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and Central Asian Studies**

Critical Theory and the War in Croatia and Bosnia

Thomas Cushman

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Sabrina P. Ramet
Editor

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Things have come to pass where lying sounds like truth, truth like lying, . . . The confounding of truth and lies, making it almost impossible to maintain a distinction, and a labour of Sisyphus to hold on to the simplest piece of knowledge, marks the victory in the field of logical organization of the principle that lies crushed on that of battle. Lies have long legs, they are ahead of their time.

Theodor Adorno
*Minima Moralia*¹

Critical sociological theory emerged in the wake of World War II to offer explanations for the rise of fascism in Europe and the dissolution of the Enlightenment project in the twentieth century. The practical aim of critical theory was to understand how the modern project could be realized. Yet history keeps setting up barriers to such a project: at a time when the culture of Western liberal democracies seems poised to become the universal model for human societal development, Europe has been the site of a genocide against the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Genocide has been perpetrated, this time against another defenseless population, this time in full view of the world, and this time without being stopped by those who witnessed it and who possessed the means to do so. At the very time when the Enlightenment project seems alive in the ethos of the new European Union, social processes within supposedly enlightened societies have contributed to the toleration of genocide and other manifestations of "anti-Enlightenment" in Europe itself. Theodor Adorno asked the question: how is poetry possible after Auschwitz? We can now ask the question: how is the idea of Europe possible after Bosnia?

In light of what has happened in Bosnia, another set of questions emerge for the critical theorist: how is it possible that in the midst of Europe — which recently unified around the very Enlightenment ideal of a civilized Europe — a genocide of the magnitude as that which occurred in Bosnia could have taken place? How could this genocide have occurred when so much media attention was devoted to it? Why were so many Western intellectuals ambivalent about Western intervention to stop Serbian aggression against defenseless civilians? Why did so many Western intellectuals and political leaders adopt relativistic and equivocal interpretations which refused to assign primary responsibility for the war and mass killing to any major party in the conflict and instead chose to see the conflict as a product of "age old tribal hatreds" in which "all sides were equally guilty?" Why have so many prominent intellectuals and politicians taken positions that actually blame the victims of military aggression for their own misfortune?

Answers to these questions form the core of a critical theory of the war in Bosnia. What distinguishes these questions from those laid out by members of the Frankfurt School is that they focus to a large extent on understanding events *outside* of Bosnia as the key to,

understanding events in Bosnia itself. This is necessary, in the first instance, because the conduct of the war was directly related to the perceptions of local political elites as to what the West would or would not do in relation to concrete political or military decisions. Acts of Serbian aggression against Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, for instance, were clearly related to the subjective perceptions on the part of Serbian elites that the West would not intervene.² Yet there is another reason why a focus on events external to Bosnia is necessary: the process of globalization, which includes the mass production and distribution of instantaneous news, has dramatically transformed the ways in which wars are waged. Knowledge about world conflicts is available immediately to politicians and publics through a plethora of sources and this knowledge has a direct bearing on political action and public opinion. The theorists of the Frankfurt School had little to say about the relationship between the rise of fascism and Western liberal capitalist societies. To be sure, the Allies could have intervened against Hitler long before they did and Europe's toleration of Hitler's rearmament and initial acts of aggression could be seen, in some part, as responsible for the carnage that came later. The core of their critical theory was the analysis of the internal social dynamics which gave rise to fascism, such factors as the authoritarian personality, the family fractured by industrial society, mass culture, and propaganda.³

While the dissolution of the Yugoslav federal project and the subsequent war and genocide in the former Yugoslavia can best be understood by looking at social forces in the former Yugoslavia itself — class structure, resentment, ethnonationalism, the breakdown of community, the mass psychology of Serbian or Croatian varieties of authoritarian neo-fascism, the unequal distribution of political, economic, and military power — critical theory must also focus on the analysis of the Western response to genocide in Bosnia, not only in terms of how that response affected concrete developments in the Balkans, but for what it tells us about the culture of the West itself.⁴ It is rather clear that Western political leaders and mass publics knew exactly what was happening in the former Yugoslavia, first in Croatia and then in Bosnia. Yet, for a variety of reasons, they chose not to use military force to intervene until most of the killing was over. The exploration of why this was the case is a central task for critical theory. The development of such a theory is fundamentally a reflexive exercise which sheds light on the central dynamics of late capitalist society as well as the intellectual's place in it. Some contemporary theorists refuse to decouple the analysis

of events in Bosnia from the analysis of the nature of postmodernity: the analysis of the Western response to Bosnia reflexively leads them to a critical commentary on cultural trends in Western societies.⁵ The kind of unchecked aggression which has occurred in Bosnia has appeared and will continue to appear in other parts of the world; the cultural dynamics of Western modernity have in no way extirpated barbarism, but have and will exert a strong independent effect on international relations and political conduct far into the next century.⁶

This paper is a first step in the development of a critical theory of the war and genocide in Bosnia. It focuses on one element of the conflict: the responses of Western intellectual elites to the conflict. In this respect, the critical theory developed here moves beyond the Balkans itself and makes the central object of study the objectifiers of the objective history of war and genocide in the former Yugoslavia. In this regard, the focus is on the sociology of knowledge produced by Western intellectuals about the war and the concrete relations between those forms of knowledge and Western political practices in relation to the war. The sociology of knowledge is not a usual complement to international relations theory, or even to political science more generally. Yet it is clear that particular types of knowledge produced by Western intellectuals about the conflict in the Balkans had a decisive, independent influence on the outcomes of the war in the Balkans. While there are many types of knowledge produced about the Balkan war, the focus of this analysis is the *relativistic* "styles of thought" that have been a central part of Western thinking since the beginning of the Balkan war in 1991.

There have been many bloody conflicts in the twentieth century and intellectuals have made much commentary on them. Yet the hallmark of the recent Balkan war is the prominence of equivocal or relativist positions among interpretations of the war. It might even be said that perhaps in no other conflict has so much "balance" in interpretation been demanded by so many Western intellectuals. A comparison of the present Balkan war with the Spanish Civil War is instructive. Because the facts of Franco's aggression were so clear to the world, it would be difficult to imagine in the moral context of the times a conference or a volume on the Spanish Civil War in which the points of view of representatives of the Franco regime were represented in equal measure to the points of view of the victims of Francoist aggression. Still more difficult to imagine would be positions in which Francoist positions were actually affirmed and ratified by prominent Western intellectuals. Even though

Western powers imposed an arms embargo on Spain, among Western intellectuals, there was a great deal of *consensus* about the moral dimensions of the war and most critical, liberal intellectuals distinguished themselves from apologists for fascism by adopting critical stances toward Franco. Similarly, if we consider the main bodies of intellectual work on the destruction of European Jewry by Nazi Germany, we would not expect that representatives of the point of view that the Jews provoked the Germans and therefore brought about their own extirpation would be given credence by serious scholars. One could not imagine, for instance, at a contemporary conference on the Holocaust that those who deny the Holocaust or seek to revise its proportions would be given any credence at all.

Yet in the 1990s, when the facts of overwhelming Serbian responsibility for the war and genocide in Bosnia are quite well known, when evidence for planned military attacks on civilians and systematic extirpation of people based on their ethnicity abounds, conferences, volumes, scholarly papers, media coverage, and editorials which comment on the war regularly feature empathetic accounts of Serbs as victims of such things as Croatian nationalism, Bosnian Muslim fundamentalism, and Western imperialism. The attempted systematic extirpation of Bosnian Muslims by Serbian forces surely represents one of the most significant acts of barbarism in the twentieth century. What is different in this case is the response of the West: perhaps in no other conflict in the twentieth century have Western intellectuals proven themselves so willing and able to offer accounts that occlude, obfuscate or even deny the central historical facts of military aggression and mass killing. Many Western intellectuals who ordinarily espouse quite liberal or even radical positions quite unproblematically echo the sentiments and political propaganda lines of individuals who have been indicted for the most prolific war crimes to occur on European soil since World War II. In some cases, prominent intellectuals go so far as to praise the actions of individuals who have been indicted by the UN war crimes tribunal for heinous war crimes and genocide.⁷ If in a previous age intellectuals were characterized by an almost overzealous degree of commitment to various causes, the present age is characterized by a stance of almost "aggressive ambivalence" on the part of many Western intellectuals. This is a trend which demands critical interrogation and concrete sociological analysis. It cannot be understood solely by examining the "objective facts" of the history of the war — a history which is admittedly complex — but also by examining the culture of late capitalist societies which frames intellectual ac-

tivity and political policy. Critical interrogation of this trend toward relativism and equivocation is all the more important since relativist reinterpretations are likely to increase as the temporal distance from the Balkan war increases. In this respect, the task of critical theory is to keep relativist positions from receding to the political unconscious where they solidify and become taken-for-granted parts of the stock of knowledge about the origins and consequences of the war. Critical theory is thus an act of raising a certain variety of untruth to the level of consciousness and thus, it is an act of conscience as well.⁸

Facts of the Case

When making a critique of patterns of thinking about relativistic thinking in relation to the war and genocide that has occurred in the former Yugoslavia, it is useful to be clear about a certain body of historical facts. To be sure, the situation in the former Yugoslavia is immensely complex and the causes of the dissolution of the country and the resulting conflicts cannot be reduced to simple formulas. Yet, on the other hand, there are a number of historical facts that remain central, but which are often occluded in many contemporary accounts of the war:

1. The Balkan war, that is the use of armed forces to impose nonconsensual solutions on Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina by Serbia and Bosnian Serb forces, was planned and carried out by Serbian political elites in Belgrade and Bosnia and was prosecuted with the aid of the full military might of the Yugoslav National Army. This war was waged on the sovereign territories of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina primarily against unarmed civilians.
2. During the invasion of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a project of state-sponsored genocide was carried out against the Muslim citizens of that state by Bosnian Serb leaders and soldiers who were sponsored and equipped by the same elites who had planned and executed the war.⁹
3. According to a leaked CIA report, the Serbian leaders and armies are responsible for 90% of the atrocities committed in this war and 100% of the systematic killing.¹⁰
4. A UN-sponsored report under the direction of Cherif Bassiouni (which is over 5000 pages) released in 1994 is another key source of documentation which underscores Serbian official direction and their responsibility for the vast majority of war crimes com-

mitted.

