Chapter 16

Politics and Society in the Modern Era in the Balkans: Global and Regional Context

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'Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.'
[Beware of Greeks bearing gifts.]
Virgil, *Aeneid*

Prologue

I left Bosnia at the end of 1992, then the world's biggest area of war, and therefore the Balkans, the most stigmatised part of the world. Now I live in Scandinavia, the part of Europe with the best image in the world, more precisely in Norway, the country placed by the UN for years on the top of the list of countries with the highest quality of life. And yet, if you ask me whether I would return to Bosnia, thus to the Balkans, my answer is: 'Immediately!'

If to this we add that Scandinavia, particularly Norway, is one of the most developed democracies in the world, while the Balkans is still, despite its transitional achievements, a part of the world where human rights and fundamental freedoms are conspicuously breached, and Bosnia is under the authority of the Office of High Representative and is thus a non-sovereign country, then my response seems more confusing and—doubtful.

Where does such an irrational need to return from the most European part of Europe to the part of Europe which is regarded by some as not belonging in Europe at all come from? I suspect Europeans actually believe me, and as for the Balkan people I definitely know that they do not. They say: 'if you truly wish to return, why don't you do that?' My ambivalent attitude towards the Balkans, particularly Bosnia, as well as towards Europe, the fact that I want to return, but am not doing that, one can grasp if you are the one from the Balkans who was the victim of the genocide there, and in spite of that you did not, even in Europe, become a nationalist. Such an attitude towards both Europe and the Balkans one can understand only if one comprehends the relationship of Europe and the Balkans. Therefore, how to explain the relationship?

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The relationship between Bosnia, the Balkans and Europe, one can comprehend if it is put into a wider context. The wider context in this case means if to this—that is to Bosnia and the Balkans, as well as to Europe, one adds—the US.

In recent history, having in mind the dismemberment of Yugoslavia and the tragedy of Bosnia, Europe and the US have had intrinsically different relationships towards Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, thus a European issue and—nevertheless a part of Europe. These differences are numerous, but they can be reduced to three relevant points:

1. The relationship towards the integrity of Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, as sovereign, although Balkan, states;
2. The relationship towards the war, in Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular, but to all so-called Yugoslav wars (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo);
3. The relationship towards democracy and the building of a sustainable state of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The relationship of Europe and the US towards these three essential issues: the integrity of sovereign states, the war, and eventually, democracy as a political-legal system, appeared to be so different that people in the Balkans, particularly in Bosnia, have good reason to be scared of any further steps coming from Europe. This explains the title of

this text. Moreover, after their recent experience, Bosnians have the right to wonder whether they are at all a part of Europe—or the US. This is not to say that all moves having come from the US were correct and timely.

1. The Integrity of the Balkan States between Europe and the US

My starting hypothesis is that the events in the Balkans, the wars in particular, over the course of the last two centuries, have not their causes only in the Balkans, but are basically the outcomes of the clash between two European political concepts, the Western one, on the one hand, and the Central-South-Eastern one, on the other.

To say this in a more concrete manner, the hypothesis would read: the 'Balkanisation' of the Balkans is the outcome of the 'Europeanisation' of the Balkans. 'Balkanisation' is a quite recent term. For that reason one should seek the causes of it in modern times: the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Balkanisation is, namely, the process of political crumbling, hashing up and carving up of a formerly politically homogenous and integrated area in Europe. Up to the nineteenth century the Balkans had only one political border, divided between two large political creations, two empires; thus two aristocratic and non-democratic states. Today in the Balkans there are more borders than states. Two empires, those of the Ottomans and the Habsburgs, though religiously composite and multi-ethnic, were, in spite of this fact (and illogical for the fact), politically homogenous and territorially integral. However, these were two creations that did not fit to West-European political standards.

