulgaria), Vojvodina of which part inhabited with Hungarians could secede and small Serbia of which parts inhabited with Albanians could secede. This congress of the Party

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[12] Laslo Sekelj, "Da li je moguća mirnodopska Jugoslavija?", *Sociološki pregled–Journal of the Sociological Society of Serbia*, Vol. XXVIII (1994), N. 2:237-252.

culminated in the anti-Serbian stance condemning Serbs generally unlike other nations were only bourgeoisie was condemned. Comintern headed from Moscow proclaimed and supported this policy since summer 1924, when Stjepan Radić, Croat nationalist went in Moscow.[13] This attitude against Yugoslavia which supported all secessionist non-Serbian movements, even of fascist Croatian Ustascia, lasted until 1935, when because of the Hitler`s rise, Comintern and the Communist Party in Yugoslavia embraced Yugoslav unity.[14] However, it is interesting that British plan for the after war Yugoslavia in 1943 was almost the same as the communist one. British secret service SOE planned the formation of the Federation with the division of Serbian territories. This plan, named "The Basis Policy for Yugoslavia" with the date April 11th 1943, was first cited in 2011. It envisaged the division in three federal units (Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian), while Serbian should be utterly divided in provinces of Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Vojvodina.[15] Unlike communist, British still did not considered Montenegrins and Macedonians as particular ethnic groups.

The issue of the loyalty is tightly connected with the sense of belonging which in turn is essentially issue of identity. Once, or since, the growing part of the population in Yugoslavia felt no belonging to the state, the loyalty toward Yugoslav Federation was diminishing. Ethnic and religious identities are forged much before the national in a sense of the belonging to the nation-state. Thus in the crisis of the multi-ethnic and multi-confessional federation, people embraced the previous, basic collective identities, the ethnic and religious one. End of the Cold War in Europe meant end of the federal multi-ethnic states: of USSR, Czechoslovakia and of the SFRY (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). Smaller or third Yugoslavia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), essentially federation of Serbia and Montenegro was transformed in loose State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2003 to be finally dissolved in 2006. Dissolution of federations was finished. In parallel with this process, EU promotes regionalisation and fragmentation of authority and governance. Kosovo and Metohija has been problematic region with recurrences of violence during the SFRY. Albanian guerrilla and terrorist warfare in the province started in 1997, was backed by the western countries and culminated in NATO aggression against Serbia and Montenegro.[16] Yugoslav wars legacy left problems for the acceptance of the national identity by the groups harbouring collective identity different than the majoritarian. The Balkans are not the exemption. Issue of integration

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[13] Aleksa Đilas, *Osporavana zemlja* (*The* Contested *Country*), Književne novine, Belgrade 1990, pp. 108, 123-129.

[14] Ibidem.

[15] Miroslav Svirčević, Апорија Устава СФРЈ од 1974. године (Aporia of the Yugoslav Constitution From 1974), in: Dr Branislava Knežić, dr Jovan Ćirić, *20 Years Since the Breaking - Up of the SFRY*, op., cit, pp. 150-152.

[16] See more on the western involvement in: (ed.) Raju G. C. Thomas, Yugoslavia Unraveled: Sovereignty, Self-Determination, Intervention, Lexington Books 2003, pp. 386.

of immigrant communities of different racial and religious background in developed nations came in prominence with the 21st century. It is evident in the clashes between domicile and immigrant population in Britain, in Italy, on-going problems over integration and relations among whites, blacks and others in USA, officially proclaimed failures of multiculturalism in Germany and in France.[17]

Balkan in the 1980s witnessed ethnic consolidation and homogenisation of Bulgaria by expelling hundreds of thousands of Muslims whom Bulgaria saw as a threat and internal enemy possibly sided with neighbouring Turkey. Dissolution of Yugoslavia through wars was just climax of never ended clashes, suppressed in 1945 that were revamping periodically (Albanian chauvinist protests in 1968, 1981, Croatian spring in 1971). As war evolved what was established of Yugoslav unity dissolved and new acclaimed states Slovenia and Croatia applying different methods pushed for the ethnic cleansing and ethnic homogenisation. For Slovenia it was much simpler since non-Slovene nations had lesser portion of the population. Part of the Serbs were stripped of citizenship, one part lost their job and left, of course not all of them. After the destruction of Serbian Republic of Krajina acclaimed by the Serbs in the Republic of Croatia as Croatian institutions proclaimed secession from Yugoslavia (it was announced before but the Declaration of independence was on 25th June 1991). Since civic nationalism was not promoted by neither of states, and it was partially applied by communist Yugoslavia, minorities, religious and ethnic minorities have lost loyalty to a national state in the Balkans perceived as ethnic.