5. Reports prepared by Congress and the US State Department likewise indicate that between 80 to 90% of the war crimes can be attributed to the Serbs.¹¹
6. Reports by Helsinki Watch, a respected fact finding organization, confirm these other findings.¹²
7. Other such reports exist, by the CSCE, the Red Cross, the news media—all of them remarkably resonant with one another.¹³ For example, the UN concluded that Serbs committed the vast majority of rapes in Bosnia, and again, did so as an organized, systematic policy.¹⁴

To be sure, there are many other “facts” about the war and it should be said at the outset that there are no guiltless parties in the conflict in the Balkans. All sides in the conflict have committed atrocities and war crimes, albeit in different degrees, but only the Serbian side has been accused of genocide by the International War Crimes Tribunal at the Hague. In the Serbo-Croat war of 1991, following the brutal invasion of Croatia by Serbian dominated forces of the Yugoslav National Army, Croatian forces (both official and paramilitary) committed war crimes against Serbian civilians and soldiers. Following the truce between Serbia and Croatia, Croatian forces attacked Muslim forces in western Bosnia-Herzegovina. A number of Croats have been indicted by the Hague Tribunal for crimes committed in those acts of opportunistic aggression.¹⁵ Yet Human Rights Watch/ Helsinki Watch itself distinguishes between the degree and severity of crimes committed by Croats and those by Serbs, noting in its reports that crimes committed by Serbs were far more premeditated and extensive.¹⁶ It is important to keep such distinctions ever present when establishing the facts and chronology of the Balkan war. As Brendan Simms notes, “Both quantitatively and qualitatively, Serbian policies differed from the essentially opportunistic transgressions of Croatia. . . and the reactive behavior of the Muslims, loyal Serbs and loyal Croats supporting the Bosnian government.”¹⁷ And perhaps no one has put it more clearly and succinctly than Patrick Moore of the Open Media Research Institute:

It is true, as in any war, that no one side consisted entirely of angels. But what made Serbian atrocities different from those committed by others was that they represented not an incidental development in the conflict, but a deliberate instrument of policy. The rapes, expulsions, burnings, lootings, and massacres were a conscious and calculated means of setting up a Greater

Serbia.¹⁸

The task of this monograph is to understand the emergence of bodies of knowledge which work to revise and/or occlude the facts stated above. In making this the central task for a critical theory of the war, I am seeking to reclaim for critical theory a commitment to empirical facts as well as a commitment to providing a critical interrogation of those intellectuals who use (or, rather, misuse) reason — consciously or unconsciously to deny or obfuscate the facts of genocide. Evidence for mass killing cannot be explained away in the terms of postmodern theory as a “socially constructed artifact.” What can be explained as a socially constructed artifact is knowledge about the conflict and its relations to the concrete structural positions and cultural reference points of those who produce it. The starting point for the critical theory laid out here is, thus, the examination of what social theorist Dorothy Smith refers to as the “socially organized practices that constitute objectified forms of knowledge” about the Balkan war and genocide in Bosnia.¹⁹

I should stress that what follows is not a critique of the idea of relativism, *per se*, nor is it a call for the celebration of some idea of absolute truth in historical interpretation, generally speaking. Rather, it is an attempt to examine relativistic thinking as an independent cultural force which has affected the interpretation of concrete, objective historical events in the Balkans and concrete policies of Western political elites. In the critical theory which I put forward here, I wish steadfastly to avoid the banal characterizations of relativism put forth by many conservative culture critics.²⁰ For these thinkers, relativism is adjudicated as being essentially “bad,” while Western cultural values and some idea of absolute truth are seen as inherently “good.” The question of the superiority of Western values is quite another issue and beyond the scope of the present analysis, as are questions about the existence of absolute truth. I would only point out here that I am sympathetic to the idea of cultural relativism, which argues against cultural superiority and for the respect and toleration of all cultures, while I am very critical of the idea of moral relativism, which argues that moral judgments or universal cultural values are not possible.²¹ While I shall argue in favor of the application of universal cultural values in the response to the Bosnian conflict, I favor an approach to the Balkan war which adjudicates accounts on the basis of their *verisimilitude* or what the philosopher Karl Popper refers to as “truthlikeness.”²² The critique of relativism here focuses on the latter not as something which is *a priori* adjudicated as “bad”, but as a style of thought

which produces knowledge which denies or obscures the reality and verisimilitude of certain objective historical facts. Relativism, I argue, works against the establishment of verisimilitude in accounts of the war and genocide in Bosnia. The critique of relativism mounted here does not deny the complexity of historical events in the Balkans. Rather, it focuses on the ways in which certain relativist interpretations contribute to revisionist accounts of the Balkan war and the genocide that took place there. In this sense, this critique is part of a body of work that seeks to interrogate critically revisionist accounts of other genocides in Europe.²³

I also wish to note that relativistic interpretations of human events are necessary to the human sciences, in general, and to the interpretation of the Balkan war, in particular. Events in the former Yugoslavia cannot be interpreted in an unrelational way. Further, I acknowledge that some scholars might have been led to relativist interpretations of the war by the sheer complexity of events in the former Yugoslavia, just as I am willing to admit that many of those who insist on an absolute truth about the situation often deny facts and evidence in order to retain their belief in their absolutist interpretations of the conflict. As Ernest Gellner notes: "People may become subjectivists or relativists because respect for the truth led them to such conclusions, and others may be absolutist out of opportunism and desire to embrace the comforting conclusion, whether or not it is logically warranted."²⁴ Thus, I would note at the outset that any attempt to deny the expression of relativistic thought purely on the grounds that it is "relativistic" would be erroneous and censorious. In what follows, I merely reserve the right to critique its manifestations and to articulate and criticize the relations between relativistic thinking about the Balkans and Western passivity in the face of genocide. What concerns me here is relativism as a way of thinking which independently prefigures, shapes, and forms knowledge about the Balkan conflict such that it:

1. denies certain objective facts about war and genocide in the region and occludes and masks the recognition of certain key events that occurred in Bosnia and the causes of those events
2. works to shape political action of appeasement, toleration, and legitimization of territorial, political, and economic gains won through military aggression.

In what follows, I present a brief outline of some of the key types of relativistic thinking on the Balkan conflict and then provide a brief theoretical explanation for the prevalence of this type of thinking among Western intellectuals.

Relativist Thought-Styles and the Balkan Conflict

As a starting point for this analysis, I find it useful to begin with Karl Mannheim's notion of "styles of thought." Mannheim notes that "individuals do not *create* the patterns of thought in terms of which they conceive the world, but take them over from their groups. . . . There are different schools of thought distinguishable by the different ways in which they use different thought processes and categories."²⁵ For Mannheim, styles of thought are essentially products of groups and the analysis of meanings, which is the central method for Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, must ultimately take place with reference to the groups who develop and deploy particular kinds of meanings.²⁶ There are many positions that Western intellectuals have taken in the conflict, but one of the most significant is *relativism*. Most broadly, in the social sciences, a relativist position holds that there is no unique truth or objective reality about the social world.²⁷ In relation to the Balkan conflict, relativist positions usually take the form of *moral equivalence*, arguing that "all sides are equally guilty" for beginning the conflict and for committing war crimes, atrocities, and genocide. Because of the alleged equivalence of sides, the attempt to make moral judgments or to reach definite conclusions about the "truth" of the conflict is construed as problematic. This style of thinking is evident across a broad range of ideological positions from left to right and has done much to shape concrete policies of non-intervention and appeasement in the Balkan conflict.

Relativist discourse can be found throughout many Western media. In this study, I focus on relativist discourse in as it can be found in examples from two different fields: academic anthropology and foreign policy analysis. In each case, I provide critical readings of articles which illustrate the most fundamental rhetorical and discursive practices which comprise the structure of relativist styles of thought on the Balkan conflict. The structures of thinking in these articles appear in many other texts across a broad range of media: the articles under for scrutiny here were chosen because they are exemplars of relativistic thought on Balkan affairs. They have appeared in major social science and policy journals and they have been widely cited as authoritative accounts by others who analyze and make policy on the conflict in the Balkans. Their authors have assumed the status of experts on the Balkan conflict; in many cases they have advised political leaders or their accounts have been

quoted in justifications for particular political policies. The articles and their authors thus form part of the core of the expert system which drives much of Western understanding of the Balkan conflict and political action in the region. What I aim to show here is how supposedly objective, dispassionate, academic analysis of the conflict worked at another level as propaganda which both legitimated Serbian military aggression in Croatia and Bosnia and helped to justify the lack of response to stop genocide by Western political powers.