What differentiated Central-South-Eastern Europe from the rest of Europe is as follows: Western (paradigm France) Europe, as well as Northern (paradigm Sweden) Europe, accomplished their political homogeneity and integrity by erasing both ethnic and cultural and regional identities, aiming to establish a common, standardised, i.e. national, identity. The (Western) European political standard was a national state. Everything not satisfying this condition was not recognised as European. Political Europe did not overlap with geographical Europe. Not only Turkey, as civilisationally distinctive, but also Austria-Hungary, as a Christian country, did not meet this basic (Western) European condition *sine qua non*. Turkey and Austria-Hungary were aristocratic and (to some

extent) theocratic states. That is why they should have vanished as such. According to victorious historiography they had to vanish as such. One should have proved that these political arrangements were not able to function as homogenous political entities because they were multicultural, ethnically composite and religiously tolerant. One should have corroborated that these two political creations were not able to sustain their integrity, for their populations speak various languages, pray in different ways, and also have distinctive cultures of family relations, and in particular towards women. Once it is proved, from the current perspective, which is the perspective of the victors, it appeared that the breakup of the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg monarchy was a historical necessity. Moreover, and this is the irony, one should today know that these two states were carved from inside, by an internal logic, and not by interference from outside. And not only that: the two were unnatural political arrangements.

Everybody familiar with what the role of France and Britain was in the dissolution of Turkey and Austria-Hungary, knows, however, that they did not need to dissolve. Moreover, the dispute between the two European political concepts, the Western one and the Central-South-Eastern one started neither with World War I, nor with the Balkan wars of 1912–13. It (the dispute) started with the Treaty of Berlin (as the continuation and the consequence of the Treaty of San Stefano), by the recognition of the sovereignty of the Balkan countries (Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Montenegro) and the Austrian-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as a part of the sovereign Ottoman empire, thus by the clash within the Central-South-East European political concept. It is high time for historiography to reveal to what extent it was an internal conflict and to what extent it was induced from outside.[1]

One should first demonstrate, from the nation state standpoint, that believers of different religions cannot live together in a theocratic state, as Turkey was. Bosnia-Herzegovina should have been occupied by a

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[1] The congress in Berlin was held from 13 June to 13 July 1878. The decisions made there were of essential importance for the future development of events in the Balkans, as well as all of Europe and the world: 'For the Balkan peoples, then, the Berlin Treaty meant not peace with honour but rather frustration of national aspirations and future wars. The direct and logical outcome of the Berlin settlement was the Serbian-Bulgarian war of 1885, the Bosnian crisis of 1908, the two Balkan wars of 1912–13, and the murder of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in 1914' (Stravrianos 2000: 393–412).

European Christian state as Christians lived there. Great (Western) European powers generously allowed Austria-Hungary to occupy, and then to annex, Bosnia-Herzegovina. The fact that Austria-Hungary came into control over, by doing so, for the first time in its history, a considerable number of Muslim citizens, meant strategically for the long-term nothing from the standpoint of the nation state principle. It was a question of time as to when Bosnian Muslims would be Europeanised; that is, speaking in modern terms, integrated and assimilated. It was, speaking in chess terms, the European sacrifice of chess-man. Austria greedily took it. Turkey agreed to the occupation of the part of its territory, while keeping the sovereignty of the sultan over the territory. Austria fell into the European trap and so laid down the foundations of its own destruction. The Annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was an introduction into what became known later as 'Balkanisation', therefore, the disrespect of the territorial integrity of states and their dismemberments. The second episode of sacrificing the Balkan political integrities were the Balkan wars of 1912–13. Europe allowed the invasion of the Balkan Christian (Orthodox) countries against the Ottoman Empire (Stavrianos 2000: 528–43). Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Romania attacked Turkey in 1912 in order to 'liberate' the remaining national territories and the remaining brethren, Orthodox peoples, particularly Macedonians. What happened to Macedonians in cultural, religious, ethnic and territorial terms in the wake of the replacement of foreign rule by rule of their brethren, one should know in order to understand (Poulton 2000). When one grasps that, then it will be possible to comprehend why the Second Balkan war was also inevitable and not the least bit different from the first one. As the objective of the First Balkan war was the breaching of Turkish territorial integrity, and not the liberation of brothers in blood and faith, so too the Second Balkan war, the war of the Balkan Orthodox states against Bulgaria, also an Orthodox state, was the same—the breaching of territorial integrity or the seizure of others' territory. Not even Lenin, in his account of the nature of the Balkan wars, was able to overcome his Bolshevik Jingoism.

