

Looking 100 Years Back and 100 Years Forward

Peacebuilding in the Balkans Region¹

Ivana Milojević
University of the Sunshine Coast

In order to change an existing paradigm ... do not struggle to try and change the problematic model. [Instead,]... create a new model and make the old one obsolete.

Quote attributed to Buckminster Fuller.

Introduction: Theorising Balkans

Who controls the past ... controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.

George Orwell

Courtesy of both European colonialist discourses and the 1990s Yugoslav wars, the term Balkans has become a signifier of disunity, a synonym for 'dividing into small warring/hostile states' and even for genocidal ethnic cleansing. Within the region of the former Yugoslavia, the internalisation of balkanism created narratives such as that 'no generation in the Balkans could live their whole lives without experiencing war at least once', that war is somehow entrenched in 'our hotter blood and temperament', or that '*all* previous transitions between different systems of government were violent'. Even though none of those statements is empirically true (has anybody actually measured the difference in blood temperature between various European people?), nonetheless, this internalised balkanism has proved popular and resilient. Most importantly, it has created cycles of self-fulfilling prophecies wherein these discourses have finally found some validation in reality. Other past-oriented narratives propose Balkan states such as Serbia as responsible for starting at least one world war—this narrative is often repeated in Serbia itself, and not uncommonly with pride.

¹ This chapter contains sections from Milojević, Ivana (2013). *Breathing: Violence In, Peace Out*. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press. More information: <http://www.metafuture.org/2015/11/19/breathing-violence-in-peace-out/>

Another powerful, and detrimental, discourse in the region has been that of nationalism. The imagination of pure ethnic nation states has cost the people of the region dearly. Forceful separation of ethnicities perceived as disparate—based on ‘narcissism of minor difference’ and inspired by the cognitive discourse of primordial ethnicism—has resulted in deaths, poverty and the overall diminished well-being of most people in the region. Primordial ethnicism has solidified within an idea of pure ethnic state and despite its detrimental outcomes it has been almost universally accepted as the solution to the imagined/constructed ethnic hatreds in the Balkans.

Challenging such cognitive templates and discourses, that is, of balkanism and ethnic nationalism, is crucial for long-term peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding in the region. The existence of nonkilling presents and the imagination of nonkilling futures are firmly linked with the investigation into the nonkilling pasts. Alternative interpretation of history is thus one of the keys to creating alternative (nonviolent) presents and futures. And so is alternative reading of dominant discourses that, most commonly, lead to killings and violence.

The following sections investigate the dangers that lie within the current discourses of balkanism and nationalism and propose the alternative readings into the region’s past, present and future.

Balkan’s “Lesser People”

“Ja sam Balkan boy i smrdim na znoj” [I’m a Balkan Boy and I stink of sweat]

Rambo Amadeus

The idea of ‘lesser’ and ‘higher/more advanced’ people was central to the doctrines of imperialism, Eurocentrism and social Darwinism. It has been used for centuries; it reached its peak in fascism and Nazism. Sadly, racism, ethno-nationalism and imperialism-based politics have not influenced only fascism and Nazism. Rather, these ideologies have significantly impacted the whole contemporary world. The arena of international politics, in particular, is built on hierarchical relations between lesser/higher people, of which the latter have not only more wealth/power in general, but also more influence in political decision-making processes locally and globally.

Within the boundaries of Europe [prior to as well as concurrent with the 20th c. immigration wave from the ‘Third Countries’ (another ‘lesser people’ lot)] it has been the area of the Balkans that has, by and large, been inhabited by the lesser people. “A specter is haunting Western culture—the

specter of the Balkans,” begins Maria Todorova’s seminal text *Imagining the Balkans* (1997: 3). What she means by this is that, especially in the 1990s:

All the powers have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this specter: politicians and journalists, conservative academics and radical intellectuals, moralists of all kind, gender, and fashion. Where is the adversarial group that has not been decried as ‘Balkan’ and ‘balkanizing’ by its opponents? Where the accused that have not hurled back the branding reproach of ‘balkanism’? (1997).

The discourse of balkanism makes politics within the region, within Europe and globally, further argued Todorova (1999), “significantly and organically intertwined” with a construction/invention/imagination of the Balkans as lesser. From an innocuous geographical term—denoting the area surrounding the Balkan Mountains, or the Balkan Peninsula in Southeast Europe—the construction of the Balkans at the beginning of the twentieth century meant that:

Europe had added to its repertoire of *Schimpfwörter*, or disparagements, a new one that, although recently coined, turned out to be more persistent over time than others with centuries-old tradition . . . That the Balkans have been described as the ‘other’ of Europe does not need special proof. What has been emphasized about the Balkans is that its inhabitants do not care to conform to the standards of behavior devised as normative by and for the civilized world. As with any generalization, this one is based on reductionism, but the reductionism and stereotyping of the Balkans has been of such degree and intensity that the discourse merits and requires special analysis (Todorova, 1997: 3).

This special analysis is pertinent for two reasons. First, orientalism manifested as Islamophobia is gaining ground in Europe and in the rest of the western world. Not surprisingly, problematisation of Muslims currently on the rise in Europe follows a very similar pattern that ‘lesser people’ of the Balkans discourse did. We can thus hopefully learn from previous mistakes and their bad consequence and create more helpful and peace promoting discourses. Understanding detrimental effects of discourses that categorise people according to higher/lower value is necessary, as perhaps a first step towards abandoning them. Second, the analysis pertinent to the area of peace and conflict studies because the conceptualisation that Todorova critiques is still widely present within the field. One example is *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace* (2010), where there are no less than 23

entries in some way directly related to the 'Balkans'. To start with, the term 'Balkan Conflicts' is defined in the following way:

In the 1990s Yugoslavia witnessed the worst violence Europe had seen since 1945 in a series of wars that devastated large parts of the broken federation. Several hundred thousand people—mostly civilians—died. Millions fled abroad or were displaced internally. Chauvinism, fuelled by the conflict between Serbia and Croatia, the two longstanding South Slav rivals, engulfed Bosnia. Eventually, after years of equivocation, the West intervened to prevent the wholesale deportation of the Albanians of Kosovo. The scale and intensity of the crisis *forced* the Atlantic democracies to base much of their security strategy after 2000 on the integration of the Balkans into common Euro-Atlantic structures with the European Union (EU) increasingly taking the lead in shaping policy (Gallagher, 2010: 168, italics added).

Not only is this entry written by a non-Yugoslav, non-Balkans-based author, but also none of the bibliographical entries accompanying it (with titles such *The Balkans* [twice], *The Balkans after the Cold War: From Tyranny to Tragedy*, *The Balkans in the New Millennium*, *The Balkans: From Constantinople to Communism* and *The Balkans in World History*) is by a Yugoslav or Balkan's based author. And while Balkan-based authors may also be guilty of balkanism, it is still less likely that they will theorise themselves as 'inferior'/'uniquely problematic'. Barash and Webel's *Peace and Conflict Studies*, an influential text, is likewise full of references to Balkanisation and 'the Balkans'. For example, "Following the establishment of nation-states in Western Europe" low levels of various kinds of violence existed, "at least until the resurgence of genocidal ethnic cleansing and xenophobia during the 1990s in the Balkans" (2002: 177). Also here they state, "Furthermore, it is not clear that further *Balkanization*—of Africa, India, or anywhere else—will necessarily further the cause of peace. Certainly, the Balkans peninsula, known as the 'tinderbox of Europe'" (2002: 169). The implication, even most likely not intended, is clear: without its 'tinderbox', (western) Europe would have been fine, peaceful and tolerant, so it is obvious here who the problem is! The claims of 'primordialism' and 'perennialism', long abandoned when explaining the behaviours of western European and other 'developed' states, continue to be used for the Balkan ones. Incidentally, Todorova's argumentation and writing, as well as that of many other authors, have been published within the context of *Slavic*, rather than political or peace/conflict, studies. But to better understand a whole range of issues within this region, cross-pollination is necessary.