Anthropology as Apology

The Serbs As Victims I: Collective Memory and Preemptive Genocide

One of the strongest elements of relativist discourse on the wars in Croatia and Bosnia is the idea of the Serbian people as historical and contemporary victims of Muslim and Croatian domination. This discursive practice seeks to deny Serbian culpability for the present war and atrocities by focusing on and amplifying past instances of Serbian victimization. Historically, Serbs were dominated by the Ottoman empire for more than 400 years and there is a strong collective memory of oppression at the hands of the "Turks." In the twentieth century, Serbs experienced persecution and genocide during World War II in a Nazi quisling state called the Independent State of Croatia (NDH in the Croatian acronym) which was led by Ante Pavelić and a group known as the Ustasha. The Ustasha regime was notoriously ruthless toward Serbs and while a fierce debate rages as to the number of Serbs who were actually killed, there is little question that Serbs suffered greatly at the hands of the Croatian fascists. Hundreds of thousands of Serbs were killed by the Ustashe.²⁸ The collective memory of this genocide has remained alive in the present, in particular among the Serbs of Croatia, where the genocide was carried out.

In 1990, Franjo Tudjman, a retired Yugoslav general, dissident historian, and leader of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) was democratically elected president of a soon-to-be independent Republic of Croatia. Tudjman, an ardent nationalist with strong authoritarian leanings, had written a controversial book which sought to downplay the atrocities of the NDH and which made a number of statements that were construed by many as revisionist and anti-Semitic.²⁹ After assuming power, the new Croatian state revived a number of symbols which were highly offensive to Serbs living in

Croatia. The new Croatian flag, for instance, featured a red and white checkerboard coat-of arms dating to medieval times which had been used as the centerpiece of the flag of the Ustasha regime (the Ustasha flag, however, featured a prominent U at the top which was not incorporated into the flag of the new Croatian republic). This coat of arms had been used as a symbol of Croatia since the middle ages and had been incorporated into the Communist era emblem of the Socialist Republic of Croatia after World War II; nonetheless, its association with fascism was objectively and subjectively real to many Serbs living in Croatia. In addition, the new Croatian government began to use a new unit of currency, the kuna, which had a long history in Croatia, but which had also been used by the Ustasha regime. In spite of the fact that the kuna was not introduced until 1993, well after Serbian forces had invaded Croatia as a response to "provocations," the willingness of the government to use the kuna was no doubt known before the Serbian invasion and seen as a tendentious act by many Serbs. Finally, the new Croatian constitution specified that the official language of the new republic would be Croatian, written in a Latin script. Serbian, written in Cyrillic script, was classified as a minority language.³⁰

These actions were clearly symbolic and had little practical value in terms of the practical political tasks of the new Croatian state.³¹ But, they were perceived by many Serbs as direct provocations against Serbs and a symbolic indication that the new Croatian regime might not respect the rights of the Serbian minority in Croatia which had suffered so greatly at the hands of the Ustasha in World War II. The acts of the new Croatian government represented a form of symbolic violence against the Serbs.³² This symbolic violence was experienced as a provocation by both Croatian Serbs and their allies in Belgrade and was met by physical violence. In 1991, Croatian Serbs engaged in an armed insurrection aided by the armed forces of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) which was controlled by Serbia in the aftermath of the dissolution of Yugoslavia. In the ensuing onslaught, Serb forces seized one-third of Croatian territory and set up an "independent" republic known as the Krajina, destroyed major Croatian cities, and forced many Croats to leave their homes. In all, an estimated 20,000 Croats were killed in the military onslaught and thousands more were disabled, raped and displaced.³³ A significant number of Croatian women were raped as well. In the political justification for the invasion, Serbs claimed that the attack on Croatia was necessary as a pre-emptive strike to forestall the repetition of genocide perpetrated against Croatian

Serbs in World War II. Croats, on the other hand, claimed that the threat was exaggerated, that minority rights were guaranteed under the new Croatian constitution, and that Serbian forces had, through the use of propaganda, consciously stirred up anti-Croatian sentiment among Croatian Serbs as a pretext for the expansion of Serbian territorial ambitions in Croatia. For Croats, the invasion was part of a plan for the establishment of a "Greater Serbia."

In the West, the conflict between Serbs and Croats became the object of debate and discussion among intellectuals. In such debates, it became readily clear that scholars were "choosing sides," that is, offering interpretations which favored either the Croatian or the Serbian interpretation of events. In 1993, an article entitled "Dismembering Yugoslavia: Nationalist Ideologies and the Symbolic Revival of Genocide" was published by anthropologist Bette Denich in the prestigious anthropological journal, *The American Ethnologist*.³⁴ It is worth noting that this was the only article published on the conflict in this journal of anthropology throughout the course of the Balkan war. In fact, very few articles specifically about the war were published in either sociology or anthropology journals (which was also the case before or during World War II when very little scholarly attention was devoted to the war). At the time of its publication, the facts of the war in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina were quite well known in the west: the two countries had been recognized as independent by the community of Western nations and were granted seats in the United Nations and had been invaded by Serbian forces. Yet, this article makes very little mention of these facts. Instead, its express purpose appears to be to understand the "symbolic revival of genocide" by the new Croatian government as a causal factor in both the dissolution of Yugoslavia and in the ensuing conflict. The article begins by constructing the war as a "civil war" in which all sides have committed war crimes:

In the Bosnian civil war, systematic terror was used by all the warring ethnic factions (Serbs, Croats, and Slavic Muslims) to displace ethnic populations as a means for establishing control over territory. Armed forces committed atrocities against civilians to intimidate them into fleeing as refugees. While the basic methodologies were shared by all sides, atrocities reported on the largest scale were committed by Serbs against Muslims, and the greatest numbers of refugees were Muslims, fleeing as Serbian forces gained territory.³⁵

The above quote is rather representative of relativist discourse

on the war: it acknowledges rather limply the fact that the Serbs are the primary aggressors, but excludes further exploration of the specific facts of the Serbian invasion of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina by defining the conflict as a civil war in which all sides use the same "methodologies." The rhetoric of "civil war" makes it difficult to assign culpability for aggression, for in a civil war, both sides usually have armies which engage in offensive and defensive maneuvers. In this case, the JNA was, at the time of the invasion, the fifth largest army in Europe.³⁶ The war itself is only mentioned in this brief passage: there is no mention of the facts of that war such as the killing of over 20,000 Croats, the mass destruction of Vukovar and other cities; there is no mention of the Western arms embargo which left the Serbian forces far superior to either Croatian or Bosnian forces; and there is no mention of the programs of forced migrations (known as "ethnic cleansing") which were planned and carried out by Serbian forces under the specific direction of Serbian political and military authorities. In addition, even though the article was published in early 1994, there are no references at all to the invasion of Bosnia-Herzegovina which occurred against an even more defenseless population and was accompanied by well-documented atrocities committed against Bosnian Muslims by Serbian armed forces, even though the facts of these atrocities were already quite well publicized in the West. Rather, the focus of Denich's article is on understanding Croatian symbolic politics as provocations which fueled the Croatian Serb insurrections which began the Serbo-Croat war of 1991.

From the standpoint of an interpretive social science which attempts to grasp social action in terms of the subjectivity of the actors involved, the central task of Denich's paper is quite valid and the answers rendered are quite plausible. Yet, the interpretive positions put forth in the article, while seemingly grounded in the rhetoric of *Wertfreiheit*, are not especially detached or value-free in relation to the actual conflict in the Balkans. In fact, the interpretive strategy in the article crystallizes and legitimates Serbian positions from within a welter of rhetorical commitments to *Verstehen*. Denich argues that the source of the dissolution of Yugoslavia lies primarily in the rise of separatist Croatian nationalism (embodied in the figure of Franjo Tudjman) and the "symbolic revival" of the memory of genocide by the Tudjman regime. Denich's article provides a highly empathetic account which constructs these acts as forms of "symbolic violence." Her highly empathetic account works to establish the authenticity of Serbian claims of provocation. She notes,

quite rightly, that the symbolic actions of the new regime were quite disastrous for the general state of relations between Serbs and Croats and were of direct causal significance for starting the war. The Serbs who revolted were moved to do so by the strong collective memory of genocide which circulated through minority Serb communities in Croatia. Denich's empathetic account, though, works to establish equivalence between two disparate phenomena: *symbolic violence* and *physical violence*. It does not acknowledge the causes or outcomes of the war beyond a focus on Croatian symbolic aggression against Serbs and some brief discussion of rise of nationalism in Serbia proper. In so doing, the article rhetorically raises Croatian symbolic actions to the level of the Serbian actions such that questions about who the primary aggressor was, how the war was planned, who was responsible for the outbreak of the war, or what the specific conduct of the war was, all become difficult to ask.

What is at issue in explaining these events is not the subjective reality of Serbian grievances against Croats and their actions. The symbolic acts of the Croatian regime exerted direct causal influence on Croatian Serbs and interpretive sociology must explain the causal sequence of events in terms of the subjective feelings of those involved. What is at issue is the ways in which accounts of this rebellion move beyond an understanding of events to an empathetic rendition of Serbian actions which masks significant historical facts about the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the ensuing war. In the first case, there is a distinction to be made between symbolic violence and physical violence: from a normative standpoint, it might be argued that killing cannot be justified as a response to symbolic provocation. Otherwise, for instance, African-Americans would be justified in killing white Southerners for flying the confederate flag. In historical terms, the fact of political and military sponsorship of Krajina Serbs by Serbia proper is not mentioned at all in Denich's account of the war. Tudjman claimed that the Croatian Serbs were incited to rebel by Belgrade, but this claim is steadfastly denied in Denich's account (as it is in all official Serbian accounts). She neglects to mention that many Croatian cities were shelled and destroyed, that tens of thousands of civilians were killed and disabled, and that Croats were driven from their homes in a policy of "ethnic cleansing" that was systematically orchestrated by Serbian political elites in Croatia and Serbia proper. While Denich's account contains a strong tone of condemnation and moral outrage at the symbolic acts of the Tudjman regime, there is not an equal condemnation, or even affirmation of the acts of physical vio-

lence that were unleashed against Croatia by the Serbs and the JNA. Denich accepts, *prima facie*, and reproduces the idea that the symbolic actions of Croatian nationalists were provocations. Her account self-consciously seeks to establish the authenticity of the Serbian claims to provocation and it provides intellectual legitimization of those claims in a highly regarded journal of anthropology. Military aggression and acts of genocide are always grounded in specific accusations of provocation on the part of the aggressor.³⁷ Denich's view commits itself to a value-free and ethically neutral anthropology and is, indeed, seen as such by fellow anthropologists, but it resonates strongly with and provides intellectual justification for the official Serbian view that Croatian actions were a direct provocation.