For the first time in the history of 'Balkanisation' it appeared to be apparent that Europe stood behind. As neither Europe nor the Balkan nation states were not anxious about the integrity of Turkey (in both cases—the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the First Balkan war), so too Europe was not anxious about the integrity of Bulgaria, nor about

the integrity of any other Balkan state. Europe's indifferent attitude towards the integrity of Yugoslavia, at the end of twentieth century, corroborates this and, moreover, has its roots at the outset of the twentieth century.

Why did Europe allow Serbia, along with other the Balkan Orthodox-nation states, to attack Turkey, as a Muslim country, and also to tolerate Serbian terrorism against Austria-Hungary (the assassination in Sarajevo), as a Christian state, remains a great political-diplomatic secret, but not a theoretical one. Not only Turkey, namely, as a non-Christian country, nor Austria-Hungary, as a Christian country, failed to fit into Western European political standards. What was the common denominator of both Austria-Hungary and Turkey is that both had multi-ethnic societies, by and large functioning and tolerant societies. Neither of these were thus nation states, and that is what was in the way for Western Europe. Such a Western Europe was seeking a political creation on the Balkans to rely on and which would be ardent to adopt its political paradigm of the nation state. This political creation was Serbia. The only political interest of the West for Serbia and other emerging national states was to make them an instrument to be used in the struggle against the integrity of the two remaining political arrangements that did not meet European standards, the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empires. The interest was neither the protection of Christianity nor the liberation of subjugated peoples. Herein lies the cause of all forthcoming tragedies of Serbia and its people, and the cause of tragedies that Serbia brought to other the Balkan peoples.

The third episode: World War I eventually revealed what lay in the basis of the relationship between Western Europe, as only legitimate Europe, and Central-South-Eastern Europe, as the originally oriental-despotic, and therefore essentially non-European, political concept. Serbia, as Austria-Hungary earlier, got a green light and was encouraged, or at least not discouraged, by the West to show its apparent pretensions towards Bosnia-Herzegovina, then already a political unit of the sovereign state of Austria-Hungary. As Turkey once, so too Austria-Hungary realises that its integrity is imperilled by the Balkan politics of Western Europe. Behind Serbia, in both the case of its attack on Turkey and the case of its terrorist provocation in the war with Austria-Hungary, stood the self-confidence ensured by France and Great Britain. Behind their alliance and support of Serbia, however, was neither concern for Serbian people nor the worry for European civilisation. Behind (Western) European

Balkan politics was simply the interest in 'Balkanisation' of two great Balkan empires. When it was realised, both Turkey and Austria-Hungary ceased with mutual hostilities. From being two foes for centuries, Turkey and Austria-Hungary became allies. That is the only way to explain the sudden alliance between these two states: the existence of common threat.

Yet, something happened even Europe did not count on. The outcome of World War I was, of course, the total collapse of the integrity of another great multi-ethnic state, Austria-Hungary, and the strengthening of new national Balkan states. Austria alone became a nation state, whereby it fulfilled the prerequisite of joining the Western European political model, just like Turkey. However, the consequence of the War also was the emergence of a new state, culturally composite, ethnically varied and even religiously tolerant—Yugoslavia. It was an unexpected and non-planned outcome of the conflict between two European political concepts, West-European and Central-South-Eastern, and moreover the consequence of the triumph of the former over the latter. Today, one can say that Yugoslavia also was an unwanted consequence of World War I. Frankly speaking, the creation of Yugoslavia, as a territorially large state, was a direct contention to the long-term politics of European powers (Stavrianos 2000: 405–6). After all, the state was not the result of West European Balkan politics either. On the contrary, victorious West Europe actually offered at the end of the war, Serbia, as the ally of the victorious alliance—all of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and a big bite of Croatia, up to the line Karlovac-Karlobag, which is even today an obsession of the main actors of Serbian nationalism in the Hague. However, both Slovenia and the whole of Croatia offered themselves to Serbia, while Bosnia-Herzegovina joined them. Serbia accepted the offer without consideration. Yugoslavia, a new non-national state, and as such dissonant to the prevailing political concept in Europe, however, was not approved by Europe, but by the US, and President Woodrow Wilson. (Unlike Europeans, Wilson started from the peoples' right to self-determination, something that Europe accepted in principle. But, the principle of self-determination implies not only the right to secession but also the right to unification, which consequently means both national and multi-ethnic states. South Slavs, just as Czechs and Slovaks, self-determined to live together, and that was contradicting the principle Europe rested on. Europe therefore had to wait for another occasion for the next phase in Europeanisation of the Balkans.)