Foucault's observation about power-knowledge systems that determine how reality is perceived and defined is apparent in the discursive construction of the Balkans. For example, the *Popularna Enciklopedija* (*Popular Encyclopedia*) published in 1976 by BIGZ, Beograd defines Balkan as:

BALKAN (Turkish 'mountain'), mountain system in eastern Serbia and Bulgaria, composed from various mountain ranges, 530 km long, 21–45 kilometres wide; it can be divided between Western one (see *Stara Planina*), Middle one (see *Shipka*) and Eastern one (up to the Black sea); highest mountain tops: Botev (2376 m), Vezen (2198), Midzor (2169). Sheep raising is developed and there are coal, copper and gold deposits.

The Hutchinson, Softback Encyclopedia's (published in Oxfordshire in 1994) definition, on the other hand, is:

BALKANS (Turkish 'mountains') peninsula of SE Europe, stretching into the Mediterranean Sea between the Adriatic and Aegean seas, comprising Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey-in-Europe, Macedonia and Yugoslavia. It is joined to the rest of Europe by an isthmus 1,200 km/750 mi wide between Rijeka on the west and the mouth of the Danube on the Black Sea to the east. The great ethnic diversity resulting from successive waves of invasion has made the Balkans a byword for political dissension. The Balkans' economy developed comparatively slowly until after World War II, largely because of the predominantly mountainous terrain, apart from the plain of the Save-Danube basin in the north. Political differences have remained strong—for example, the confrontation of Greece and Turkey over Cyprus, and the differing types of communism prevailing in the rest—but in the later years of the 20th century a tendency to regional union emerged. To 'Balkanize' is to divide into small warring states.

Despite some tendencies towards regional union then, the term Balkans remains a signifier of disunity. Further, the question could be raised as to how confrontation between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus differs from confrontations over other parts of greater Europe (that is, dispute over Alsace-Lorraine between France and Germany, 1871–1945 or Northern Ireland between Ireland and the United Kingdom, 1920–1999). Nor is there mention of the fact that the colonisation of the region by various European (Austro-Hungarian, Nazi German) and non-European (Ottoman) empires contributed to the 'Balkans economy developing comparatively slowly' until after Second World War (when the area was largely decolonised). Instead, geographical ('eternal' as in 'mountainous terrain') conditions are presented as the main reason for the region's economic 'backwardness'.

The Hutchinson is significant both for what it says and also for what it does not. Given that it defines the Balkans in political as well as geographical terms it could be expected that it would provide some additional information and interpretations such as: that the poverty of the Balkan region occurred largely because of colonisation by the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires; that people living at the Balkans experienced invasion and brutality by Nazis during the Second World War; and that the eighteenth-century Balkan question actually refers to the competition and struggle between western European nations to get territories and spheres of influence on the peninsula during the decline of Ottoman empire, etc. However, the cognitive template of balkanism overrides such alternative discourses. Interestingly enough, the cognitive template of the colonised (nation-states within the region) focuses predominantly on the blaming of imperialist policies for its own political or economic difficulties. Both cognitive templates—of balkanism as well as anti-imperialism—are a result of imperialist and nationalist practices that have contributed to the various forms in which violence took place in the region. And both templates continue to underlie policies and politics still impacting upon millions of people living there.

One example of this can be seen in the way *the construction of the Balkans*—that is, being defined not only in geographical but also in cultural and political terms—impacted on both the practices as well as perceptions of violence that took place in twentieth-century Europe. The definition or understanding of the Balkans geographically is not very precise and correct; for example, in the case of Yugoslavia, none of the three Yugoslavias that have existed thus far was completely within ‘the Balkans’. The mountains in Slovenia are part of the Alps mountain chain; Slavonija and Vojvodina are north of the Danube and Sava, in Panonska nizija (the middle European Pannonia depression). Thus neither area, strictly and geographically speaking, belongs to the Balkans. Most importantly, the common understanding of balkanism forgets about not only the peaceful coexistence of many ethnicities in the region but also about various political projects of the twentieth century that aimed at regional unification. Within the discourse of balkanism there is, for example, no mention of *Pan-Slavism*, an historical movement that attempted to *unify* all Slavs within one nation-state (within the Balkans in particular and Europe in general). Nor is there mention of the Balkan Leagues (I in the 1860s, II in the 1912–1913) that temporarily unified Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro in their efforts to overthrow the Ottoman occupation. Other alliances and treaties that deserve but rarely receive a mention include The Balkan Pact (1934), a treaty signed by Greece,

Turkey, Romania and Yugoslavia, wherein signatories agreed to suspend all territorial claims, and the Balkan Bled Agreement (1954), an agreement between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria recognising distinct Macedonian ethnicity and language. The idea of a Balkan Federation manifested on and off from the late nineteenth century up until 1948. Other shorter- or longer-lived organisations and projects such as the League for the Balkan Confederation (1894), the Balkan Socialist Federation (or Socialist-democratic Conference) (1910), the Revolutionary Balkan Social Democratic Labour Federation (1915), and the Balkan Communist Federation (1920–1933) all involved Balkan people working together and cooperating on a range of issues.

The area, like the rest of the Europe or indeed the rest of the world, has therefore seen both diversifying and unifying political movements. It has been moulded in particular political units and formations in accordance with the political climate and the mainstream discourse of the time. And, these units, formations, movements, ideologies and politics were changing through time and space. They are thus neither ‘eternal’ nor ‘primordial’ but socially, politically, culturally and historically constructed. However, the mainstream discourse has captured the notion of the Balkans within particular interpretations, according to the needs of those that help promote it. Balkanism and its subjects were:

imprisoned in a field of discourse in which ‘Balkans’ is paired in opposition to ‘West’ and ‘Europe’, while ‘Balkanism’ is the dark other of ‘western civilization’. When the Balkans were part of the scatter pattern of invective aimed at the east and ‘Orientalism’ was the other necessary for the self-essentializing ‘West’ and ‘Europe’, there existed the prospect of their rediscovery in a positive fashion. With the rediscovery of the east and orientalism as independent semantic values, the Balkans are left in Europe’s thrall, anti-civilization, *alter ego*, the dark side within (Todorova, 1994: 482).

The term has become useful in conveniently exempting ‘the west’ from:

charges of racism, colonialism, Eurocentrism and Christian intolerance: the Balkans, after all, are in Europe, they are white and they are predominately Christian (1994: 455) . . . Balkanization not only had come to denote the parcelization of large and viable political units but also had become a synonym for a reversion to the tribal, the backward, the primitive, the barbarian. In its latest hypostasis, particularly in American academe, it has been completely decontextualized and paradigmatically related to a variety of problems (1994: 453)

The violent conflicts of the 1990s in one (now former) country *partially* geographically based in the Balkans have brought this discourse to the front of mind, transforming it into “one of the most powerful and widespread pejorative designations in modern history” (Todorova, 1997: cover). This is because, as Todorova once again astutely remarks: ‘The Balkans are usually reported to the outside world only in time of terror and trouble; the rest of the time they are scornfully ignored’ (1997: 184). This allows for this region —“geographically inextricable from Europe, yet culturally constructed as ‘the other’”—to continue to serve as “a repository of negative characteristics upon which a positive and self-congratulatory image of the ‘European’ has been built” (1997: cover). Even though ethnic homogenisation within nation-state has been one of the basic themes of European history overall, and conflict in the former Yugoslavia, as Todorova has argued, the “ultimate Europeanization of the peninsula” (Stokes, 1997), the discourse on balkanisation won. In other words, considering the “extent of the devastation that Europeans have wrought on each other, to say nothing of the rest of the world, in . . . ‘the century of expulsions’ . . . the rhetorical . . . attempts to distinguish ‘the Balkans’ from ‘Europe’ . . . are suspect” (Hayden, 1996: 797) and should thus be rejected.