What is at issue here is not the veracity of Denich's account, but the moral ramifications of its discourse. Her account gives moral precedence to an empathetic sociological understanding of the Serbian point of view rather than to the facts of the consequences of armed invasion. Actions which were deeply offensive to Serbs symbolically were also used as a pretext for armed aggression and the *physical extirpation*, either through murder or forced migration, of Croats living in areas deemed to be Serbian. This was the cornerstone of the Serbian propaganda campaign that was the ideological grounding for the military invasion and occupation of Croatia: the constant reference to the Croatian actions of World War II and the conscious attempt to link all contemporary expressions of Croatian nationalism with Ustashism and the NDH. What is most notable in Denich's work is that it recapitulates the argument of the supposed collective guilt of Croats and provocation which is the cornerstone of official Bosnian Serb propaganda. One element of official Serbian propaganda is the view that "the Serbian side never attacks; it responds to enemy provocations."³⁸ Indeed, in Denich's account, we have only an outline of the provocation rather than an explanation of the ways in which this provocation was amplified and used as a legitimization device for military aggression and preemptive killing in Croatia. In some cases, the connection between past and present is made quite overtly, as for instance, when the author directly makes a connection between Croatian atrocities of the Ustasha period and current acts of Croatian aggression against Serbs in Croatia which occurred after the Serbian invasion of Croatia and the occupation of one-third of Croatian territory. This strategy of linkage is a mainstay of Serbian propaganda and is adopted in many Western accounts, of which Denich's is only a significant and no-

table example. In most cases, though, the accounts that are proffered are empathetic in the sense that they give credence to the idea of collective historical guilt of the Croats, an idea which was the central justification for the Serbian invasion of Croatia in 1991.

It was clearly in the interests of Serbian elites to insinuate that symbolic violence was equal to physical violence in Croatia. Such a relativizing strategy, especially one which relied on the sensitive theme of the Holocaust, could clearly create doubt as to who was the aggressor and who was the victim in the present. Yet in the highly visible account under scrutiny here, there is virtually no mention of the ways in which the sentiments of Croatian Serbs were manipulated by Serbian political elites. The evidence for Serbian manipulation of historical memory is quite clear, although nowhere is the evidence more clear than in the words of Jovan Rašković, psychiatrist and leader of the Serbian Democratic Party of Croatia who admitted the manipulation: "I feel responsible, because I prepared this war, although not with military preparations. Had I not provoked this emotional tension with the Serbian people, nothing would have happened. My party and I have set fire to the fuse of Serbian nationalism, not only in Croatia, but everywhere else, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina."³⁹ It is worth pointing out that Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić, who has been indicted by the war crimes tribunal in the Hague, appeared on the CBS television news magazine "Sixty Minutes" in September 1995 and declared that Bosnian Serb aggression against the Croats was necessary to prevent the latter from doing to Serbs what they had done in World War II. He also noted that Europe would thank him and the Bosnian Serbs for protecting Europe from the threat of Islamic fundamentalism, presumably by killing Bosnian Muslims. In addition, in another interview Karadžić noted that:

Historically, the Croats and Muslims have coalesced against the Serbs. So why are we fighting? We are fighting to protect ourselves from becoming vulnerable to the same kind of genocide that coalition waged upon us in World War II when 700,000 Serbs were killed. Today, Serbs would be 60 percent of the population of Bosnia if this genocide had not been committed. We will never again be history's fools.⁴⁰

The idea of the connection between past Croatian atrocities and present ones is a strong element of official Serbian propaganda not only in Bosnia, but in Belgrade as well. Official reports made in the journal *Yugoslav Survey*, an official organ of state power in the rump Yugoslavia, stress the memory of World War II genocide and,

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more importantly, its connection with the present. Consider the following official government statement:

More than 700,000 Serbs perished in a monstrous genocide committed against them only in the Independent State of Croatia, a Croatian-Muslim creation, under the auspices of the Axis powers. The testimony about that is offered by Jasenovac, the biggest concentration camp in the Balkans, in which besides Serbs, also many Jews and Gypsies perished. *Unfortunately, this symbol of the genocide committed against the Serbian people has recently fallen victim again to Croatia's latest armed aggression against the Serbian people.*⁴¹

The "armed aggression" in this case refers to the Croatian recapturing of the Krajina, which had been recognized as a part of the new Croatian state, seized, and ethnically cleansed by Serbs in 1991. In a speech delivered by the Yugoslav Federal Prime Minister Dr. Radoje Kostić at the Assembly Held in Belgrade in 1995, the same kind of linkage between past and present is noted:

A just and lasting peace, based on equal treatment of all warring parties and as the outcome of the Yugoslav crisis, would be the best way to mark the fiftieth anniversary of victory over Fascism and pay tribute to the victims of the Second World War...Unfortunately, the war lords are still on the scene. Croatia has committed unprovoked acts of aggression against the Republic of Serb Krajina. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia most strongly condemns this glaring act of aggression by the Croatian authorities and calls on the parties to the conflict and the relevant international factors (sic) to prevent further violence, to get the parties involved to return to their original positions and to provide for the renewal of the peace process.⁴²

What is striking about Denich's account is its remarkable similarity to the official Serbian propaganda cited above. As with official accounts, Denich's account ratifies the idea that contemporary manifestations of Croatian nationalism are incarnations of fascist Ustashe nationalism and insinuates, in relativist fashion, that the Croats are the primary aggressors in the region. Much relativist discourse on the war is grounded in a more general negativity toward nationalism on the part of Western intellectuals. In this case, Balkan nationalism is seen as a "virus" and very little attempt is made, either by academics or by policy makers, to distinguish between types of nationalism and their pragmatic consequences.⁴³ The result is a highly relativistic one — all parties involved in Balkan conflict are "infected" with the disease of nationalism and, there-

fore, no one nationalism is seen as "better" or "worse" than the other. In relativistic thought structures on the war, Croatian nationalism, in particular, is particularly suspect because of the legacy of the Ustashe regime and the genocide against the Serbs. As Ivo Banac notes, "Serbian nationalist historiography, aligned to Milošević's movement, set out to prove that every resistance to Belgrade, not just among the Croats, necessarily tended in the direction of Ustashism and genocide."⁴⁴ The linkage of all expressions of Croatian nationalism to the fascist regime during World War II is a particular powerful tool for the delegitimization of Croatian claims to self-determination. Conversely, such linkage is a powerful tool for the legitimization of Serbian nationalist aspirations and territorial aggrandizement which were carried out under the conscious political manipulation of the collective memory of genocide and the continued construction of the victimage of the Serbian people. The Ustashe was so ruthless that "Croat self interest of whatever provenance (including reform communist and liberal) could easily be tarred with the brush of fascism, by the help of innuendoes, criminally constructed. It was a temptation that no embattled Serbian or centralist tendency failed to utilize after the war."⁴⁵ Indeed, though there has been a variety of expressions of Croatian nationalism, in general, such expressions — regardless of their content — tended to be judged rather negatively by Western intellectuals because of the patina of the Ustasha atrocities.⁴⁶ This included even those expressions of nationalism that were evidently liberal in their origins and aspirations. The uprising in the 1970s which came to be known as the "Croatian Spring" was inspired strongly by the liberal ideas of the Prague Spring, yet the association of this expression of Croatian nationalism with the Czech resistance was denied in favor of a linkage between Croatian nationalism and Croatia's fascist heritage.⁴⁷ For most Western intellectuals, the reference point for Croatia in the present becomes the period which is most tainted and, not insignificantly, it is this reference point that is amplified in the present by Serbian nationalists and intellectual defenders of the Yugoslav idea, not only in the former Yugoslavia, but in the West as well. Throughout the discourse on the Balkan war, and especially in relativist discourse, the image of Croatia that is invoked is strongly negative and this has served well in the construction of accounts which seek to amplify the historic victimization of the Serbs, and, in so doing, establish moral equivalence, justify Serbian armed aggression against defenseless civilians, and justify non-intervention by Western powers in

Serbs as Victims II: The Orientalist Fallacy in the Balkans

In the previous discussion, I have provided a critique of the interpretive schema that works toward the construction of Serbs as victims of symbolic violence. This schema relies on empathetic accounts which privilege the authenticity of the subjectivity of Serbian minorities in Croatia. This empathy, which allows the social scientist to grasp the point of view of the "native," is vitally important for understanding the history of the war in the former Yugoslavia and no sociological or anthropological account can proceed without it. Yet, such empathy is not ethically neutral: in this case, relativism culminates in a position which is broadly empathetic to the Serbs in stressing their status as victims. The construction of victimization is central to the establishment of a "rhetoric of provocation" which has been central to the legitimization of genocidal activities by Serbs in the former Yugoslavia.