Although one can hardly proclaim the new state (The State of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and eventually, Yugoslavia) as ethnically tolerant, in its second, Communist manifestation, Yugoslavia got rid of the pretensions to becoming a nation state. When Communists, at the moment of their transition to nationalists, decided to 'balkanise' Yugoslavia, and carve it into small nation states, Europe, as a paradigm of the nation state, showed an incredible level of ignorance and indifference in spite of the Helsinki oaths to the stability of European borders. Quite the reverse, many European states played a very unfair role (Simms 2001).

Sabrina Ramet and Letty Coffin deem it unfair to blame only Germany and Austria for encouraging Slovenia and Croatia in their secessionist intentions (Ramet and Coffin 2001).

It is indicative that among the most often used attributes in the European academic and political vocabulary for the 1992 dissolution of Yugoslavia, were assessments that Yugoslavia was an unnatural arrangement. Ignorant European critics of Yugoslavia did not say which states are natural arrangements. In short, Europe did not demonstrate any interest in keeping the integrity of a sovereign European and a Balkan state.

It is also indicative that the US, unlike Europe, showed much more interest in preserving a plural society and the integrity of a state, just as it played important role in its creation. The same, constructive role the US played later on, with respect to the integrity of newly emerged states, first of all Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, protecting them from aggressive nationalist projects to build a nation state—the great Serbia. From the first moment since President Milosevic and the government of Montenegro proclaimed on 27 April 1992 the creation of new federal state, comprised of only two republics, the US protected the integrity of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Europe continues to demonstrate its indifference towards their territorial integrity, just as in the case of Yugoslavia. Moreover, in the case of Bosnia, Europe proposes its division in various variants.

One can say, in sum, that the US behaved as if Yugoslavia, and in particular Bosnia, were parts of the US, and not of Europe, and vice versa.

2. Yugoslav Wars, Europe and the US

The question of territorial integrity necessarily leads to the question of war. One who does not care about integrity always risks confronting war and—crime.

One can perhaps say that the relationships of Europe and the US towards the latest (Yugoslav) wars in the Balkans have separated Bosnia, and respectively the Balkans, even more from Europe. And thereby, of course, the US from Europe. One can see already in the level of interest for these wars and the responsibility in which the wars were regarded, the huge difference between Europe and the US. Although on its own ground, Europe regarded these wars as regional, even local, while the US considered them a global issue and a threat to world peace.

While the US, at least the Democratic Party and President Clinton, was against the war, there was a long delay for intervention, in particular against the crimes, which could have been foreboded from the very beginning in their worst form—genocide—the same cannot be said for Europe. Moreover, it was President Clinton who was begging for forgiveness from the victims in Srebrenica, and in Bosnia as a whole, at the tenth anniversary of the massacre. Europe did not do that.

'No intervention' was the defining feature of the politics of United Kingdom, as well as of most of the European countries (Simms 2001: 1–48). Contrary to them, the US was ready to jeopardise even the Atlantic alliance because of its own principles. After all, it was the US that led air strikes against Bosnian Serb positions on 31 August 1995, after Srebrenica. European allies joined them, but not for the reason of ending the war, but only when even the European public was not able to absorb Srebrenica. As if the genocide in Bosnia did not start long before Srebrenica. European powers eschewed the intervention up to the last moment, until the dimensions of the massacre in Srebrenica could not be concealed anymore. In the UN Security Council session, France, Italy, Nigeria, Russia, the UK and China rejected approving air strikes only one day after the fall of Srebrenica, but early enough to save 8,000 lives of Bosnian boys and men. The only exception was the Czech Republic (Vetlesen 2005).