Nonetheless, the balkanism discourse influenced not only Europe’s relationship with the region, but also debates within the former Yugoslavia. That is, Balkans/Europe dualism has been “central to much of the political discourse over the legitimacy or necessity of political acts concerning Yugoslavia’s collapse and subsequent wars, both by Yugoslav politicians and by those on the world stage who have had to deal with them” (1996). Within the former Yugoslavia and its successor states, “the designation of the ‘other’ has been appropriated and manipulated by those who have themselves been designated as such in orientalist discourse” (Bakić-Hayden, 1995: 922). Accompanying socialist and multicultural Yugoslavia’s collapse was not only the questioning of the “common-identity-through-common-communist-state but, led by their political and intellectual elites”, the restoration of “‘original’ identities that predated the common state” (1995). These original or ‘real’ identities were not only to be found in the pre-Yugoslav past, their (re)construction also followed “the familiar orientalist pattern of ‘unchanging truths’ . . . exhibit[ing] a curious mixture of culture and politics” (1995: 926).

The portrayal of Yugoslav peoples as a whole or some particular groups of subject-victims within western media as “powerless victim of circumstances, deprived of all political identity, reduced to bare suffering”, argues Slavoj Žižek represented “a certain naturalization, a purely racist perception

of what went on in Yugoslavia, treating things there as a kind of almost natural catastrophe, as if a kind of primal ethnic hatred exploded there, tribal war, everywhere against everyone else” (Žižek 1999). Instead, a more accurate perception is that even a “subject-victim to whose aid NATO intervene[d] [was] a political subject with a clear agenda” (1999). However, many Yugoslav people were actively participating in the dismantling of Yugoslavia. In doing so they too utilised the discourses of superior/inferior peoples. Concretely, early in the 1990s the battle to locate oneself high(er) on the ‘hegemonic western scale’ and geographically and/or culturally closer to ‘the centre’ or western Europe started:

From the standpoint of the ‘northern republics’, Slovenia and Croatia, centuries under Habsburg rule have qualified them to ‘join Europe’ at the present [post Yugoslavia] time. Historical circumstances which led to industrial development in western Europe have been appropriated by Slovenes and Croats as the product of their superior qualities, and western-like participation in the cultural circles of *mittel Europa* is stressed, without consideration of *how* they participated—as equal actors or otherwise (Bakić-Hayden, 1995: 924).

These republics proclaimed that they ‘belong’ to Europe; simultaneously, however, there was a strengthening of the “popular perception in the north and west of Yugoslavia that there is a southern, ‘Balkan burden’, which has slowed if not prevented entirely the non-Balkan parts of the country from [being] what they ‘really are’—European” (1995). Further to the east/south, Serbs and Montenegrins tried to position themselves as historical defenders of Europe, European civilisation and culture from the invasion of oriental barbarians: ‘the last barrier to the ongoing onslaught and aggression of Islam’ (Šarić, 1990: 68). Therefore “Serbs, Montenegrins and, to a lesser extent, Macedonians . . . felt compelled to defend their ‘other’ Europeaness by stressing their complementary contribution to the European cultural heritage and the cultural discontinuity created by the Ottoman conquest of their part of Europe” (Bakić-Hayden, 1995: 924-25). Yugoslav Muslims also needed to position themselves within the overarching narrative of balkanism. While Serbia reinvented the Kosovo myth as the historical proof of its ties to Europe, Kosovo Albanians (the majority of whom follow the Islamic faith) reiterated the myth of Balkan indigeneity, or the national myth² about Illyrian descent.

² Myth is here understood in Jungian terms and as further supported by the work of Joseph Campbell: as a collective story that gives meaning (rather than as ‘a false story’).

Further to this they positioned themselves as victims of Slavic occupiers—the non-Slavic people imprisoned in South Slavic States (that is, Yugoslavia, Serbia). This enabled them to create effective political strategies that eventually also led to secession and the formation of the independent state. Especially efficacious in this process were the nonviolent methods of civil disobedience Kosovo Albanians implemented under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova (1944–2006). Their ten-year, nonviolent campaign, which took place during most of Slobodan Milošević's reign, earned them respect and sympathy internationally, paving diplomatic paths for achieving secessionist political goals. Muslims in Bosnia found themselves in the ambivalent situation of having to simultaneously confirm and denounce their own balkanism. Geographically closer to the European 'centre' (than Serbs, Montenegrins and Macedonians) and yet culturally (via religion) connected with the Islamic 'orient', their main hope was in contrasting their unique culture against the barbaric Serbs (and occasionally even Croats)—for which Serbs provided plenty of empirical evidence. Their somewhat closer (but also highly ambivalent) ties to Croats were partially connected with what Muhamed Filipović terms "tutorial, patronage relationship towards Muslims and Islam . . . into the national corpus of Croatian people" (cf. Bakić-Hayden, 1995: 927).

Due to the strength of the Kosovo myth and the 'defenders of European civilisation' narrative, Serbian attitudes towards Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) were more negative. Often pejoratively called 'the Turks', they have most commonly been perceived by Serbs as "traitors . . . converts . . . whose weakness and opportunism deprived them of the religious and cultural identity bequeathed to them by their forefathers in Kosovo" (1995). Lastly, all these groups could position themselves as higher than the true 'untouchables' of Yugoslavia, 'Gypsies' or Roma people. If all else failed, victimised and voiceless, Roma people could always be used as a reference point denoting the superiority of other, more 'European' ethnicities.

After these narratives of 'nesting orientalisms' (Bakić-Hayden, 1995) collided in the wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and later Serbia and Montenegro, Europe's lack of enthusiasm to provide unequivocal support for the 'defenders of its civilisation' confused Serbian nationalists. To explain what was perceived as unequivocal support by western European nations towards Slovenia and Croatia, narratives stressing divisions between Catholic-Protestant and Eastern Orthodox European Christians were evoked in Serbia. Due to the promotion of these narratives, after a while large sections of the Serbian population started to believe that salvation from the (real and perceived) injustices committed by their immediate neighbours

was no longer coming from western Europe but from their Eastern-Orthodox ally, Russia. True to the CGT (*Chosenness–Glory–Trauma*) syndrome (Galtung, 2002), the rumour went around that conflicts over the former Yugoslav territory *have always* caused world wars, and large sections of the population expected Russian involvement against NATO, which was, apparently, to trigger yet another larger European war. Milošević's regime waited for nearly three months while NATO bombed Serbia and Montenegro, but the Slavic brothers did not come to the rescue. The political leadership around Milošević was most likely truly surprised that neither the narrative of 'Europe's defenders' nor of the 'eternal brotherhood with Russians' yielded the expected results. In the end, Milošević's regime proclaimed 'victory', a proclamation that most likely the regime itself—like the majority of the population—failed to believe in. To this day, Serbia is confused, even split down to the middle, in terms of which narrative to tap into when envisioning its desired future.

Slovenia, on the other hand, quickly benefited from positioning itself as part of Europe, the furthest northwest, the most economically developed and the least 'polluted' by the heritage of the Balkan and balkanism. Given that Slovenia was ethnically the most homogeneous Yugoslav republic (population around 90 per cent Slovene at the time), and unburdened by 'other inferior people', it was relatively free to go. The Yugoslav army threw a tantrum, possibly more out of a habit of repressing dissent rather than out of attachment to Slovenia itself. The Yugoslav army command's closest ties were with Belgrade, which had no claims to parts of Slovenian territory. One of the rare quick wars took place, of low duration (ten days) and intensity. Still, around 60 people were killed and more than 300 wounded.

Another legacy of this war was the further disintegration of the Yugoslav army, Yugoslav communist party and the Yugoslav state. Slovenes and Croats left all these institutions, even though at the time the president of the rotating Yugoslav presidency (Stjepan Mesić) as well as the Prime Minister (Ante Marković) were of Croatian descent. Mesić's alleged statement that he would be 'the last president of Yugoslavia' was widely circulated in Serbia. The motion by then president of the presidency Borisav Jović (from Serbia) to block Mesić's becoming a new president based on constitutional automatic rotation rule was not circulated at all. Neither was Jović's discussion with the Yugoslav defence minister-commander of Yugoslav army (1988–1992) Veljko Kadijević and President of Serbia Slobodan Milošević (1989–1997) about re-drawing of boundaries after Slovenia's and Croatia's secession. The public was never to hear that the military option was proposed to both quench

opposition to Milošević's rule within Serbia as well as to 'push out' Slovenes and Croats while retaining sections of Croatian territory wherein Serbian people were in a majority. The careful choosing of narratives also did not include reports on Milošević's meeting with Croatian president Franjo Tuđman in which they agreed to divide Bosnian territory between Serbia and Croatia (the Karađorđevo agreement, 1991).