Long transformation of state in the Middle Ages after tribal foundations on the ashes of the antique states (Imperial Rome and its tributaries), with landlord feudal wars, finally through imperial and religious authority rivalry and mutual exhaustion sovereign monarchies were strengthened. Their evolution with the changes of the Western Christianity, rise of the political power of the Popes and subsequent downtrend of theocentric and ascendancy of anthropocentric world view eventually caused rise of Bourgeoisie forces that organised French Revolution and established secular national state. French nationalism was almost from the beginning patriotism, reserved for the citizens regardless of their religion and only subsequently of racial features. Yet, most of European nationalism as well as the nationhood were just like in Germany blood and soil issue (Ireland, Scandinavian countries, Eastern and central Europe). Multinational empires in the continent dissolved in interethnic and interreligious wars (Poles against

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[17] See for these in: Слободан Јанковић, „Савремени миграциони трендови: последице по Србију", оригинални, *Национални интерес*, бр. 2, год. VI, vol. 8, Београд 2010, стр. 236-238; Vladimir Grečić and Slobodan Janković, "Managing Population Movements: The Challenge for Diplomacy in Southeast Europe", *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, Winter/Spring 2010, Vol. XI, N. I, pp. 132-133; Slobodan Janković, "Odnosi Ankare i Brisela i njihovo prelamanje na Balkanu" izvorni naučni rad, *Međunarodna politika*, Vol. LXIII br. 1147 jul–septembar, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Beograd 2012, str. 40, 41.

Russians, Slovaks against Rutenians, Bulgarians against Serbs and Greeks, Hungarians against all, Balkan people against Ottoman Turks). Blood and soil ethnicities were basically created around the common language, one understood mostly by groups using various dialects. In the Balkans the situation became to be different since the 19th century. In that period community of religion started to be primary agent of ethnicity for the Croats and subsequently for the Serbs. Stjepan Radić, Croatian politician wrote in 1888. that he sees many Serbs in Dalmatia, Bukovica (dalmatian hinterland), Dubrovnik, Mostar and in Slavonia who speek Croatian (since Croats accepted Serbian stocavian dialect – Vienna agreement in 1850 – as part of their own language, their politicians could say that some Serbs speak Croatian, although thez have been speaking Serbian). Croatians undertook this intiative in order to rpesent part of the Serbian literature as their own. He wrote that inevitably all those cattolics which declare themselve as Serbs will inevitably become Croats and that all those Orthodox will become Serbs.[18] After the socialist experiment and various interests for the weakening of the Serbs new nations (Montenegrins and Macedonians since 1945 and Muslims – from 1993 denominated as Bosnians) were constructed around different language (Macedonians), religion (Muslims) or based on the existence of the state (there was a state of Montenegro recognised as independent at the Berlin Congress in 1878).

State or civic nationalism was considered as progressive democratic (right of European peoples to self determination and national independence) in 19th century. But this concept was basically promoted by Napoleon and was suitable for British islands were monarch was ruling over different ethnicities and religions (Englishmen, Scots, Irish, and Welsh). Still, even there, one language — English, just as in France — was promoted as one of the pillars of the political union and afterward of the collective identity. Same was tried with the Church of England. Civic nationalism was suitable also for Spain and even for Netherlands (that could not resist the religious divide which resulted in the secession of catholic Belgium in 1830). While this concept simultaneously with the soil and blood and language based ethnicity was spreading in the Western and central Europe as romantic nationalism, it started to permeate even the Balkans divided at the beginning of the 19th century between the Ottomans and the Austrian Emperor.