In what follows, I provide an analysis of another form of relativistic thinking which stresses the idea that Serbs are victims of a more general, ongoing process of symbolic domination: "orientalism." While some authors stress the collective memory of physical violence against the Serbs, others stress more subtle processes of supposed cultural domination of Serbs by other ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia. A representative example of this theoretical strategy is found in an article by Milica Bakić-Hayden and Robert Hayden in the prominent journal *Slavic Review*.⁴⁹ The central thesis of the article is that the Serbs and other Eastern Orthodox peoples have been subject to an essentializing discourse which seeks to construct them as backward and regressive. This "orientalism", which emanates primarily from "politicians and writers from the northwestern parts of the country" (presumably from Slovenes and Croats) is seen as one of the root causes of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia and, ostensibly, as a tool of cultural and political domination of the "eastern" peoples of Yugoslavia (presumably Serbs and Macedonians). The authors note that "contrasting images [of superiority of northwestern peoples and inferiority of eastern peoples] help nationalist political figures in Croatia and Slovenia to justify the need to break away from the Balkans."⁵⁰ In addition, according to these authors, not only are such constructions rhetorical legitimizations for breaking away, but they are also conceptual practices of power and domination. The authors note

that : "Orientalist knowledge has been both a tool for and justification of cultural as well as political dominance, in that it both presumes and restates the inferiority of eastern races, religions and societies to those of the West."⁵¹ The description of the attempts of Slovenian and Croatian politicians and intellectuals to distance themselves rhetorically from an imagined "other" as "orientalist knowledge" presumes that these politicians and intellectuals are involved in a project of cultural and political dominance. The authors then proceed to look at different expressions of orientalist rhetoric in Yugoslav political life and relate these to concrete political crises in the former Yugoslavia. The article ends with a paean to Yugoslavism, which celebrates the idea of "civilized federalism" as opposed to the "essentializing nationalisms" which seek to destroy the Yugoslav idea. It should be said at the outset that the article does not mention at all the fact that the Serbs, the presumed target of domination from the "northwest parts of the country," had, at the time of the writing of the article, already unleashed a military against Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Said's concept of orientalism is a powerful one for cultural analysis; it has been very influential in the analysis of cultural domination in a variety of historical contexts. His analysis demonstrates convincingly that the physical domination of Muslim peoples by Western imperial powers was grounded in a cultural strategy of domination which essentialized and naturalized "orientals" as inferior, barbaric, and uncivilized. Said's concept is highly specific to the particular history which it purports to describe: the cultural domination of the East by Western imperialist powers. At the most elemental level, though, the transposition of Said's orientalist argument to the Balkan case is flawed, since the historical situation in the Balkans is quite different than the historical situation of imperial domination which led to the emergence of orientalist discourse in the West. There are a number of specific problems with Bakić-Hayden's and Hayden's application of the orientalist argument to the Balkan situation.

First, many peoples of the former Yugoslavia, including the Croats and Bosnians, are subject to the same processes of orientalism from the more "civilized" countries of Western Europe.⁵² The idea of the Balkan peoples as tribes who are inferior to "civilized" and "Enlightened" Europeans is a persistent one in Western political and intellectual discourse and seldom are distinctions made between Balkan peoples as to the degree of tribalism each one displays. In fact, it might be said that the Croats (who have traditionally been

associated with Naziism) are subject to more essentializing discourse at the hands of Europeans than the Serbs, who have been staunch allies of Western powers in the 20th century and who have been the ethnic group most associated with the protection of the Yugoslav idea (and thus the hegemony of Serbia in the Yugoslav federation). The metaphor of "Balkanization" which has come to signify persistent, intense, and intractable fracturing of human communities is often applied to all of the peoples of the former Yugoslavia (although probably less to Slovenes): Croats, Serbs, Bosnian Muslims, Montenegrins, Macedonians are classified together as Balkan peoples, as tribalists and savages who have been engaged in "age-old conflicts."⁵³ Thus, as opposed to being a central part of a European discourse of domination, Croatia (and perhaps even Slovenia) are significantly distanced from Western Europe proper through the exact same process of exclusion and the process of the social construction of otherness that is the hallmark of the "orientalism" that Bakić-Hayden and Hayden describe in their analysis. It is possible to see the situation as quite the opposite from that which is described by Bakić-Hayden and Hayden: while Croatian and Slovenian intellectuals seek to distance themselves from Serbia, this is less an act of "orientalism" (which, if we remain true to Said's conception, must be accompanied by physical or political domination) than it is an act of self-definition which works as a means of resistance to Serbian hegemony and as a cultural legitimization for the idea of independent nationhood. Seeing such rhetoric as a device for differentiation which works to liberate ethnic groups from Serbian hegemony is difficult, since, as we noted above, the negative attributes of Croatian nationalism, especially in the discourse of proponents of the Yugoslav ideal, are usually stressed instead of its actual or potential liberal dimensions.

Second, the application of the term "orientalist" to Croats and Slovenes connotes that the latter dominate Serbs. This connotation is not in keeping with the strong sociological evidence for Serbian hegemony in the former Yugoslavia. For the Croats or Slovenes to be orientalists in Said's sense of the term, they would have to be in a position of tangible power over Serbs in Yugoslavia, since orientalism is the cultural domination which accompanies tangible political domination. Orientalism is a discourse of the powerful, not of the oppressed. With the exception of World War II, it is decidedly not the case that Croats were dominant in Yugoslavia. In fact, the situation was quite the opposite: Serbs were the dominant ethnic group in Yugoslavia in terms of numbers and in terms

of tangible political and military power. In the political realm, for instance, in 1988 Serbs comprised 44 per cent of the membership of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) in relation to a population of 38 per cent in Yugoslavia as a whole. Croats, the next largest ethnic group, represented 13 per cent of the membership of the LCY in relation to a population of 20 per cent of the country as a whole.⁵⁴ In military institutions, Serbs were also dominant: in 1991, Serbs constituted 60 per cent of the officer corps of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) in relation to a population of 36 per cent in the country as a whole. Croats represented 13 per cent of the corps in relation to a proportion in the country as a whole of 20 per cent.⁵⁵ These are quite remarkable and powerful indices of Serbian hegemony in the former Yugoslavia. Said's notion of orientalism loses all of its theoretical power if it is applied to peoples who are the hegemonic power in a social relationship rather than to those who *resist* hegemony. Bakić-Hayden and Hayden construct a scenario in which hegemons are the supposed "victims" of orientalism at the hands of those who are themselves subject to Serbian hegemony. Such was not the intention of Said's original work and this application would likely be refuted by Said himself.

Another fact that is worth mentioning along these lines is that the authors construct Serbs as the target of orientalism at the same time that Serbian forces were mounting a military offensive against Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bakić-Hayden and Hayden completely ignore this act of domination, as well as the cultural work of Serbian orientalists who created a discourse which dehumanized Muslims as a legitimizing strategy for the physical extirpation of Muslims and the establishment of a Greater Serbia.⁵⁶ Given the fact that Said's model was specifically designed to examine the cultural construction of Muslim identity by imperial powers, it seems better applied to the interpretation of the cultural work which grounded a rational plan for genocide carried out by one of the largest modern armies in Europe. Thus, in Bakić-Hayden and Hayden's account, Serbian orientalism is explicitly masked in favor of an account which constructs the image of the Serbs as victims of symbolic domination and violence.

Finally, Bakić-Hayden and Hayden's view dismisses the possibility that there *are* actual cultural differences between "East" and "West" in the Balkans: while it is the case that these differences are socially constructed and that intellectuals magnify these differences (or deny them) for political purposes, these latter facts do not preclude the exploration of the independent effects of culture on hu-

man action. As W.I. Thomas noted in his famous sociological axiom, "If men define situations as real they are real in their consequences." This theorem is a mainstay of contemporary cultural sociology. However useful the labeling of the latter as "essentialism" or "racism" is for mobilizing political sentiment against sociological analysis, such labeling also denies the possibility of a non-essentialist cultural sociology which could explore:

- a. the actual cultural boundaries and differences between Croats and Serbs,
- b. how these cultural differences might, from a theoretical perspective, exert an independent affect on various types of social action in the Balkans, including acts of aggression.

The idea that the espousal of cultural differences as a source of social action is a form of orientalism thus denies a cultural sociology which may, in fact, provide some understanding of current events in the region.⁵⁷

Making an argument for culture as an explanatory variable does not preclude one from working for the denial of cultural difference as part of establishing a modern, liberal social order. As I have noted, it was decidedly the case that Serbs were the victims of genocide at the hands of the Croatian Ustasha during World War II. That genocide was grounded in a Nazi-like ideology of the racial inferiority of Serbs rather than in a nuanced and sociologically informed conception of cultural difference. Just as all expressions of Croatian nationalism can be elided with the Ustasha, so too can reasonable efforts to discuss real cultural differences between the peoples of the former Yugoslavia be elided with overtly racist ideological pronouncements emanating from reactionary and racist expressions of Croatian nationalism. It is worth stressing that the rhetorical construction of Serbs as victims of the symbolic violence of orientalism which is the cornerstone of Bakić-Hayden and Hayden's work takes place at the same time as a program of organized physical violence was occurring against Croatian and Muslim populations at the hands of the supposed "victims" of orientalism. Again, as with the case of Denich's article, this discourse resonates strongly with the rhetoric of victimization which is the core legitimization strategy of Serbian propaganda. In each case, the rhetorical strategies and discursive practices are intellectual reworkings of some of the elemental themes of the Bosnian Serb propaganda that underlay acts of aggression against Croats and Muslims in the former Yugoslavia.