So, instead of transparency about political processes and the competing visions for the future by multitude of players and actors, the Yugoslav public was pulled between the trinity of CGT syndrome—chosenness, glory, trauma—for the multiplicity of particular needs or issues. Packaging and re-packaging of narratives became a full-time occupation for government officials, and for the intellectuals and journalists who were close to regimes. Underlying narratives of 'belonging', 'victimhood', 'rightful place', and so on, were always present, albeit in different guises. It was not uncommon that a new narrative was formed almost overnight, even if it was contradictory to the previous one (that is, retention of Yugoslavia versus creation of ethnic-nation state, or alliance with Europe versus alliance with Russia). Relentlessly promoted, the old–new narrative would almost completely obliterate the previous one. This testifies that despite the Euro-centric cliché, "according to which people in the Balkans have this very long memory, [that] they never learn anything new, they never forget anything old", the reality of the ground confirmed that, on the contrary, "the Balkans, if anything, is the area where people forget extremely quickly extremely fast" (Žižek, 1999).

This last sentence is also an example of essentialising because like in any other geographical place in the Balkans some people have longer, and others shorter, memories. Most often people identify with narratives that they receive in families, schools, from governments, or through media and other cultural means (for example, literature) and then filter (remember or forget) new information through those narratives. Underlying cognitive frames, paradigms or worldviews play a critical role in this process. Europe–Balkan dualism, long present as a method of ascertaining superior/inferior or lesser people, was an archetypal narrative that experienced its logical consequence during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. The choice of narratives is important because "even if something is a purely manipulative ideological invention, nonetheless it produces certain material effects" (1999). In other words, the imaginations of superior/lesser people, coupled with a nationalistic imagination of homogenous communities, facilitated a process that produced 'real victims' (Hayden, 1996: 783). Killings, tortures, wounding and abuse of real people followed, with the well-publicised 'summit' of genocidal ethnic cleansing.

Within this process of ethnic cleansing one group disappeared with the most ferocity and velocity—the ‘Yugoslavs’. Imaginations of allegedly primordial, homogenous and ‘pure’ communities made the existing heterogeneous, intertwined, intermingled and diverse multicultural Yugoslav community unimaginable (Hayden, 1996: 783). Especially in the areas where the mixing of people (with the exception of Vojvodina) was high, “where the intermingling of the populations was most complete . . . forced unmixing of peoples” (1996: 790) took place. In the end it was the multicultural Yugoslav community that had existed in real life in many parts of the country that became first part of the lesser and then ‘nonexistent’ people. Where the mixing was greatest, where boundaries between people were the most blurred, as they represented a “living disproof of the nationalist ideologies” (1996), the violence had to be at its most ferocious:

To reverse Benedict Anderson’s evocative phrase (1983), the disintegration of Yugoslavia into its warring components in 1991–2 marked the failure of the imagination of a Yugoslav community. This failure of the imagination, however, had real and tragic consequences: the Yugoslav community that could not be maintained, and thus has become unimaginable, had actually existed in many parts of the country . . . In a political situation premised on the incompatibility of its components, these mixed territories were both anomalous and threatening . . . For this reasons, the mixed regions could not be permitted to survive as such, and their populations, which were mixing voluntarily, had to be separated militarily (Hayden, 1996: 788).

The disappearance of the Yugoslavs as a national minority, as a consequence of the wars of the 1990s, is only partially due to balkanism. In fact, the continuation of these multiethnic, multicultural Yugoslav identities was made impossible by the long-standing historical processes of ‘Europeanisation’—denoting homogenising into nation-states prior to potentially entering larger unions. As these processes are not limited to Europe or its lesser cousin the Balkans; a better term for them is ‘state ethnicisation’. Ethnicisation here is understood as “a dialectical process by which meaning is attributed to socio-cultural signifiers of human beings, as a result of which individuals may be assigned to a general category of persons which reproduces itself biologically, culturally and economically” (Miles and Brown, 2003: 99). Ethnicisation occurs within states, across states and even globally, so it is important to stress that state ethnicisation denotes efforts to homogenise within the territory of a (new or old) state, impacting on all its instruments as well as on the overall mindset within it. State ethnicisation therefore

stands in direct opposition to efforts to envision particular states as multi-ethnic, multicultural, intercultural or diverse.

While state ethnicisation has also been a reaction to the imperialism and colonialism of previous eras and is in itself perhaps 'positive' in reinforcing local identities, it is simultaneously an anti-thesis of more global and universal notions of human identity, as, for example, proposed during the European Enlightenment period. Such anti-thesis is, by and large, detrimental for the maintenance and continuation of peace for two reasons. First, state ethnicisation goes against the voluntary mixing of people, as its primary goal is to maintain 'pure' boundaries. In that sense, state ethnicisation goes against empirical reality and human history marked by the constant movement of people. Arresting these movements is then only possibly through more or less violent measures. And second, the narrow frameworks of ethnically pure states will always make sections of its population somehow 'inferior'. This is a particular form of violence, wherein inferior peoples are constructed as having lesser quality and thus being ontologically of a lesser value. Such demarcations and rankings of people make perfect sense within nationalistic, imperialist and militaristic discourses. However, these practices are in direct opposition to building positive and more lasting peace. Consequently, if positive and lasting peace is a goal, practices of homogenising ethnicities within nation-states go directly against it. Instead, more inclusive identity markers within states—perceived not as bearers of nationhood but as bearers of citizenship; that is, in their purely administrative function—are needed.

Understanding processes in the former Yugoslavia through these (state ethnicisation) notions rather than through lenses of balkanism is important. Minor differences in interpretation count. For example, in the 1990s both Croatia and Serbia wished to retain their territories where other ethnic minorities (Serbs in the former, Kosovo Albanians in the latter case) lived, minus these ethnic minorities. Serbia also wished to broaden its administrative territory to include 'their' people living within administrative territories of Croatia and Bosnia. Unlike the previous two republics that interpreted the Yugoslav constitution's allowance for 'self-determination' of people to mean the self-determination of republics, the Serbian regime interpreted this clause to mean the self-determination of the 'constitutive people' who created Yugoslavia. This 'minor difference' in interpretation influenced the processes that resulted in several hundred thousand deaths, millions of individual displacements and migrations, economic collapse, environmental destruction, massive mental health costs, an increase in ethno-nationalism and chauvinism, and even the increase in local fascism.

Likewise, whether the former Yugoslav peoples were seen as rational, political actors or irrational 'Balkans people' influenced the type of strategies used to address past violence in the region. The consequences of this minor difference in political imagination were also many. It was crucially important when in the eternal battle between the civilised and the barbaric (some time post-cold war) that the category of Eastern Europe and communism was replaced by the notion of inferior, dangerous Balkans. True to other European traditions, that is, of militarism, the barbaric other was seen to be in a need of strategic discipline. In the new post-cold war climate, "post-communist societies have been roundly represented as 'younger' siblings of the West' and nowhere was this more pronounced than 'during the secessionist and political conflicts in the post-multicultural society of the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s" (Murawska-Muthesius, 2006: 305). As "the notion of political immaturity and moral baseness had been fixed and historicized as an essential feature of the Balkans, and the legacy of both Ottoman and Byzantine absolutisms" (2006), disciplinary interventions by the civilised were apparently required.