It seems that the relationship of the Balkan states towards the war(s) in former Yugoslavia and the crimes committed in them was also

indicative from the standpoint of my basic hypothesis. The more these states, although Balkan ones, are Europeanised, the more their relationship towards the war is far from that of the US and is closer to the European one. None of the Balkan states interfered in the war, nor officially took the side of any of the parties in the conflict. And yet, volunteers from Greece and Romania took part in the war in Bosnia on the side of the Bosnian Serbs. Volunteers from Greece, a NATO member state, even fought in Srebrenica, a 'Safe Area' under the protection of the UN and international forces, primarily military forces from the NATO alliance. If the soldiers from the Dutch battalion in Srebrenica had been commanded by the Norwegian colonel Hagrup Haukland, their immediate commander, to defend Srebrenica (Michas 2002), as they had had to, it could have happened that soldiers from a NATO member state would have shot at a paramilitary unit from another NATO member state.

It did not happen, but I do not know what to say: luckily or—regrettably!

3. The Relationship of the US and Europe
   ## towards Democratisation in the Balkans

Is there a relationship between territorial integrity of the state, the wars they wage—and democracy?

The Balkans, Bosnia in particular, cannot imagine a better gift from their mother Europe than democracy. Europe, including its academic experts about democracy, or the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission, does just that: it offers Bosnia-Herzegovina democracy, which is to say the sovereignty of its citizens instead of the Dayton Agreement and the Office of the High Representative and its Bonn (sovereign) Powers. A very seductive carrot. Naïve as they are, the Bosnians have already bitten it. '[The] Opinion on the Constitutional Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Powers of the High Representative' could, however, become the Trojan Horse for Bosnia-Herzegovina (Venice Commission 2005).

Naïve as I am, for I am Bosnian, thus Balkan, I believe it can be prevented, and for that reason I do challenge the Venice Commission's Opinion, and their naivety that democracy in the Balkans is feasible at the moment, and that the Balkans will avoid new wars if it only democratises.

Here is the argument. The Venice Commission, namely, shares Vojislav Kostunica's (*Danas* 2005), the President of Serbia, opinion, the man who even in Serbia is recognised not only as a Serbian nationalist, and a sophisticated intercessor of the Slobodan Milosevic's politics, accused in The Hague for, among other things, the genocide in Bosnia, but also for being a Nazi (Sonja Biserko, president of Serbia's Helsinki Committee). Many in Serbia today believe that Serbia is still ruled by Milosevic, through Kostunica. Kostunica, likewise as a genuine European, asserts that Bosnia should be given to its people, and wretched from the jaws of the Dayton Accords, the foreigners led by the High Representative and, of course, Americans. Dozens of Serbian intellectuals participated for years at European conferences and reiterated his words: 'Bosnia to Bosnians, foreigners out!' This is very generous of those who have never renounced their finite goal: the Great Serbia.

Many Bosnian intellectuals, regrettably, have joined this populist-academic offensive. Paddy Ashdown, the current High Representative, is among the most unpopular persons in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnian intellectuals have again been allowed to be trapped by crafty Kostunica and naïve Europeans. Once foreigners leave, they repeat along with Serbian and European intellectuals, the people of Bosnia will fix their state and country.

If foreigners leave Bosnia it will be divided by foreigners, by its neighbours I mean, perhaps they will instigate a new war, and if it is not excluded they will continue with the genocide against one of its peoples, though in a more subtle and sophisticated manner than 'The Balkan Butcher' from The Hague used to do it. On behalf of the European principle 'that people can not live together'.