The perspectives outline above are couched in conceptual practices which are traditionally defined as "left" and which are committed to the emancipation and liberation of subjugated populations: the influence of such radical thinkers as Michel Foucault and Edward Said is strong in the articles discussed above. Yet the masking of physical violence by the discourse of Serbian victimization and the extent to which such discourse reproduces and recapitulates Serbian political propaganda calls into question the extent to which it is in any meaningful sense emancipatory or liberatory. On the contrary, it is striking that these anthropological perspectives, grounded as they are in radical terminology, are so overtly resonant with official Serbian themes which ground Serbian aggression in a rhetoric of victimhood. These relativistic styles of thought are not limited to the left, however, and it is not only Western anthropologists who have constructed intellectual accounts which serve as apologies for Serbian aggression in the former Yugoslavia. There is a significant degree of what Kenneth Burke refers to as "consubstantiality" in relativist discourse on the war.⁵⁸ That is, intellectuals from groups who might differ significantly on fundamental issues have emerged who share the basic substance of relativist positions in their views toward the war. Relativist positions on the war appear across the left-right political continuum, in the so-called left critiques of symbolic violence against Serbs and in the discourse of *realpolitik* which is usually associated with the political right and appears so prominently in Western discourse on the war.⁵⁹

One of the most significant examples of what might be called "relativistic *realpolitik*" emerged in an article by General Charles Boyd which appeared in 1995 during the later stages of the war in Bosnia in the prominent journal *Foreign Policy*.⁶⁰ The previous examples of relativistic thinking have explored the strategies by which equidistance was established between Serbs and Croats. This particular article attempts the same construction of moral equidistance between all the parties to conflict, including the Bosnian Muslims. One of the central tasks of Boyd's article is to dispel the "myth" that the Bosnian Muslims are the primary victims of the Balkan war and to construct an account which actively denies the facts of Serbian aggression against Bosnian Muslims and recasts Muslims as responsible for their own misfortune and subsequent acts of aggression. Boyd argues that, because all sides are essentially culpable and have been victimized, the concrete policy of the Western governments

should be to accept that the Serbs have legitimate grievances, acknowledge those grievances, and make peace by appeasing them.

Boyd begins by making a strong argument that morality has little to do with interpreting events in the Balkans and that the interpretation of the conflict should proceed from the analysis of how each side responded to power and opportunity. He argues that any attempt to inject moral analysis into the interpretation of events in Bosnia is naive since the facts of the case so obviously — in his mind — demonstrate that every side is guided not by morality, but by power. All sides have committed atrocities, and all sides are opportunistic, motivated primarily by power. Boyd begins by equating the actions of the Serbs and the Croats: “recently, more than 90 percent of the Serbs in western Slavonia were ethnically cleansed when Croatian troops overran that UN Protected area in May. As of this writing this Croatian operation appears to differ from Serbian actions around the safe areas of Srebrenica and Žepa only in the degree of Western hand-wringing.”⁶¹ As of the date of publication of the article, the world was quite aware of the fact that the Serbian capture of those safe areas involved the systematic mass murder of up to 8,000 civilians, an act which was the single greatest atrocity of the entire Balkan war and the most egregious war crime to occur in Europe since World War II. Most conscientious Western observers acknowledge that war crimes were committed by Croats in the Krajina operation. These crimes were far less serious in scope and there is little evidence that these atrocities were as systematically planned as were those which occurred at the hands of Serbian soldiers in the UN safe areas of Bosnia and, earlier, in parts of Croatia. Nonetheless, without a presentation or recapitulation of the historical facts of the case (Croatia was invaded by Serbian forces which seized one third of the territory of the new state, a significant number of the Serb refugees were military personnel who had terrorized Croatian civilians and who had refused to go to the peace table for three years and who gave orders for civilians to leave, etc.) it is quite easy to see the actions as essentially the same.

In a direct act of Serbian apologism, Boyd notes that: “The Serbs are not trying to conquer new territory, but merely hold onto what was theirs.”⁶² Throughout the article, he seeks to establish the legitimacy of Serbian claims, and notes that the victimization of Serbs, while very real, goes virtually unnoticed by the West. He reports mass migrations of Serbs from lands which they had either occupied traditionally or which they had occupied through military action. At no point in the article does Boyd discuss the origins of the

war, or establish the temporal sequences of the war. Nor does he acknowledge, except briefly, the vast devastation wreaked by the Serbian dominated JNA against Croats and Bosnian Muslims. Rather, his focus is on the activities of the primary victims of the war — Croats and Bosnians - whom he elevates to a status of aggressor equal to that of Serbs. To be sure, the Croatian government was less able to claim the status of victim after engaging in an opportunistic war with Bosnian Muslims. And to be sure, Croatian troops committed atrocities and war crimes against Muslims and Serbs. Yet the question remains as to the degree to which Croatian actions were directly comparable with Serbian actions in an empirical sense. Boyd ignores such empirical questions and instead focuses on equating the severity of Croatian actions with that of Serbian ones, without providing any facts which would contextualize his account: lacking are facts about the provenance of the war, the political nature of the ethnically pure Srpska Krajina, the military activities of Serbian troops against civilian targets in Croatia proper (including the destruction of Vukovar and terrorist attacks on Dubrovnik, Zagreb and other major cities), and the refusal of Serbian leaders in Croatia to negotiate a peace with Croatian authorities. In addition, Boyd fails to note that, while many civilians did suffer displacement during "Operation Storm", a good number of those fleeing the Croatian onslaught were military personnel who had been ordered to leave and who ordered other Serbs to leave the area. These very same military personnel had been responsible for many of the atrocities committed against Croats in the Krajina region.

It is common for relativists to make the argument that the Croats were never scrutinized in Western intellectual circles and the press for these actions. In fact, the Croatian offensive and the offenses committed against Serbs were given a great deal of coverage and critical scrutiny in the Western press.⁶³ In many cases, as with Boyd, in such coverage the Croats were elevated to a status of aggressor equal to that of the Serbs. The most common refrain was that the Krajina offensive was the largest example of "ethnic cleansing" in the war.⁶⁴ While it is certainly understandable that Croatian actions would bring about a criticism in the form of equivocation, what distinguishes Boyd's article is its conscious construction of an image of Bosnian Muslims as both aggressors and cunning manipulators of Western sentiment. While acknowledging the intensity of the siege of Sarajevo by Serbian forces, Boyd also notes that the "image of Sarajevo, battered and besieged, is a valuable tool for the

Bosnian government.”⁶⁵ In addition, he notes that “some of the city’s suffering has actually been imposed on it by the actions of the Sarajevo government.” In no part of the article does Boyd acknowledge differential responsibility for the war or war crimes: the reader is presented with an account which is consciously constructed with an eye toward establishing *doubt* about responsibility for the war and creates the image of shared culpability. All sides are seen as having legitimate goals and all sides are actual and potential aggressors. While the claims for Croat aggression and opportunism are tenable to a certain degree, given the opportunistic acts of aggression committed by Croatian forces in the Croat-Muslim war, what is most notable about his account is the elevation of the principal victims of the war, the Bosnian Muslims, to the status of aggressor. This is tantamount to arguing that the Poles were responsible for the atrocities committed against them by the Nazis in World War II and that their retaliation against the Nazis was equatable with Nazi aggression.

The publication of the Boyd article elicited a rather extreme response from a number of leading commentators on the war, many of whom had been strong advocates for the Bosnians in the West. Critics pointed out the distortions in Boyd’s facts and arguments and its philosophical position of moral equivalence and relativism.⁶⁶ The primary objection to the article is two-fold: first, that it engaged in moral relativism and the establishment of equidistance between the parties; and second, that it simply reported the facts of the case wrongly — no available evidence indicates that Croatian or Muslim aggression against Serbs was equal to that perpetrated against Croats and Muslims (especially). Nonetheless, as I shall argue below, countering Boyd’s claims and philosophical positions with facts and appeals to universal moral values faces an uphill struggle: the strength of relativist arguments is that they reproduce and intensify existing dispositions toward relativistic interpretation. In so doing, they occupy space in the debate which creates doubt about such things as which party is the aggressor and which is the aggrieved, the scale and scope of atrocities and killing, and culpability for the war. It is this doubt which justifies appeasement and inaction on the part of Western powers, even if later on people are convinced that the arguments or the facts or the moral positions which undergird relativist positions are problematic. This is especially the case in a cynical culture in which the disposition to disengage from moral action is seen as desirable and exerts a powerful effect on political policies.

While the examples offered above are not overt apologies for Serbian aggression and genocide (although they could be read as that), they rely on the same rhetorical structures that exist in formal Serbian propaganda which seek to justify and legitimate military aggression and violence against Serbian enemies in the former Yugoslavia. In such propaganda, there is very little mention of any acts of Serbian aggression; those acts, instead, are masked by a focus on acts of barbarism perpetrated against Serbs by Croatian fascists in World War II, by the linkage of all acts of Croatian nationalism with fascism, and by the conscious attempt to deny that distinctions between victims and aggressors exist in this *fin de siècle* Balkan war. In this sense, the arguments under criticism are not at all detached, despite their grounding in the rhetoric of adherence to the rhetoric of social scientific norms of "balance," "objectivity," and "understanding". Such discourse construes itself as critical of a "one-sided" discourse and, in offering the "Serb side of the story" claims to establish balance in the debate. Balance is achieved, but often at the expense of making confusing analytical and empirical distinctions, by the misapplication and decontextualizing of theoretical concepts, or by stressing one set of facts over another. In this sense, the articles discussed above might be seen as "relativistic performances" which demonstrate their partisanship not only by what they include as by what they exclude. As Kenneth Burke notes: "Any performance is discussible either from the standpoint of what it *attains* or what it *misses*.. A way of seeing is a way of not seeing — a focus on object A involves a neglect of object B." ⁶⁷