Once again, deep cultural stories of superior and lesser people manifested behind the mask of rational and political decision-making processes. But behind this alleged rationality an unconscious fear existed: that unless the Balkan is 'disowned', the discourse of 'democratic' and 'developed' states of Europe no longer fighting each other post Second World War would have been weakened. Perhaps if a narrative similar to the one of democratic and developed states not fighting any other state could have equally been invented for the territory of both the former Yugoslavia as well as the Balkans, this too would have become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Such an invention does not have to gather inspiration from the realm of fantasy because it can easily gather information from the realm of empirical reality. For example, a narrative highlighting the duration of *actual peaceful cohabitation* of the multitude of ethnic players in the Balkans, as well as within the former Yugoslavia, could have been offered. Not only would this narrative have been more accurate, more in line with the historical and empirical realities of the region, it could have provided strong support for maintaining peace. Stressing the long periods of history within which Balkan people have collaborated, unified, created treaties, cooperated and above all lived peacefully together would have significantly undermined narratives of primordialism and perennialism of the 'Balkan conflict'. Sadly, within the context of a highly militarised continent these alternative narratives would have redirected attention away from bellicose and militarised politics; another reason why, to slightly paraphrase Hermann Keyserling, if "the Balkans did not exist it would have to be invented" (cf. Todorova, 1997: 133).

Alternative, peace-promoting narratives would have also dramatically disturbed the often unconscious beliefs about the superiority/inferiority of European (and world's) peoples. This would have prevented the 'civilised' from justifying their own violence while simultaneously denouncing the violence of others. And, perhaps, it would have prevented western democracies from justifying their alleged superiority of culture, civilisation, and even violence. As pointed out by Jan Oberg in response to 'human-rights' based interventions at the turn of the century:

When democracies fight wars and make interventions they legitimate it with reference to highly civilized norms such as peace, human rights, minority protection, democracy or freedom—and they do it as a sacrifice, not out of fear. In contrast, 'the others' start wars for lower motives such as money, territory, power, drugs, personal gain, because they have less education, less civil society, less democracy and are intolerant, lack humanity or are downright evil (Oberg, 2001).

Whatever the reasons behind the de-politicised 'militaristic humanism' of the 1990s (Beck, 2006: 127), in which violence was again justified on the grounds of higher civilised goals (in this instance, of 'universal human rights'), in the case of former Yugoslavia it was ultimately the deep story of balkanism that made such humanism possible. As well, it was the internalised balkanism that influenced the detrimental behaviours of a number of Balkan and non-Balkan (former) Yugoslav peoples and their governments. Avoiding the discourse of balkanism, in all its forms and guises, in the future thus remains crucial for avoiding further violence in the region. Coupled with alternative narratives that put forward the 'radical' proposition of all people being of equal value and narratives that highlight the Balkan's peaceful histories and presents such discursive practices remain the best guarantors of the region's peaceful futures.

Nonkilling Nations and Killing Nationalisms

"Nonkilling nations are not unthinkable", argues Glenn Paige (2009: 54). As further support for this claim he provides a list of 27 countries without an army, 53 countries that recognise conscientious objection to military service (including all six former Yugoslav republics—now independent states; that is, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Macedonia and Montenegro) and 93 countries without a death penalty (in addition to all former Yugoslav republics/new states, the list includes other Balkan countries such as Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Romania—it may be worth mentioning that the newly

independent but not universally recognised Republic of Kosovo also prohibits the death penalty in its 2008 constitution). Further, throughout history a number of nation-states have come into existence via negotiation and a nonviolent transition from previous political entities—most commonly cited examples include the dissolution of Czechoslovakia into the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1989, and the dissolution of the Norway-Sweden Union in 1905. Less commonly cited is the *peaceful* separation between two *Balkan* states in 2006 (Serbia and Montenegro)—this is perhaps due to the event being fairly recent. In any case, these examples convincingly show that violence is not *inherently* linked with either the coming into being nor subsequent maintenance of nation-states. Further, most international or inter-state interactions are “cooperative rather than competitive in nature” (Kelly, 2010: 100). Yet, at the same time, the development of nation-states has so far most often gone hand in hand with both violence and ethnic nationalism—“a doctrine that sustains and legitimizes the modern notion of nationhood” (Mikula, 2008: 134).

There are currently around 2000 ‘nations’ in the world today, estimated Johan Galtung in 2002 (Galtung et al., 2002: 126). Within these nations people share values, norms, culture, language, religion and territory. Within the current global system these nations are organised into 200 states, of which only about 10 per cent, or 20, of them are nation-states, ‘inhabited by (almost only) one nation’. The other 180 are multinational countries but only one (Switzerland) of those 180 states has managed a symmetric cohabitation of nations residing within it. In all other 179 states there is one dominant nation, ‘more equal than the others’ (2002). In other words, even though “90 percent of states in the early twenty-first century are ‘constructed’ and multinational, such as the United States or Brazil, and often multicultural as well . . . most [also] have a dominant nationality group” (Kelly, 2010: 100). Rather than being purely administrative units, these nation-states and multinational countries usually engage in discursive practices by which some groups of people (that is, dominant national group) are served better than others (national minorities). In practice this manifests as discrimination against minority groups as far as the satisfaction of their basic needs is concerned. Sometimes that means that even their basic need for survival is jeopardised. Most often, however, discrimination against minorities impacts on the needs crucial for their good quality of life; that is, their overall wellbeing, identity and freedom needs may be endangered.

Nationalism generally goes hand in hand with the hierarchical ‘ranking of people’. This ranking takes the form of ethnocentrism, “the belief that one’s own ethnic group is in some way superior to other groups” (Mikula, 2008: 64).

In other words, and to paraphrase George Barnard Shaw, ethnocentrism (as well as nationalism and patriotism) signifies a belief that this group (nation, country) is superior to all others because one was born into it! Ethnocentrism therefore not only goes “against the grain of the liberal worldview based on Enlightenment ideals, which attempts to downplay differences by appealing to a universal humanity”, it is also dangerous because its concrete expressions often involve “proselytizing, discrimination, hostility and violence” (2008).

But perhaps distinctions could be made between: ‘ethnic’ (common descent) and ‘civic’ (agreed principles and values) nationalisms nationalism and patriotism (a milder form simply denoting ‘love of one’s own country’) ‘benevolent’ and ‘extreme’ nationalisms?

Nationalisms could be “democratic, forward-looking, and generous”—Kamenka (1993: 85) summarises the positive sides of nationalism, as well as the negatives, “authoritarian, backward-looking, and chauvinist”. Nationalism could also be “secular or religious” and “socialist or conservative” (1993). There are positive sides of ‘benevolent nationalism’ and ethnic solidarity, conclude Barash and Webel (2002: 183) in their “final note on nationalism and ethnocentrism”. The positive sides of nationalism may include transcending the parochialism of other divisions, such as religion, class, gender, and so on. By appealing to a sense of national identity, unity and community, and by including all within borders of this unity/community people could also be motivated to be less selfish and work for the common good. Nationalism can then ‘sometimes’

evoke compassion, love, and community pride and can even serve as a positive force for human cooperation and ecological awareness. Love of the land, the people, the culture, and the ecosystem can contribute to dignity, caring, altruism, and some of the finer emotions of which human beings are capable (2002: 183).

However, Barash and Webel also contend that while nationalism can “in theory, be limited to one’s nation in practice, however, it is often combined with antagonism toward other nations” (2002: 160). Especially when nationalism is activated to support war efforts, attempts to calm bellicose attitudes, engage in rational debates and mobilise for peace commonly become extremely difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, “one of the great challenges to students and practitioners of peace and conflict resolution is accordingly to channel the benevolent aspects of nationalism and ethnic solidarity while guarding against their horrors” (2002: 183).