Nationalism in the Balkans, old and new nations

Historical circumstances induced different perception of ethnic identity in the Balkans. After the destruction of medieval states, Balkan people remained distant not only by language but even more by the religion from the ruling Turks. Division of people on the basis of faith in the Ottoman Empire (Millet system) on the one hand and the catholic Austrian and Venetian pressure on orthodox people on the other emphasized orthodox Serbian particularity since Serbs were bordering and living under all these

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[18] Милорад Екмечић, *Дуго кретање између клања и орања: Историја Срба у Новом веку 1492-1992*, Службени Гласник 2010, стр. 312.

ruling nations of different language and religion. This helped the prominence of religious among other collective identities. Orthodox Serbs moving north and west, or simply staying in territories conquered by Turks and later by catholic states suffered pressures on religious basis, while those who were Roman Catholics, like Dubrovnik Serbs, or those who later adopted Roman Catholicism gradually became alienated from the national Serbian identity and finally with the end of the Second World War adopted Croatian national identity.[19] One of the many examples are orthodox Serbs who along with the Croats escaped to Gradišće-Burgenland, territory today mainly situated in eastern Austria. Out of four major groups, one is Vlahi. Since Vlahi was always name used for Serbs by Catholics and Turks, the author wanted to find further information about this Vlahi. As soon as one starts the simple research in the internet he can find that these Vlahi were 'Croats' of Greek-Orthodox faith who had to accept Roman Catholicism in order to obtain the right to settle.[20] In contemporary Croatia process of the new croatisation of the Serbs is on-going in particular since 1995.

Serbs, as well as Greeks, and occasionally Bulgarians (who inhabited lands closer to the Ottoman capital – Constantinople) were often rebelling against the Muslim invaders and have took part in all Austrian and afterward Russian wars against Turkey in the peninsula. As a result of Turkish invasions and incursions the catholic population of Dalmatian cost was decimated and en masse emigrated in Italy, on the islands and toward North (Croats of Gradišće). Serbs, who were moving from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Southern Dalmatia, and contemporary Montenegro and even from today's Serbia, were populating emptied or scarcely inhabited territories. Thus they arrived North up to today's border between Slovenia and Croatia (Zumberak) were they gradually lost Serbian identity after conversion to Union but have maintained eastern rite (though inside the Roman Catholic Church) until today.

Ethnic identity based on confession ergo evolved due to:

1) Loss of mediaeval states and occupation by the states of different religion. That way language and religion became the trademarks of identity.

2) Migration and mixing of population in Western (Dalmatia, Slavonia, Croatia, Northern (South and central territories of once Hungarian kingdom) and central Balkans (Kosovo and Metohija, Macedonia) between Serbs and Croatians (Western) or Serbs and Albanians (Central).[21]

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[19] Милорад Екмечић, *Дуго кретање између клања и орања,* op., cit.

[20] Weiden bei Rechnitz, Интернет, http://www.the-burgenland-bunch.org/V_Histories/Weidenbei Rechnitz.htm, retrieved on 07/03/2013.

[21] See on the migration in Dalmatia and changing identity from Serbian to Croatian in: Slobodan Janković, "Serbia-Croatia Relations after 2000", *Neighbour and Neighbourhood*, Lingua-Culture Contextual Studies in Ethnic Conflicts of the World (LICCOSEC), Vol. 11, Osaka 2009, Proceedings of Round Table Conference, Belgrade, September 17-18, Osaka 2010, pp. 121-129.

Minorities, belonging and loyalty today

First (1918-1941), second (1945-1991) and in minor measure even third Yugoslavia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1992-2003) were multi-ethnic and multicultural mosaics resembling the mixture of defunct Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman or other empires. Particular characteristic of the second Socialist Yugoslavia is that it nurtured the principle of the weakening of the largest group – of the Serbs. In order to gain privileges for other groups only Serbs had to be reduced by creating artificial nations out of parts of the Serbian population and only Serbia had autonomous provinces.

The Yugoslav wars due to their character of inter-ethnic and inter-religious warfare produced emotions and hatred not only between the groups involved in the wars. Wars, crisis and resurgence of previously supressed national animosities in the environment characterised by social, economic and political crisis generated mistrust and affected belonging and sense of loyalty toward the state. All six states created of six republics of the former Yugoslavia, are established as national states of dominant ethnicity (Montenegro is unique case of a country officially being based on citizenship having at the same time dominant ethnic group) and all other citizens. Except for the France this is general rule for the rest of the continent. Inter-ethnic and inter-religious divisions and wars as well as a general process of the state dissolution, process not ended in the case of Serbia and frozen, but not finished in Macedonia and in BiH generated social milieu in which members of ethnic and religious minorities strive to achieve political autonomy as a necessary step toward full secession (Croats and Serbs in BiH, Albanians in Serbia and in FRY Macedonia). Additional impact is presented by policies of neighbouring countries. Politicians and organisations from Hungary as a home country to Hungarian minority, support political representatives and organisations of Hungarians in Serbia, that often claim political autonomy and sometimes even change of the borders.

