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I International Symposium on Culture of Remembrance

Bosnia and Herzegovina



INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SARAJEVO



“Culture of Remembrance: Twilight or New Awakening”

BOSNIA
AND
HERZEGOVINA

Areas of ethnic majority (2001 census)
2001 Census
2001 Religion
2001 Ethnicity
2001 Language
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International University of Sarajevo
12—13 April, 2014 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

CULTURE OF REMEMBRANCE

Book of proceedings

I INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

*“Bosnia and Herzegovina – Culture of remembrance:
Twilight or new Awakening“*

Editors

Sabahudin Hadžialić

Alma Jeftić

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*“Bosnia and Herzegovina – Culture of remembrance:
Twilight or new Awakening“*

**I MEĐUNARODNI SIMPOZIJ
KULTURA SJEĆANJA**

*„Bosna i Hercegovina – Kultura sjećanja:
Sumrak ili Novo buđenje“*

**И МЕЂУНАРОДНИ СИМПОЗИЈ
КУЛТУРА СЈЕЋАЊА**

*„Босна и Херцеговина – Култура сјећања:
Сумрак или Ново буђење“*

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**Historical and contemporary dimensions of the
phenomenon of hatred in the former Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina**

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that man's hatred towards someone or something is primarily the concern of psychologists, it is an important social phenomenon in this region that is strongly influenced by social processes and events both historical and contemporary. One could even argue that today hatred is essentially determined by the political process. It is the driving force in crisis situations.

The promoters of hate are not just politicians. Others that have had an important role include the media, intellectuals, and religious leaders.

Why is the hatred present today? Why do we create more fear and hatred rather than build trust? Why do we spend more time scratching the wounds of the past than we do looking to the future?

Can BiH society in general get out of this situation?

Keywords: hatred, destruction, nationalism, politics

How to understand the hatred as a flexible phenomenon

Hate exists in humans as an instinct which defends them against other humans or for them to cause harm as a means to achieve some of their objectives. That innate instinct forms deeply held beliefs in individuals and groups that construct their social identity and that of their enemies which are grounded in supposed "facts."

The hatred that exists in man may be the result of the long-term memory of the individual or collective memory, which is rich in facts about accidents, wars, and killings, especially negative things. This history of bad memories undoubtedly contributes to the existence of hate. Hatred and revenge are therefore strong drivers of many human activities. For almost every nation, like every individual, especially those that have lived longer, there is reason to blame men or nations that it for any bad treatment or outright hostility. The only question is how one will react to the evil done to them. For this there is already a common maxim - forgive but do not forget, remember and not forgive.

Different forms and manifestations of hatred are created out of and operate according to the laws of a spiraling system. Simply put, this hatred is food for itself. Hate is revenge for hate. Here lies, among other things, the existence of individual and collective memories.

These awakening memories of "our" dead, the injustices and atrocities that "we" are applied to re-living memories of someone else's evil and its removal from the darkness of the past and forgetting to see the light of day.

This should convince us that between our former calamities or the eternal and the present moment nothing significant has happened other than "our" unwarranted and unjust oblivion.

Thus, once the open hatred never closes, history turns into a rhythmic, jerky outburst of unrestrained hatred in which we lick our wounds and carefully preserve our memories.

When this happens and it encourages conflicts between people of different faiths and nationalities, then it is no longer necessary to evoke memories, they are already revived and every day the number of reasons for revenge increases.

Hatred as a social phenomenon

Hatred in the historical sense as well as today in this region has become a very important social phenomenon that has strongly influenced social processes and events not only when these so-called crisis situations are in question. Today one might even say that hatred essentially determines the political process, especially in BiH.

Hate is a significant factor that appears in the disintegration processes, the processes of disintegration of a complex state community...

This hatred towards others is a consequence insight that other are to blame for not achieving the goals, as a result of memory or recollection of the time killing each other, was the main driving force that brought together and motivated, especially extreme nationalists, who were known as having a special role in crisis situations.

Hate that certainly has roots in the great differences in religion and culture is an integral part of the project of creating national states that are seeking a way out of the complex multinational state community. In addition to politicians, the media, intellectual, religious and other from the country and abroad are particularly engaged to this.

The aim of stimulating hatred and the showing of difference which wished to show as large and insurmountable were a complete negation of the value achieved in the same state. The ferocity of the conflict, various forms of crimes against civilians and soldiers and hatred that they feel is much greater within their own state than when it comes to conflicts of different countries.

How did it happen that hatred become such a significant factor in social processes, particularly in the war? How did the national policy, media, intellectuals and religion influence this...

Hatred as a generator and initiator of nationalism

In the analysis of nationalists or as they are called nationalistic ideologists, there are several elements: loyalty to any person or any other entity; belief that the compatriots are in many ways superior to members of other ethnic groups; neglect or denial of the rights and interests of other national groups, which entails a feeling of hostility towards them; strongly expressing the belief that the individual fate depends on the fate of the national group.

Nationalist messages are always meant to provoke emotions rather than intellectual ideals. The aim is to appeal to powerful emotions (associated with a defensive reflex towards their own national group and hatred toward members of other, mainly rival national bodies) which will be enthralled in critical reasoning of those messages.