Whether this is where energies are best directed is far from certain. A number of theorists ask the question related to the *practice* of nationhood and the nation “as a practical category, as classificatory scheme, as cognitive frame” (Brubaker, 1996: 16) rather than questions about its ontological ‘is-ness’. “We should not ask ‘what is a nation’,” writes Brubaker but “how is nationhood as a political and cultural form institutionalized within and among states?” (1996). This type of question moves away from understanding nations through the lenses of primordialism (nations as primeval and natural aspects of the human condition), perennialism (nations eternal existence throughout the history), and even ethno-symbolism (focuses on the expression of symbols, myths, traditions and values within pre-modern ethnic communities) (Mikula, 2008: 135) and towards a socio-constructionist perspective. Homi Bhaba, for example, argues that “nations are imaginary constructs that depend for their existence on an apparatus of cultural fictions” (1994: 49). Nation is therefore “constituted through narration, which entails the conversion of a particular territorial space into a place of historical experience” (Mikula, 2008: 135-36). The best-known proponent of the socio-constructionist perspective, Benedict Anderson, famously proposed “the following definition of the nation”:

it is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. . . . [As Gellner writes] “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it *invents* nations where they do not exist” (Anderson, 1991: 5-7).

Further, the nation is always imagined as *limited* because:

even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind. The most messianic nationalists do not dream of a day when all the members of the human race will join their nation in the way that it was possible, in certain epochs, for, say, Christians to dream of a wholly Christian planet (1991).

It is also imagined as *sovereign* because:

the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution [of the 18th and 19th centuries] were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. Coming to maturity at a stage of human history when even the most devout adherents of any universal religion

were inescapably confronted with the living *pluralism* of such religions, and the allomorphism between each faith's ontological claims and territorial stretch, nations dream of being free, and, if under God, directly so. The gage and emblem of this freedom is the sovereign state (1991).

And, finally, nation is imagined as a *community*, because:

regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings (1991).

Anderson's brilliant analysis suggests that violence is not an unexpected or accidental result that comes from the way nations are commonly imagined and conceptualised. Bhabha reminds us that "national culture is not unitary, but rather, ambivalent and disruptive" (Mikula, 2008: 135). In practice, this ambivalence and disruption is most often seen—by nationalists—as a threat to the common, national identity. Within the nationalistic discourse, differences (ideological, political) within their ethnic states are rarely perceived as something positive or even neutral. The likelihood for them to use accusatory labels such as traitors, fifth columnists, and foreign conspirators—against other nation-state citizens 'not sufficiently loyal' that they perceive as such—is therefore always on the horizon. Especially during times of violence and conflict (with others), dissent within nation-state is discouraged, often ferociously and violently. As the governments of both nation and multinational states attach and indeed are expected to "attach priority to the interests of [their] own state, even if its policies are damaging to other nation-states" (Kelly, 2010: 101) this prepares fertile ground for interstate conflict. As these governments, even democratically elected ones, attach and are expected to attach higher value to the interest of the dominant social group (most often dominant by ethnicity, but also by gender, race, class, and so on), minority viewpoints and groups are more commonly excluded or pseudo included (that is, tokenism, marginalisation via invisibility, etc.). In practice nations are conceptualised even more by whom they exclude than whom they include, which means that the very category assumes exclusionary practices.

This imbalance/exclusion most often goes hand in hand with the existence of structural, cultural and epistemic violence that is, in turn, common preconditions for the explicit, unmediated use of direct violence. "Born in iniquity and conceived in sin, the spirit of nationalism has never ceased to bend human institutions to the service of dissension and distress", Thorstein

Veblen (2009: 38) wrote powerfully nearly hundred years ago. The material effects of nationalism are, he continued, both 'sinister and imbecile' wherein the 'national mob-mind' mentality of vanity, fear, contempt, and servility' continues to design the 'loyal citizen' (2009). Nationalism, which is above all, "a state of mind, in which the supreme loyalty of the individual is felt to be due the nation-state" (Kohn quoted in Farnen, 2004: 45) has thus been linked "conceptually and empirically to militarism . . . ethnocentrism, dogmatism, stereotyping, and lack of cosmopolitan views" (2004: 57). There is no shortage of theorists who expressed negative views towards nationalism. Nationalism is a "great menace" and an "epidemic of evil" wrote Tagore (1916: 9). For George Orwell nationalism has been "inseparable from the desire for power", or, in other words it is about "power-hunger tempered by self-deception" (Orwell and Angus, 1968: 362-63). For Eric Fromm nationalism "is our form of incest, is our idolatry, is our insanity" with 'patriotism' as its cult (1955: 58). Even in milder forms, patriotism sets up a moral hierarchy and threatens the peaceful alternatives of egalitarianism, universalism and cosmopolitanism. Any person aiming to lead a moral life must thus abandon it, was Tolstoy's conclusion (Nathanson, 1993: 8). Albert Einstein called nationalism "an infantile disease" or "the measles of mankind" (1993: 187). William Ralph Inge defined a nation as a "society united by a delusion about its ancestry and a common fear of its neighbours" (1949). Yet another link between nationalism and violence has been proposed by Norman Angell:

The root of the problem is very simply stated: if there were no sovereign independent states, if the states of the civilized world were organized in some sort of federalism, as the states of the American Union, for instance, are organized, there would be no international war as we know it . . . The main obstacle is nationalism (quoted in Chitkara , 1998: 79).

Despite this intense critique nationalism remains the "omnipresent thought in politics, in the minds of ordinary people, politicians and observers in politics, and in international relations" (Harris, 2009: vi). The current practices of nationalism and ethnocentrism also remain a major reason for violent inter-state and inter-ethnic conflict. Imagined ethnic communities too often break up "actually existing communities" (Hayden, 1996: 793) and create 'real victims'. The mechanism of *how* this is done is brilliantly summarised by Goering's often-quoted explanation at the Nuremberg trials. Whether nation-state such as Russia, England or Germany, whether:

a democracy, or fascist dictatorship, or a parliament or a communist dictatorship, the people could always be brought to the bidding of the leaders [and into the war] . . . All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country (cf. Pilgrim, 1992: 114-15).

This statement was widely circulated via digital social media at the beginning of ‘the war on terror’, however, the majority of United States and other western nation-state citizens bought into the bellicose post-September 11 propaganda, at least in the initial stages (see Gallup, 2003: 69; Gareau, 2004: 205; Kashmeri, 2007: 35; Kinder and Kam, 2009: 77).

The role of manipulative elites, who “act to construct extreme and polarizing identities that are used to consolidate their power and, in the course, to justify the dehumanization and destruction of specific target groups” (Jenkins, 2010: 96) notwithstanding, the process described by Gering is usually enthusiastically embraced, even actively constructed, by the majority (within a dominant national-ethnic group). As this construction is about a particular practice—not essence—it is possible to identify common routes along which the process takes place. In other words, engendering violence via collective participation in practices of denial, marginalisation and justification—within the narratives of nationalism and ethnocentrism—most often follows eight basic steps. This *collective violence pedagogy* seems to be a commonly and easily applied recipe by which nationalisms bring about violence. My own observations in a number of nation-states within which I have resided are that these eight basic steps could be described and summarised as follows:

1. Creation-solidification of the category of ‘the other’ (even if that other was until recently part of ‘us’).
2. Differences (that is, along ethnic, religious or ideological lines) between ‘one’ and the ‘other’ are potentiated and similarities are minimised or obliterated.
3. The attribute of ‘the lesser’ is attached to the other, who has also been construed commonly as ‘weird’, ‘wrong’, ‘evil’ and even ‘subhuman’; that is, everything not liked about the self is projected onto the other.
4. A sense of threat of ‘them’ coming after us is created; the other is constructed as nothing but ‘dangerous’—the derogatory images of potential (or long-standing) ‘enemy/enemies’ are also almost exclusively used.