Kosovo and Metohija with its negligence of basic human rights as freedom of movement, freedom to work, ethnic and religious violence is issue per se, but since it is under occupation by NATO assisted by albanian representatives we did not studied the situation in this part of Serbia.

Croatia

Croatia, after ethnic cleansing of the Serbs during the 1990s and with the lasting process of national and religious assimilation (from Eastern Orthodox Christianity to Roman Catholicism) is one of ethnically most homogenous states in Europe 90.42, in which the participation of main ethnic group is proportionally growing (from 78.1% in 1991 to 90,42% in 2011). Serbs are the second ethnic group with 4.36% (from 12,2% in 1991).

Croatia recognises 22 ethnic minorities comprising 7,67% percent of the population. Still, Serbs as the largest minority are often facing discrimination and even physical assaults. They are being publicly accused on ethnic bases and their law based rights are

denied. For illustration we can mention that according to the Croatian constitutional law on national minorities, in municipalities were certain minority exceeds 1/3 of population, as is the case with the town of Vukovar, all signs have to be also on the language and alphabet of that minority. Still, the law is not being implemented, even though Serbs are more than 34 percent of the population. IN the spite of two weeks Serbian pupils of the Orthodox Christian seminary in Krka, Croatia have been attacked and beaten by larger group of Croatian children, Director of major football club, Dinamo, from Zagreb publicly insulted Serbs and minister of Education on the basis of him being an Serb, and right wing PM Ruža Tomašić said that Croatia is only for the Croats while all others are merely guests. All of these provoked, for the first time in more than twenty years joint condemnation by both Prime Minister and President of Croatia.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

B and H recognises 17 national minorities but since 1991 there was no census due to political problems and obstacles posed mainly by Muslim politicians. Law for the protection of minorities was adopted in 2003. Members of minorities cannot assume high governmental positions.[22]

Bosnia and Herzegovina has three constitutive nations (ethnicities), Bosniaks (Muslims), Serbs and Croats. Major political parties of Serbs are announcing the possibility of the seccession of Serbian entity in a time to come. Major political representatives of Croats from time to time are seeking the establishment of the third Croatian entity as an instrument to override decline of the Croatian population and danger of being outnumbered in municipalities where they now constitute majority. Main Croatian city in Bosnia is Western Mostar (western part of the city of Mostar which is inhabited by the Muslims on the eastern shore of the river Neretva. Serbs are purged from both parts of the city.

Serbia

Although Serbian laws guarantee highest standards of minority rights, foreign interests (local and those of big powers) and mentioned intergroup relations produce separatist tendencies primarily among members of Hungarian, Muslim and Albanian minorities, (in minor measure or without any political significance it may also be the case with the representatives of some other groups). Croatians, as well as so called ethnic Montenegrins (38527) have many times expressed publicly critic of governmental policies asking always for the new rights.

Although religious leader of the part of the Muslims in Serbia, mufti Zukorlić asked that Slav Muslims should boycott the census in 2011 he failed, and did so also in the elections

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[22] National Minorities in BiH, Internet, http://www.oscebih.org/default.aspx?id=53&lang=EN, retrieved on 19/03/2013.

in 2012 where he presented his own list. Still, parties of Muslim Slavs/Bosniacs, although present for many years in different governments of Serbia and having ministerial positions, always claim new rights aimed at achieving political autonomy. They do that despite Muslims represent 3,1 percent of the overall population of Serbia without counting occupied Kosovo and Metohija. Of these 3,1% (222 828 people) Bosniacs are 145278 (around 2%).[23] Albanian inhabitants of three municipalities in the south of Serbia (Preševo with absolute Albanian majority, Bujanovac with relative Albanian majority and Medveđa with Albanian minority) are asking for the territorial political autonomy, local police and self-appointed customes which is prerogative of a state.