That this European attitude is profoundly rooted in Serbian nationalism one can confirm in Radovan Karadzic, also one of those accused for war crimes in The Hague. He asserted: 'Serbs, Croats and Muslims cannot live together any more. One cannot hold cat and dog locked in the same room' (Vetlesen 2005). As if unhappy states are the same as unhappy families. So that, if you are *pater familias*, then you can drive out both wife and children, because you cannot live with them. Or, if you are *mater familias*, then you drive out both husband, and children if needed, because you cannot live with them any more. States, however, are not families. In normal law societies neither husband nor wife even can be coerced into living together. But, to be driven out from the house to the

street neither. Only from abnormal states one can drive out one million people, say Bosniaks, just because one does not want to live with them anymore.

In the idea to cede Bosnia to its own people, that is, in the idea to cease the 'faking democracy' in Bosnia (Chandler 1999), to drive away the international community, i.e. to abolish the protectorate there, etc., there is nothing bad—in principle. In reality, however—taking into account the circumstances engendered by the genocide, the war and the dismemberment of the former common state, and in particular by the growth of nationalism in B and H—the idea is simply unsustainable and catastrophic. The idea to leave Bosnia to its people cannot happen for a very prosaic reason—there it no people (in terms of demos) there. There are still only three nationalisms. And two very national neighbouring states. For those who are not familiar with this, one should underline that Bosnia does not share borders with more than two states, although it has three peoples, and that its only neighbours are Serbia and Croatia. Under such conditions, to leave to Bosnians, Serbs and Croats, along with Bosniaks, to decide their fate, means bringing them to the brink of war, new crimes, and the division of the country again. In doing so, the Venice Commission, which says that Bosnia's citizens must decide about Bosnia, continues, with the best of intentions, of course, to consequently practice European national politics towards the Balkans, ensuring the preconditions for the process of 'Balkanisation' of B and H, and perhaps even wider, to be resumed. The idea that Bosnian citizens are to decide about Bosnia-Herzegovina is contentious for a blatant reason: there are no citizens there.

I counter the Venice Commission with two basic arguments:

1. Given that what I have just said is not correct, i.e. assuming that Bosnians became 'citizens', and only then that they are Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs, an irrevocable moral question remains. It is immoral to stand for democracy, thus a form of state order that rests on the principle of majority, in a country in a part of which the absolute majority has been achieved by genocide. This question, however, the Venice Commission does not even mention.
2. The Venice Commission contradicts its own principle. It pleads for the renouncement of the Dayton Accords and for the driving out of the High Representative from Bosnia-Herzegovina, as non-

democratic symbols, thus for the sovereignty of citizens and peoples of B and H, as genuine democracy; while it simultaneously justifies the existence of Bosnia's division on entities based on national grounds and, nevertheless, the Dayton Accords.

The Venice Commission begins its dealing with Bosnia-Herzegovina: 1) from the premise that democracy is better than the Dayton Accords, and 2) comes to the conclusion that entities in Bosnia, established by the Dayton Accords, should not be removed, 'since this would not be accepted within the R[epublika] S[rpska]' (Venice Commission 2005).

The Commission ascertained all this by spending three days in Bosnia: one in Sarajevo, one in Banja Luka, and the third one travelling between Sarajevo and Banja Luka.

The Commission apparently contradicts itself. It wants to be in principal and European. It stands for something that it considers unrealistic. Considering the abolition of entities unrealistic, for it is something the Serbs in RS (Republika Srpska) do not want, it actually pleads for the sovereignty of national groups, and against the sovereignty of people, i.e. citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina. And yet, it continues to insist on the democratisation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. How can a country comprised of political units, entities, based on national groups, be democratised? If the Commission indeed stands for the viewpoint of the sovereignty of peoples and citizens, i.e. democracy in Bosnia, it must prove that by demanding the removal of entities based on national principle and genocidal praxis. Or, it must stand for consistent implementation of the Dayton Accords that implies the return of all refugees; something that has never happened. The Commission's simultaneous commitment to democracy and the cementation of entities can have far-reaching conclusions and consequences: 1) If the Commission stands for democratic decision making in the RS, that is, decision making by majority, does it mean that the Commission considers as legitimate the decisions made by a majority achieved by genocide? 2) If the people (in terms of demos) of Bosnia-Herzegovina is left to make decisions while the entities simultaneously exist, will the Commission underpin the RS's decision to secede from Bosnia-Herzegovina and, in doing so, provoke a new war?