There are both philosophical (or moral) and political consequences of relativistic styles of thought. In the first case, such styles of thought make it the *moral analysis* of the war problematic. Moral judgments, the assignment of responsibility for war crimes and genocide, and the establishment of verisimilitudinous accounts of the war are lost in the privileging of interpretations which favor the use of morally neutral, relativistic categories to the interpretation of the Balkan conflict. Relativistic styles of thought do not deny the possibility for the assignment of primary responsibility to Serbian forces (and they do acknowledge it in most cases), but they strain at the same time to raise other events to the same status and, thus, create the perception of equality of guilt and the assignment of equal responsibility for military aggression and mass killing. It is this elevation of competing, incommensurate accounts which is central to relativist thought structures and the principal mechanism by which such thought structures work to influence pragmatic politi

cal outcomes. These outcomes are many and a discussion of them is beyond the scope of this paper. Relativistic interpretations of the war in Bosnia, interpretations that were created and disseminated by Western intellectual elites, served as important frames of reference or typifications which guided the choices and actions of Western political elites in relation to the Balkan conflict. Throughout the Balkan conflict, Western political policy toward the Balkans and toward the genocide that was occurring there was one of appeasement and toleration of Serbian military aggression and genocide. This policy, I argue, was facilitated by the presence of relativistic styles of thought which circulated in Western intellectual discourse on the war. It is sufficient here to point out some of the most prominent examples of political rhetoric which mirror the rhetoric of the articles discussed above:

- In responding to the initial reports emanating from Croatia and Bosnia which provided evidence of genocide, George Bush announced: "In all fairness I have to say to the American people that what's happening [in Serbian concentration camps] is not genocide."⁶⁸
- Cyrus Vance, on 5 November 1991, opposed sanctions against Serbs, claiming that it was "not at all clear who is the aggressor and who the victim in this conflict."⁶⁹ It is worth noting that this statement was made *after* the Serbian dominated Yugoslav National Army had already invaded Croatia and begun the policy of ethnic cleansing and murder of thousands of defenseless Croatian civilians.
- In an interview with *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on 29 November 1991, French President Francois Mitterrand focused on Croatia's Nazi past: "All I know is that the history of Serbia and Croatia has been filled with such dramas for a long time. Especially during the last world war, many Serbs were killed in Croatian camps. As you know, Croatia was part of the Nazi bloc, [while] Serbia wasn't."⁷⁰ This statement is particularly striking given Mitterrand's admitted collaboration with the Vichy regime during World War II.
- On 23 April 1991, US Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger reported on the MacNeil Lehrer News Hour that the war would not end until Croats and Serbs "got tired of killing each other."⁷¹
- In 1992, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler noted that "there are also others who have been involved in contributing to the violence, and in fact, excuse me, some of

them were Bosnian armed individuals.”⁷²

- Yet another observer would claim, “This war has never been quite as simple as aggressor or victim... there are elements of aggression, there are elements of civil war, there are elements of provocation on all sides.”⁷³

Relativistic discourse on the war represents an active and independent cultural force that *enabled* policies of appeasement or inaction in the region. Relativistic accounts work not so much because they are the dominant element of discourse on the Balkan war — in fact, it should be noted that many intellectuals opposed the war on moral grounds and refused to engage in equivocal or relativistic interpretations of the war. Rather, relativist accounts work precisely because they are grounded to such an extent in the rhetoric of reason and a commitment to the scientific and balanced interpretation of historical events. Thus, they appear reasonable and plausible and, regardless of their empirical veracity, they exert their effect by drawing on the rhetoric of reason and objectivity to raise doubt among those who might be inclined to take a moral position or to engage in one course of action that might favor one side or the other. Relativistic thought styles are not simply a reflex of the social positions of the intellectuals who produce them, but, once created, are active and independent cultural forces which guide the formation of subsequent ideas of other intellectuals and the political practices of elites in other sectors.

Explaining Relativist Interpretations of the War in Bosnia

The Culture of Cynicism and Relativistic Thought Styles

What accounts for the genesis and reproduction of relativistic views of the war such as those outlined above? Karl Mannheim sought to explain meanings in terms of the properties and social characteristics of those who articulate them. A structural explanation of relativism would thus focus on the characteristics of those who produce them. It is worth noting at the outset that the Western Balkan Studies community consists of many intellectuals — in particular those from the left — who were deeply committed to the Yugoslav project of federalism. Tito’s break with the Soviet Union and the condemnation of Stalin’s excesses made Titoism and the Yugoslav variety of communism particularly attractive to left intellectuals. The project of Yugoslav federalism, however, was accompanied by the very real political dominance and hegemony of eth-

nic Serbs: it might indeed be said that Yugoslav communism was subject to a gradual process of what Jean Baudrillard has referred to as "asserbissement" or "Serbianization."⁷⁴ In this respect it is no coincidence that favoritism toward the Yugoslav idea among Western intellectuals is accompanied by positions which are more accepting and accommodating to Serbian positions, even nationalist ones. The acceptance of Serbian perspectives on the war was enhanced even more as it became clear that the nationalist activities of non-Serbs in the former Yugoslavia were the key impetus for the unraveling of the Yugoslav federal project. Commitment to Yugoslavism as an ideology which maintains that Yugoslavism is the only means for keeping southern Slavs from murdering each other is not necessarily a commitment to civilized ideals such as tolerance and interdependence, although it *could* be that. Because of the connection of Serbian interests to the Yugoslav project, the ideology of Yugoslavism also served to maintain Serbian hegemony in the region: when that hegemony was threatened by social movements for self-determination such as those that occurred in Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the response of many Western intellectuals was to see such movements as the cause of the crisis, rather than an indication of a more general crises of Yugoslav communism itself, or the domination of Serbs over other ethnic groups. Western intellectuals who were committed to Yugoslav federalism could be expected to locate the crises of Yugoslavia in the expressions of nationalism which were increasingly evident after the death of Tito and which were the basis for the secessionist movements for independence which ultimately brought on the dissolution of the country. An alliance with Yugoslavism, at least in the way that it expressed itself in the "actually existing socialism" in Yugoslavia, brought with it an acceptance of Serbian hegemony. As a result, the kinds of relativist discourse outlined above could be expected to resonate quite strongly with Serbian ideological claims which underlay the different expressions of Serbian aggression in the region.

The prevalence of *realpolitik* political philosophy might also be explained by structural factors. Political elites in modern democracies are beholden to public opinion and a pragmatic approach to world problems which stresses interests as the defining criteria for intervention or non-intervention is highly functional for such elites. A philosophy which denies all moral considerations is the logical choice for elites who are primarily interested in maintaining power in a society in which even the smallest mistakes can be politically

fatal. At this point, though, a paradox is raised: how does one explain the emergence of relativistic thought styles across the political spectrum? Boyd's article is a prime example of *realpolitik* political philosophy; it is, thus, remarkably similar to the discourse of social scientific analysis which is seemingly inspired by emancipatory, critical theories from the left and encoded with pro-Serbian themes. A structural explanation that relies on the relation of styles of thought to specific social-structural configurations cannot account for the high degree of *consubstantiality* of relativistic interpretations of the Balkan war. Just as some radical feminists share with conservative evangelicals a perspective which condemns pornography, so, too, do proponents of Michel Foucault's and Edward Said's ideas and other leftist positions share a common view with generals, state department officials, and other figures who have little interest in such theoretical matters, but who promulgate the political philosophy of *realpolitik* in order to protecting their power and interests. Purely structural or material explanations of relativistic thought-styles, while useful, cannot explain the high degree of diffusion of relativistic interpretations across differentially located groups of intellectuals. In this sense, a purely Mannheimian based social structural approach is limited.

What can explain the prevalence of relativistic styles of thought and their consubstantiality across specific groups and associations, however, is a view which locates relativistic styles of thought in the larger cultural milieu in which they exist. The key defining cultural ethos of late modernity is that of *cynicism* and it is the formal elements of cynical culture that have exerted a decisive influence on thinking about the Balkan war.⁷⁵ To be sure, cynicism has been a part of Western cultures since the time of the ancient Greeks (in the work of Diogenes) and there has been no shortage of cynicism in political elites' responses to wars in history. One might argue though that with the advent of modernity and, especially postmodernity, cynicism has become more generally diffused throughout social groups and, thus, exerts a more decisive influence on social and political outcomes. The key element of cynical culture is an emphasis on *disbelief* as an orienting principle toward the world. Cynical culture is characterized by a generalized discreditation of the idea that there are absolute truths or that moral categories ought to guide social action. Such disbelief, while grounded in the Enlightenment orientation of skepticism, moves beyond the idea that the goal of reason is to seek after truth. Instead, reason is applied as a goal in and of itself in the course of

intellectual work. The outcome of the application of what might be called "reason-for-itself" is a permanent state of suspicion about any kind of analysis which attempts to raise normative or moral concerns.