5. Social militarism dominates; heroic fighting and sacrifice for ones' own people/land, is *glorified*—historical discourses are devised with the emphasis placed on data that shows why liberation is necessary and why only the use of weapons will 'work'.
6. Active prosecution of opinions/ideologies that are trying to *resist* the above processes (one to four) among 'our own' (ethnic, religious, ideological) group—some useful phrases (depending on the society) include 'traitors', 'enemy collaborators', 'servants of foreign intelligence agencies', 'pacifists empower terrorism', 'pacifism is objectively pro-Fascist', 'the venal pacifism of the politically correct has been shown for the profitable cowardice it has always been', 'bleeding hearts/flower-picking peace mongers', and the like.
7. When confronted with our own violent deeds, these are *denied* or *justified*; for example, the harsh facts are met with insistence on us (always) being right and them (always and totally) being wrong—there are many justifications for the violence that can be used and the most potent and powerful ones have so far included 'others are also doing it' and 'it's a war'; numerous other useful phrases are 'they (she/he) deserved it', 'God/morality/justice is on our side', 'in the name of the freedom, democracy', 'sometimes you have to sacrifice the lives of few for the benefit of many', 'they are even worse', 'they are the ones that are evil/demons/devil's advocates/satans', 'they would do (did) the same to us' and (my favourite) 'boys will be boys'.
8. The whole process is repeated.

The steps have also been used independently, although the whole process is the most potent (and poisonous) when utilised as a package. It is also helpful, and very important, *not* to focus on the future, as this is where more creative nonviolent solutions could be invented. Better to focus on the past, and engage in selective remembering and biased interpreting of all the instances of previous violence between the groups involved.

While more 'universal', this process has been followed to the letter on the territory of the former Yugoslavia and has been liberally used within a number of western nations that have been waging war 'against terror' (outside and within their own territories, as per Huntington's *Clash of Civilisations* proposal). Going back to the former case study, the package was extensively utilised, both within the former Yugoslav more multicultural nation-state, as well as within the ethnic nation-state that preceded and succeeded this political-

cultural entity. Further, another specific internal nationalistic logic was developed during the collapse of the former Yugoslavia in order to justify territorial claims. This too is perhaps a more universal process, that like the above-described collective violence pedagogy needs to be resisted if more lasting peace between different people is to result. David C. Pugh expressed this process eloquently in terms of the ‘seven rules of nationalism’:

If an area was ours for 500 years and yours for 50 years, it should belong to us—you are merely occupiers.

If an area was yours for 500 years and ours for 50 years, it should belong to us—borders must not be changed.

If an area belonged to us 500 years ago but never since then, it should belong to us—it is the Cradle of our Nation.

If a majority of our people live there, it must belong to us—they must enjoy the right of self-determination.

If a minority of our people live there, it must belong to us—they must be protected against your oppression.

All the above rules apply to us but not to you.

Our dream of greatness is Historical Necessity, yours is Fascism (quoted in Biro, 2011: 294-95).

The two ‘recipes’ or processes have been prescriptions for the wholesale disasters that have repeatedly plagued Yugoslav peoples, the Balkans, Europe and the world. The imagined nation-state communities have too often unleashed unimaginable and unspeakable horrors that were avoidable, unnecessary and most often counter-productive. Collective group delusions, fears, narcissistic injury and rage, exclusionary practices, ethnocentrism, competitive sentiments and arrangements, discourses of superiority/inferiority, and so on, while perhaps not inherently linked to nation-states are still most often *practiced* within them. Nationalisms, of all kinds, have been notorious for fuelling inter-state and intra-state grievances and conflicts, including ‘mildly’ or ‘extremely’ violent ones. The imposition of nationalistic worldviews and aspects of culture is so often used to justify direct and structural violence that it is hard to support the view by which nationalism could be viewed as potentially ‘benevolent’. Further, the practice of nationalism actively works against and prevents practicing of the other, more promising alternative.

One day, perhaps, the alternative of “the highest form of patriotism” being defined not by the “boundaries of one’s country”, but by a duty to humankind (Strauss, 1918: 390) will become the dominant social discourse globally. One day, states may become purely administrative units, without being attached to harmful imaginings of nationalism and ethno-centrism. One day, the recogni-

tion of a nation-state as a purely imagined, socially constructed rather than 'real', perennial and 'ahistorical' community, may motivate citizens of civic nation-states to carefully craft those imaginings to promote peace rather than violence. Whether this will materialise largely depends on the strength with which the *real global community* perceives nationalism as neither inevitable nor desirable. It also depends on the strength with which this real global community puts into operation a whole range of alternative discourses that imagine various unification processes, focus on similarities among differences, and devise strategies for satisfying the basic human needs of all Earth's inhabitants.

All of us have indeed inherited certain histories. Most of those, as well as our presents, are the results of human-made political and cultural processes. Given that they are human-made they could be human-remade now and in the future, irrespective of how long these historical practices have lasted. Even those longest-lasting structures-processes are neither eternal nor natural but only as strong as the belief in their eternal-natural quality. In other words, the previous practices of militarism, othering, ethnocentrism, imperialism, and nationalism, frequently utilised within inter-group and intra-group interactions, eventually became embedded in the social structures of nation-states. These structures appear more solid than the practices-behaviours that created them in the first place, but in effect, these structures still rely on the same practices to survive. They are maintained by constant efforts to keep them as they 'are' or by efforts to enforce their 'essence'. So to undo these violent social structures—of militarism, imperialism and nationalism—different discursive practices, such as, for example, of globalism, interculturalism, humanism, neo-humanism or social inclusion, are needed. In other words, militarism, imperialism and nationalism are only as real as the frequency and intensity of actions and discourses manifested by their enthusiastic promoters, and rely on the inaction of detached bystanders. Alternatively, the power of militarism, imperialism and nationalism is weakened by the number and the enthusiasm of those who ignore it, choose not to participate in it, critique it, and engage in different ways of being and thinking.

Despite its promoters' desire to convince about the inevitability of 'the holy trinity of militarism, imperialism and nationalism', alternatives to these systems and worldviews already exist and have always existed parallel to them. Just in the context of Serbia, for example, one can find multitude of peaceful initiatives and movements in the past: from early antiwar political program by the Social democratic party in 1903 (Stojković, 2011), through globally inspired peace youth movement of the late 1960s and civil society's peace oriented initiatives in the 1990s. Examples include *Žene u crnom*

[Women in Black], *Centar za antiratnu akciju* [Center for Antiwar Action], and *Beogradski krug* [Belgrade Circle]. Numerous organisations in Serbia currently participate in peacebuilding activities, such as: *Centar za nenasilnu akciju* [Centre for Nonviolent Action], *Autonomni ženski centar* [Autonomous Women Center], *Centar za ratnu trauma* [War Trauma Center], *Fond za humanitarno pravo* [Humanitarian Law Center], *Viktimološko društvo Srbije* [Victimology Society of Serbia], *Festival o ljudskim pravima VIVISECT fest* [VIVISECTfest, travelling festivals] and *DAH Teatar* [DAH Theatre]. In the context of the former Yugoslavia examples include 1959 founding of Yugoslav League for Peace, Freedom and Equality of People (*Jugoslovenska liga za mir, slobodu i ravnopravnost naroda*) and the first alternative peace action which took place in Ljubljana in 1983 (Paunović, 1995). Currently, a number of previously mentioned organisations working in Serbia operate within the region as well (for example, Center for Nonviolent Action is based in Sarajevo and Belgrade). Further, many regional projects and initiatives that focus on peacebuilding exist (for example, peace education program *Povjerenje za Mir* [Trust for Peace] and *postjugoslavenska mirovna akademija* [Post Yugoslav Peace Academy]. In fact, there is a plethora of peace-oriented activities in the region, some of which work towards peace, nonviolence and nonkilling explicitly and others more implicitly (i.e. a number of human rights initiatives, women's and feminists' organisations, ecumenical organisation, etc.). Schools in the region too have incorporated various micro and meso-level initiatives with the goal of combating violence, for example, initiatives that focus on intercultural communication, inclusion, anti-bullying and non-violence in general.

Enhancing those alternative peace-promoting discourses, instead of enhancing nationalism, is not only realistically possible but also infinitely preferable. All that prevents us from doing so, to paraphrase Benedict Anderson, are our own limited imaginings.