I do not know if the Commission members are aware of the implications of their attitudes, but the politicians in RS have long since

agreed with the opinion of the Commission and are aware of the implications (chances, for them) that I am pointing out.

Otherwise, the Venice Commission approaches the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina in a bureaucratic, academic, and therefore abstract, manner, as if there were no war, as if the war had not been ended by the Dayton Accords and, in particular, as if the US no longer exists. The Venice (therefore European) Commission begins its critique of the current unbearable state in Bosnia by critiquing the Constitution of the State of Bosnia-Herzegovina, i.e. the Annex IV of the Dayton Accords. '[T]he Constitution was', according to the Opinion of five members of the Commission, 'drafted and adopted without involving the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and without applying procedures which could have provided democratic legitimacy'. The Constitution was drafted and adopted while the war and genocide were ongoing. Neither could citizens have been involved nor could it have been possible to respect any procedure. The agreement was signed by the warlords in Bosnia, those who have created nationalists of Bosnians. Instead of regretting the lack of democratic procedures and the absence of Bosnia's citizens in Dayton, the Venice Commission should also say where Europe was while the US was 'faking democracy' and forcing the warlords to halt the bloody war with their signatures.

The Commission's attitudes would not be disturbing if Europe did not stand behind them. The same ones (The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe) who left Bosnia for four years, who allowed an entire ethnic group to become a victim of genocide, and to be occupied by two neighbouring states, ask their Commission to examine whether the Dayton Accords and the Bonn Powers of the High Representative are

> irreconcilable with democratic principles . . . to determine how far these practices comply with Council of Europe basic principles, in particular with the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Furthermore, the Assembly asks the Venice Commission to make a comprehensive assessment of the conformity of the Constitution of Bosnia-Herzegovina with the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Charter of Local Self-Government, as well as of the efficiency and rationality of the present constitutional and legal arrangement in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Venice Commission 2005).

If Europe wants true democratisation, without sacrificing multi-ethnic society, it has to give up democracy for a while and declare a protectorate, educational of course (Sokolovic 2001: 102). Bosnians must learn democracy and be made citizens if democracy is to function.

Otherwise, as the recent behaviour of politicians from RS demonstrates, after the Opinion of the Commission was published, Bosnia-Herzegovina could eventually be divided, RS perhaps exchanged for Sandzak, perhaps for Kosovo. Perhaps it could provoke a war.

However, each of these 'perhaps' is very consistent with the European politics of 'Balkanisation', and therefore rather certain (*Bosnia Report* May–August 2005). The division of Bosnia would be the last phase of 'Balkanisation' or 'Europeanisation' of the Balkans. If this occurs, the Balkans will eventually become Europe, but Europe will lose all chances to learn something from the Balkans and to become a multi-ethnic society by losing the last one. However, if Europe is truly anxious to remove the Dayton Accords, then the only way to attain it is to begin dismantling the entities immediately. The current unbearable situation is not the outcome of the Dayton Accords, but the Dayton Accords are the consequence of an unbearable state of war and genocide.

For all appearances, Bosnia, as well as the Balkans, is the victim of vanity. Americans are not eager to change the Bosnian constitution, for it is nevertheless one more European state they created, while Europeans are keen to remove it for it was created by Americans. When two vanities collide, nothing rational can come from that.

Epilogue

If asked why I did not return to Bosnia and the Balkans, and if I really wish for that, and why, most likely, I will not return, then I will claim two reasons. Or, perhaps, only one.

The reason why I am not going to return from Scandinavia (Norway), to Bosnia and the Balkans, is the fear that I might experience genocide again, to be killed only because of my name, as I was threatened. That is actually the same reason that I want to return—for I am not capable of becoming a sophisticated European, Scandinavian or Norwegian nationalist with such a name . . . (*Hubro: magasin fra Universitetet i Bergen* 2004). The Balkans is, after all, part of Europe.

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