In the second half of the 19th century and in the first century of its existence, nationalism was a movement of the elite, the upper strata, especially the middle class that has been on the rise. Only in the twentieth century nationalism became a mass movement in which, as was noted by Kohn, seeking the participation of the masses, because people know what is good for them and what is not... Glorification of the little guy and placing him in the center of the action is the basis of populism in these movements. These populist nationalist movements sometimes (as it happened in the region of 90's of the last century) have an epidemic that is casual and temporary as all other forms of epidemics.

Nationalism is an ideology of closure, and turning towards the past. It glorifies the form of human community in which people are closely linked, depend on each other, follow tradition tied to the land, and are suspicious of strangers. These movements glorify epic culture, seeking support and inspiration in the traditions and rituals where they see a pledge of identity, its own ethnicity and compatriots.

In this respect, any acceptance of customs, views, signs which do not have indigenous, original ethno-national character and approaching international standards, causing a backlash and even public condemnation because it is treated as pollution authentic, national expression, as an act of negation of national identity.

What is the main reason for the popularity of nationalism?

"It seems to me that the most convincing answer lies in the fact that nationalism provides an escape from triviality. People who live in troubled times, implicitly or explicitly, are questioning themselves: what's happening to us? The nationalist answer is unequivocal: the nation is reborn; it is fighting against the enemy and its own independence. This answer never contains the whole truth, and sometimes there is absolutely nothing to do with the truth ... "(Minogue, 1970: 32).

This awakening of nationalism occurred in this region in the early.

After the fall of communism and after the collapse of the state in the institutional sense, a difficult national conflict emerged. Dr.Franjo Tudjman says "communist, a communist and anti-communist, the Russians or the Americans, those who are willing to destroy Yugoslavia, to destroy by dialectic words or dynamite, to destroy it at any cost." (F Tudjman, 1987: 404).

Izetbegovic writes in "Islamic Declaration" about his crucial thesis: "Islam is the integral form of life and cannot be matched with any other political and social order." Biljana Plavsic, emphasizing the thesis of Serbs as "heroic" and "heavenly" people in this rapture stated that it would be justified to have half of the Serb population killed for the idea of a great Serbian state. This atmosphere was therefore ideal for the accumulation of frustration and hatred and has definitely created the conditions for the ethnic-religious war. Such a situation was particularly present in BiH, where there were objective and subjective assumptions that built up into tensions. This set off a destructive wave that destroyed Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The hatred in these conflicts was mostly focused against the civilian population. Numerous examples of the murder of the Zec family in Zagreb (1992) and over Vukovar, Sijekovac, Pakrac, Cemerno, Sarajevo and Srebrenica to Kravica, show that the destruction of the human mind remains an immutable variable that occurs in certain conditions. Various forms of torture and killing and humiliation of people were present in numerous camps and prisons that existed in all the warring parties. Yes, it was a completely anarchic situation that no one could control shown by the fact that even today there are a large number of missing persons which is the basis for many conspiracy theories. This is especially true for BiH, where inaccurate and incomplete information about the suffering on all sides mainly competes with each other as a criterion of what should not have been allowed to be done. It is difficult to differentiate between fact and fiction in this difficult matter.

Research and Documentation Center in Sarajevo published the results of research and documented that in the 1992-95 war in Bosnia, 92207 were killed or missing. This includes victims, regardless of their ethnic (national), religious or political affiliation, as well as their ideological beliefs and affiliation to military formations. In this respect, it is important to note that 9756 killed were women, and 3372 were missing children and with the following national structures: 2961-Muslim, Serbian-218 and 172 - Croatian. In Bosnia during the war there were 400 locations at which they were prisons and camps, 320 mass graves were discovered with 15,000 human remains exhumed so far.

This data are incomplete performance indicators of the actual hate and destruction in the processes that took place from 1992 to 1995.

How to generate hatred today?

We still live in such an environment where it is much easier to produce fear than build confidence. Today's politicians and intellectuals prefer to revisit the wounds of the past rather than look to the future. Of course the solution does not lie in concealment of problems and hatred either.

For example, the Communists thought that by pouring concrete into the pits in Herzegovina and other mass graves, and similarly bombing the ones found in Prebilovci in the 90's, would make the hatred disappear, but this had a counter effect and elicited hatred.

What we must do now is get rid of hatred in politics and media. We must not use personal accidents and wounds created by the war in the creation of state policy. We must be careful not to profile the suffering caused in Jasenovac and Srebrenica in a way that produces hatred among people.

We need to improve and expedite the process of looking for the missing to give relief to their loved ones. We need to expedite and improve the process of punishing those responsible on all sides so to achieve a faster and better reconciliation process.

We all must allow ourselves to face the facts and the truths in order to move on. In BiH, the political elite, scientific and other circles must come together to arrive at a common truth as there cannot be three truths about the war in BiH.

The truth is the best barrier to hatred and the only way to tolerance. No post-war society and especially that of Bosnia and Herzegovina, has a future if it cannot escape the jaws of destruction, frustration and hatred, regardless of the gravity of this. A vision for

the development, optimism and prospects, especially in a new environment of globalization trends, gives hope and a chance for the survival of this society.

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