Conclusion

Despite the strength of described and analysed narratives of balkanism and nationalism it is important to recognise that these narratives are created and then re-created in daily, weekly and yearly rituals, both by individuals and societies. In other words, both narratives only exists once they are put in practice, once they are evoked and used to inform actions in the present. So to create and maintain nonkilling and nonviolence principles in the region of South East Europe it is crucial to challenge these outdated and

detrimental narratives. In addition to challenging such old yet still dominant narratives, a robust and inspiring imagination of new political models for the future is also required. This too is already taking place in the region. In that context, it is important to remember that the region of “Balkans” has also been a region where peace was the norm for large parts of its history and where people lived and cooperated mostly peacefully, despite skirmishes and disruptions due to wars. The duration of the actual peaceful cohabitation of the multitude of ethnic groups in the South East Europe, within the former Yugoslavia and beyond, has been much longer than the duration of violent conflicts. In other words, throughout long periods of history people of the region also collaborated, unified, assimilated, created treaties cooperated and above all lived peacefully together with all their differences. And they continue to do so. Remembering nonviolent pasts and imagining peaceful futures has to be done in the present—this minute, and the very next. One place where one can begin this process is to focus mind on everything that people of the region have in common, which includes not only a similar genetic mark-up but also the common peaceful pasts/presents and the shared imagination of peaceful futures.

References

- Anderson B. (1991). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London and New York: Verso.
- Bakić-Hayden M. (1995). “Nesting Orientalisms: The case of Former Yugoslavia,” *Slavic Review*, 54(4): 917-31.
- Barash, D. P. and Webel, C. P. (2002). *Peace and Conflict Studies*. London: Sage.
- Beck, U. (2006). *The Cosmopolitan Vision*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Biro, M. (2011). “Psihološki aspekti pomirenja: Primer Srba i Albanaca,” *Interkulturalnost*, 1(1): 294-302.
- Chitkara, M. G. (1998). *Mother Theresa*. New Delhi: Aph Publishing Corporation.
- Farnen, R. F. (2004). *Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Identity: Cross national and comparative perspectives*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Gallagher, T. (2010). “Balkan Conflicts,” in N. J. Young, Ed., *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace, vol. 1*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 168-73.
- Galtung, J. (2002). *Rethinking Conflict: The Cultural Approach*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Gareau, F. H. (2004). *State Terrorism and the United States: From counter-insurgency to the war on terrorism*. Atlanta: Clarity Press.
- Harris, E. (2009). *Nationalism: Theories and cases*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Hayden, R. M. (1996). “Imagined Communities and Real Victims: Self-determination and ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia,” *American Ethnologist*, 23(4): 783-801.

- Inge W. R. (1949). *The End of an Age: And other essays*. London: Macmillan Co.
- Jenkins C. J. (2010). "Ethnic Conflict," in N. J. Young, Ed., *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace*, vol. 2, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 95-99.
- Kamenka, E. (1993). "Nationalism: Ambiguous legacies and contingent futures," *Political Studies*, 41: 78-92.
- Kelly, I. (2010). "Nation-States, Causes of Conflict," in N. J. Young, Ed., *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace*, vol. 3, New York: OUP, pp. 100-103.
- Kinder, D. R. and Kam, C. D. (2009). *Us against Them: Ethnocentric foundations of American opinion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mikula, M. (2003). *Key Concepts in Cultural Studies*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Miles, R. and Brown, M. (2003). *Racism*. London: Routledge.
- Murawska-Muthesius, K. (2006). "On Small Nations and Bullied Children: Mr Punch draws Eastern Europe," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 84(2): 279-305.
- Nathanson, S. (1993). *Patriotism, Morality, and Peace*. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield.
- Oberg, J. (2001). "Western militarism and democratic control of armed forces," *Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research (TFF)*. Available online at: <http://www.oldsite.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2001/JO_dcaf_art.html>.
- Orwell, S. and Angus, I., Eds. (1968). *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Paige, G. D. (2009[2002]). *Nonkilling Global Political Science*. Honolulu: Center for Global Nonkilling.
- Paunović, Ž. (1995). "Mirovne aktivnosti u Srbiji: između inicijative i pokreta," *Filozofija i društvo*, 7: 107-125.
- Pilgrim, P. (1992). *Peace Pilgrim: Her life and work in her own words*. Shelton: Ocean Tree Books.
- Šarić, P. (1990). "Alternativa nasilju," *Duga*, August 18: 67-69.
- Stojković, D. (2011). "Antiratne i mirovne ideje u istoriji Srbije i antiratni pokreti do 2000 godine," *Republika*, 492-493. Available online at: <<http://www.republika.co.rs/492-493/20.html>>.
- Strauss, O. (1918). *The Independent*. Ann Arbor: Independent Publications.
- Todorova, M. (1997). *Imagining the Balkans*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Todorova, M. (2009) *Bones of Contention*. Budapest: Central European University Press.
- Veblen, T. (2009[1923]). *Absentee Ownership: Business enterprise in recent times, the case of America*. New Brunswick: Transaction.
- Žižek, S. (1999). *Human Rights and Its Discontents*. Available online at: <<http://www.egs.edu/faculty/slavoj-zizek/articles/human-rights-and-its-discontents/>>.

NONKILLING BALKANS БАЛКАНС

Edited by
Rifet Bahtijaragić
and Joám Evans Pim



Center for Global **Nonkilling**



University of Sarajevo
Faculty of Philosophy

Sarajevo and Honolulu
December 2015



You are free to share, copy, distribute and transmit this work*

Under the following conditions:

- ① **Attribution.** You must attribute this work in the manner specified by the author/licensor (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work).
- ② **Noncommercial.** You may not use this work for commercial purposes.
- ③ **No Derivative Works.** You may not alter, transform or build upon this work.

* For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work.

* Any of the above conditions can be waived if you gain permission from the copyright holders.

Nothing in this license impairs or restricts the Authors' moral and legal rights.

The Center for Global Nonkilling does not necessarily endorse the views expressed by the authors.

Also available for free download at: <http://www.nonkilling.org>

© The Authors, 2015

© Center for Global Nonkilling, 2015 (this edition)

First Edition: December 2015

ISBN-13 978-0-9839862-7-0

Cataloging in Publication Data (CIP)

Nonkilling Balkans / Edited by Rifet Bahtijaragić
and Joám Evans Pim.
ISBN 978-0-9839862-7-0

CDU - 172.4 : 327.36

A catalogue record is also available from the Library of Congress.



Center for Global **Nonkilling**

3653 Tantalus Drive
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822-5033
United States of America
Email: info@nonkilling.org
<http://www.nonkilling.org>



University of Sarajevo
Faculty of Philosophy

Franje Račkog I
71000 Sarajevo
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Email: dekanat@ff.unsa.ba
<http://www.ff.unsa.ba>

Contents

Foreword	7
<i>Glenn D. Paige</i>	
Sarajevo Declaration for a Nonkilling Balkans	9
Introduction	
Nonkilling Civilizational Change in the Balkans	11
<i>Rifet Bahtijaragić</i>	
Chapter One	
Looking 100 Years Back and 100 Years Forward	19
<i>Ivana Milojević</i>	
Chapter Two	
Humans as Conflict Managers	47
<i>Ingrida Grigaityte</i>	
Chapter Three	
The Transformation from Holocaustic Intergenerational Trauma to Nonkilling Intergenerational Wisdom	77
<i>Danica Borkovich Anderson</i>	
Chapter Four	
Building Peace	105
<i>Sanja Garic-Komnenic</i>	

Chapter Five	
“The Child is the Father to the Man”	117
<i>Shelley Hymel, Lina Darwich and Reky Groendal</i>	
Chapter Six	
Not Unlearning to Care	139
<i>Eveline Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger</i>	
Chapter Seven	
Psychology of Nonkilling in Bosnia-Herzegovina	171
<i>Mirna Marković Pavlović, Sabina Alispahić and Amela Dautbegović</i>	
Chapter Eight	
Ljubljana Festival in the Early 1960s	183
<i>Tjaša Ribizel</i>	
Chapter Nine	
Doukhobor Nonkilling Legacy	187
<i>Koozma J. Tarasoff</i>	
Afterword	
The Spirit of Baljvine	217
<i>Joám Evans Pim</i>	