Serbs are 83,3 percent of the population, not counting Kosovo and Metohija.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYRM)

Since ethnic war in 2001, Ohrid Framework agreement, imposed by the West, rearranged the country. This agreement envisaged adoption right for any group having more than 25 percent of the general population to assume same rights as the dominant nation. This way, along Macedonian Slavs, the Albanians became constitutive nation.

Year after the agreement Macedonia has organised the census (year 2002) which was praised by the Western countries but internally left many doubts, as Albanians turned up to be 25,12% (509083 out of 20022547) of the population, number needed to acquire rights as constitutional group. Macedonia recognises six minorities (Albanians, Turks, Roma, Serbs, Vlah and Bosnians) of which one has constitutional rights due to their perceived number – Albanians. Macedonian Slavs are called Bosnians due to the political decision to name all Muslim Slavs of former Yugoslavia with one name. Previously it was Muslims and since 1993 it is Bosniacs.

Census of 2011 failed because of the opposition of the ruling Albanian Party DUI. Since the Slavic partner in the government, VMRO, promised fair counting accusing leftist Macedonian Slavs party of "allowing an overcount of the Albanians during the last census, which took place in 2002…"[24] Albanians protested in order to abrupt census that could show the numbers lowered ten those in 2002.

Montenegro

Montenegro in its Constitution mentions 7 peoples and minorities: Montenegrins, Serbs, Bosniacs, Albanians, Muslims and Croatians, while official Census questionaire recognises possibility to express as Roma too. Roma minority council was established

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[23] "2011 Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Serbia", Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade 2013.

[24] Census fails in Macedonia, Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso 20 October 2011, Internet, http://www.balcanicaucaso.org/eng/Regions-and-countries/Macedonia/Census-fails-in-Macedonia-105372, retrieved on 19/03/2013.

in 2008 along with the national minority councils of Bosniaks, Muslims, Albanians and of Croatians.[25]

Montenegro is again the specific case were Serbs do not have an official status. Serbs are neither constitutive (or majoritarian population) nor minority. According to the latest census (2011) they constitute 28,73% of the population and 42.88% speak Serbian.[26]

Albania

Latest census in Albania (in 2011) was done with the foreign assistance and it shows the incorrect data presented in previous Albanian censuses. Result is that the Albanians constitute 82,58 percent of the population unlike more than 90 percent as in all previously organised. Problem of national minorities in Albania which even today cannot change their violently Albanised names and last names is evident in the unusually high number of those who preferred not to declare their religious and ethnic affiliation – 390938 citizens or 13,96% which did not stated their ethnic affiliation or 13,79% which preferred not to answer the question of their religious affiliation.[27]

Greece

Greece does not acknowledge minorities, except for the Muslim minority in Thrace. However, foreign sources estimate ethnic Greeks to be somewhere around 94%.[28]

Bulgaria

Bulgarian population is smaller by 564 331 persons between 2001 and 2011. According to the latest census (2011) Bulgarians make up 84,8%. There are ten minorities of which Turks are the largest with 588 318 persons. It represents 8.8% of the population. Many Turks have been expelled in 1980s and today they accuse Bulgaria of assimilation.[29] Orthodox Christians are majority with 53%. Main raw within the state regarding minorities is identity of Slavic Muslims in Bulgaria. They speak Bulgarian,

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[25] *Strategija manjinske politike: Politika Vlade Crne Gore u oblasti poštovanja i zaštite prava manjina*, Government of Montenegro, Ministarstvo za zaštitu ljudskih i manjinskih prava, Podgorica 2008, p. 23.

[26] Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in Montenegro 2011, Population of Montenegro by sex, type of settlement, etnicity, religion and mother tongue, per municipalities, Podgorica 12. 07. 2011, pp. 8, 12.

[27] Population and Housing Census 2011, INSTAT, Internet, http://www.instat.gov.al/media/177354/main_results__population_and_housing_census_2011.pdf, retrived on 18/032013, pp. 70,71.

[28] *Demographics of Greece*, Internet, http://www.eurfedling.org/Greece.htm, retrived on 19/03/2013.

[29] 2011 POPULATION CENSUS – MAIN RESULTS, National Staistical Institute of Bulgaria, http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/PDOCS2/Census2011final_en.pdf, retrieved on 19/03/2013.

and Bulgaria recognises them as Bulgarian Muslims, while some Slavic Muslims and Turkey claim them as Pomaks (ethnically distinct from Bulgarians identity).[30]

From this snapshot of ethnic and/or religious composition of Balkan states we can conclude that many religious and ethnic minorities are claiming broader rights (often political) in countries where they reside, which is not particular characteristic of the Balkans. Yet, lack of loyalty helped by the revival of revisionist policy of Turkey, Hungary, Albania and unresolved issues between Serbia, Croatia, within the FRY Macedonia and within the Bosnia and Herzegovina helps tensions in society and disputes among different collective identities based on their group identity as such. This undermines national state building, integration of the society and destabilises even prospects for the balanced development.

Legacy of the 1990s in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina brought general mistrust, tendency of the minority groups to vote only for ethnic or confessional political parties and hindered the prospects of integration.

Serbs are the biggest looser of the wars and of the post-war situation. They remained scattered throughout Yugoslavia as the biggest looser of the dissolution of the state. They have lost more than half of the population (mostly as refugees since 1995) and the status of constitutive nation in 1991 in Croatia; in BiH, although with the Dayton agreement they maintained Republika Srpska – autonomous entity – obtained in war. Serbian population, like all other Christian populations in the Balkans is diminishing in all republics. This process is particularly evident in Croatia were assimilation into Croatian nation and from Orthodox Christianity to Roman Catholics is constant yet not researched. Similar process is present in historical Serbian state and region – Montenegro. Miša Đurković researched indicated the transformative "process (lasting) more decades through which Montenegro from the second Serbian state became anti-Serbian entity." Creation of the artificial Montenegrin nation (as opposed to Serbian, same model as modern Croatian nation)[31] has beginnings in the late 19th century in the court of Vienna.[32] Same policy regarding the identity of the Montenegrins was conducted by the Comintern and the Yugoslav communist party as mentioned previously. This was done despite all documents and histories written by the Montenegrins during the Montenegrin autonomy and after it gained recognition as independent country in 1878,

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[30] See for example how Bulgarian Muslim explains this: Ali Eminov, "Social Construction of Identities: Pomaks in Bulgaria", *JEMIE* 6 (2007) 2 © 2007 by European Centre for Minority Issues, Internet, http://www.ecmi.de/fileadmin/downloads/publications/JEMIE/2007/2-2007-Eminov.pdf.

[31] Although Croatian ethnicity is much older and may be traced back to Persian empire times, modern Croatian ethnicity was rebuilt in large measure out of ethnical Serbs. See: Slobodan Janković, "Serbia-Croatia Relations after 2000", op., cit.

[32] Miša Đurković, "How the Nations are Being Constructed: The Montengrin Case", *Социолошки преглед*, year. XLIV (2010), N. 1, pp. 8-9.

testified the Serbian identity of Montenegrins.[33] Notorious is (unsuccessful) case of the attempt of the Austrian occupation administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina after 1878 to impose and establish Bosnian identity and invent the history of it, which was eventually rejected.[34] Along with the decline in numbers of the Serbs came the deterioration and breach of their rights as minorities or constitutional group.

Recent clashes between Albanians and Slavic Muslims in March 2013 in Macedonia, are unfortunately part of the series of interethnic clashes ongoing for years in this Republic. Las one were impulsed by the nominaton of the former war commander of Albanian separatists in 2001, for the Minister of defence of FRYMacedonia. Electoral success of the DUI that is in the long run secessionist party shows the degree of low loyalty of Albanians toward Macedonia. Same can be concluded for the Albanians in southern Serbia. Somehow similar situation is with the Serbs in BiH, part of the Hungarians in the Serbia, part of the Muslims Serbia, Albanians in Montenegro. This situation will continue as long as the dissolution and border changes are present in the region. For this to stop both foreign and internal dominant factors need to respect basic principles of international law, of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

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[33] As in The Code of Prince Danilo in 1855. paragraph 92 says: "Although there is no other nationality in this land except Serb nationality and no other religion except Eastern Orthodoxy, each foreigner and each person of different faith can live here and enjoy the same freedom and the same domestic right as Montenegrin or Highlander."

[34] Ibid.

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