The key element of cynical culture is a propensity toward heightened skepticism for its own sake. The cynical culture is a culture in which relativism thrives: the very idea of commitment to truth or absolute values is seen as naive, or as evidence of some diminished intellectual capacity. In the context of a cynical culture, the injection of a moral dimension to social or political analysis is proscribed. While there are many sources of such a deeply entrenched cynical culture, the rise of such a culture is directly related to the increase in the number of mass media in late capitalist society. The sheer increase in the number of media leads to an increase in the expansion of knowledge about phenomena and, thus, to the rise of competing versions of the truth. This may explain why indifference, apathy, and ambivalence became so evident as the coverage of the war in Bosnia has increased. There has never been a genocide that has been so well covered by the media as that which occurred in Bosnia. This mass mediation of the genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina has led to a situation in which the sheer number of interpretations has increased. In a universe of many interpretations, and within the context of a cynical culture in which so many accounts appear "reasonable" that no one account can be agreed upon, the propensity to adhere to a central frame of analysis or to one version of the truth diminishes. *Ecclesiastes* notes that "knowledge increaseth sorrow", but with the rise of mass media and the ensuing rise in the number of new forms of knowledge, it also increases cynicism. It is thus the cultural infrastructure of late modernity, in addition to the concrete operations of intellectuals within their respective fields of expertise and its plethora of media forms which has facilitated relativist accounts of what has happened in the Balkans. To the degree that different media facilitate different and competing interpretations of the war, there is less anchoring of the "reality" of events: in a Baudrillardian sense events in the Balkans have become "hyperreal" and this is what distinguishes "postmodern barbarism" from the barbarism of earlier ages. The sheer atrocity of the Holocaust in World War II was made more "real" by the lack of competing interpretative groups who could or would redefine the historical parameters of the event. As we get farther and farther from the actual events of the Holocaust, though, we have seen the emergence of groups which seek to reinterpret

and revise the facts surrounding the attempted extirpation of European Jewry. Such revisions and reinterpretations have been driven by the expansion of groups and communicative possibilities among groups who seek to reinterpret or deny the Holocaust. As Zygmunt Bauman argues, the Holocaust was a product of modernity, but in addition Holocaust revisionism might be seen as a product of late modernity or postmodernity.⁷⁶

Goldfarb notes that, "cynicism has its philosophic basis in relativism". Yet I would add that cynicism is a key basis of relativism: a cynical culture produces the conditions which are conducive to the production and reception of relativistic thought. Cynicism does not work in direct causal way to produce relativistic thinking. Rather, the culture of cynicism, to paraphrase Weber, is the modern switchman which guides the thinking of many modern intellectuals along the rails toward relativistic thinking. The result of this is that even such phenomena as genocide are met with what Georg Simmel called the *blasé* attitude and ambivalent feelings. Simmel is worth quoting at length here: "The essence of the *blasé* attitude is an indifference toward the distinctions between things. Not in the sense that they are not persuaded, as is the case of mental dullness, but rather that the meaning and the value of the distinctions between things, and therewith of the things themselves are experienced as meaningless. They appear to the *blasé* person in a homogeneous flat and gray color with no one of them worthy of being preferred to the other."⁷⁷ While written almost 100 years ago, Simmel could be describing Western intellectuals' ambivalent and indifferent responses to the parties in the Balkan conflict. While a certain ethic of ambivalence and cynicism no doubt emerged in relation to atrocities and crimes against humanity committed in earlier parts of this century, it may well be that the condition of modernity has changed such that the *blasé* attitude which Simmel noticed in the last *fin de siècle* is much more diffuse in the present *fin de siècle*. Such ambivalence does not simply lead intellectuals to passive and apathetic responses in the face of genocide. Instead, such ambivalence is more "aggressive": it compels certain intellectuals to actively construct accounts which consciously seek to minimize and downplay the facts of genocide in favor of more "sophisticated" and "balanced" social and cultural analyses and pragmatic policy. Intellectual accounts of the Spanish Civil War or World War II were framed in a cultural context in which there was less general confusion about moral and ethical issues. Accounts of the victims of Hitler and Franco were grounded in the moral discourse of the time

which made it relatively unproblematic to take moral positions and condemn fascism and the mass killing which it led to. In contrast, accounts of the Balkan war have emerged in a cynical culture in which the avoidance of moral judgments is widely prescribed as a precondition of intellectual activity and the taking of sides is seen as an intellectually suspect activity which lies outside the realm of reason and science. While the history of events in the Balkans is complex and the causes of the conflict are multifarious, many of the accounts that have been produced on the Balkan war are disposed toward relativism simply by the fact that the intellectuals who produce them exist in a cynical culture which both facilitates and is highly receptive to relativistic structures of thinking.

When writing of the horrors that befell Europe in World War II, the Frankfurt School critical theorists focused to a great extent on the triumph of bureaucratic, instrumental reason.⁷⁸ Fifty years later, the unrestrained application of reason to all human problems is still a source of some of the ongoing crises of modernity. It is not instrumental reason which defines the present later modern or postmodern age, though, but *cynical reason*.⁷⁹ In the analysis of the war in Bosnia, cynical reason works to blur and make fuzzy the elemental truths about what has happened in that country over the last five years. To be sure, the task of critical thinking is to "make the familiar strange." But in a cynical culture, the emphasis of critical thinking is on debunking and deconstruction without the specification that the end of such critical thinking is the determination of some knowable truth. Relativistic thinking, at least in the forms we have described it in this analysis, is not anti-rational. It is precisely the opposite: it is hyperrational. Thinkers are led to relativism through the application of reason which is only in search of itself. Cynical reason is an ethos which transcends discreet boundaries of group, class, association, or even nation. This ethos is shared by both left and right, by upper and lower classes, and by disparate nations (and even by nations who are enemies, such as the United States and the Soviet Union). As a normative force, cynical reason facilitates the production of relativistic structures of thinking about war and genocide in the former Yugoslavia across disparate social spheres. This relativism works not by denying or revising the facts of genocide (although it takes that form in some cases⁸⁰), but by equating different kinds of aggression in the Balkans, by stressing some facts over and above others, by obfuscating facts about genocide in the Balkans, and by refusing to assign differential responsibility to individuals or groups for the commission of acts of war,

crimes against humanity, and genocide. Preexisting relativistic thought structures guide subsequent relativistic interpretations which actively proscribe moral analysis of genocide and war in the region. Theory with normative intent is deviant in cynical culture.

Western policy toward Bosnia is grounded in a commitment to a form of rationality which excludes moral analysis of the conflict. Bosnia was an historical event which crystallized and amplified the pervasiveness tendency toward the expression of cynical reason in late modernity. A central expression of this tendency is the relativistic accounts of the war and genocide in Bosnia that circulated through academic, mass media, and political discourse. Such relativism has hindered the application of consensually defined normative frameworks as guidelines for political and military action in the Balkans. If any normative commitments were made at all by political organizations, they tended to be more to the norms and values of the organizations themselves rather than to more universal normative frameworks.⁸¹ Yet, in terms of the practical dimension of a critical theory with moral intent, it is precisely such universal norms that ought to be the basis for political responses to crises such as those that have occurred in Bosnia or Rwanda. In a recent interview, Jürgen Habermas notes that the intervention against Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War, while clearly motivated by US interests, was also justifiable when measured against a standard of rationally derived norms of international conduct.⁸² In this case, the norm guiding concerted Western military intervention was, ostensibly, that military aggression against weaker states would be countered by armed intervention. In spite of the existence of an international norm which strongly proscribes genocide, Western non-intervention to stop genocide in Bosnia was justified by noting the lack of definable US strategic or material interests in the region. Together with this *realpolitik* stance of officialdom, stood the relativistic interpretations of intellectuals. These interpretations, however, were at odds with interpretations guided by humane universal values which have as their practical concern the protection of the victims of genocide.

In the Bosnian war, relativism was the driving force for the emergence of a form of revisionism which worked to create an ambiguous definition of the situation and which, in turn, thwarted military intervention. The consequence of knowing the truth is decisive action, while the consequence of doubt, spawned as it is by relativistic thinking, is appeasement.

Notes

¹ Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Essays from Damaged Life* (London: Verso, 1974), p. 108.

² Thus, for instance, the invasions of the newly independent states of Slovenia and Croatia by Serbia and the Yugoslav National Army were prompted by US policy statements that supported the maintenance of the Yugoslav federation, just as the Croatian liberation of Serb-occupied Krajina four years later was facilitated by the knowledge that the US would not object to such an action.

³ See, for instance, Theodor Adorno, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Norton, 1969); Erich Fromm, *The Working Class in Weimar Germany: a Psychological and Sociological Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984); and Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, (New York: Continuum, 1982). On propaganda, see Theodor Adorno, "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda" in Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (eds.) *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (New York: Continuum, 1982), pp. 118-132.

⁴ One wonders to what extent these issues will be explored by social scientists, since the war and genocide in the Balkans were not of the same magnitude as World War II or the Holocaust. Nor is there any real infrastructure for Balkan studies that would ensure that the causes of the conflict will be explored in-depth. Sociologists are ill-equipped to explore these issues, although sociological theories and methods have begun to be used to explore some dimensions of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. See, for instance, Randy Hodson, "National Tolerance in the Former Yugoslavia", in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 99, No. 6 (May 1994), p. 1534 -1558; Dleško Sekulić, Garth Massey, and Randy Hodson, "Who Were the Yugoslavs? Failed Sources of a Common Identity in the Former Yugoslavia", in *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (February 1994), pp. 83 - 97; and Stjepan Meštrović, *Habits of the Balkan Heart: Social Character and the Fall of Communism* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993).

⁵ See, for instance, three recent essays by Jean Baudrillard, "No Pity for Sarajevo;" "The West's Serbianization;" and "When the West Stands in for the Dead," in Thomas Cushman and Stjepan G. Meštrović (eds.), *This Time We Knew: Western Responses to Genocide in Bosnia* (New York and London, 1996), pp. 79-89 and Stjepan Meštrović, *The Balkanization of the West* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994).

⁶ S. N. Eisenstadt, "Barbarism and Modernity," *Society*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (May 1996), p. 31.

⁷ There are many examples of this which could be cited, but a particularly interesting one is found in a letter to the editor of *The New York Review of Books* ("Letter to the Editor", 21 December 1995, p. 85) by *New York Times* journalist David Binder. Responding to a critical article about indicted war criminal General Ratko Mladić by Robert Block, Binder writes: "I strongly wish to disassociate myself from his [Block's] assessment of the general as a crazed killer. Until compelling evidence to the contrary surfaces, I will continue to view Mladić as a superb profes-

sional, an opinion voiced by senior American, British, French, and Canadian military officers who have met him or followed his career and who are better qualified to judge him than either Block or I," "Letter to the Editor", *New York Review of Books*, 21 December 1995, p. 85.

⁸ In this respect, the critical theory presented here owes much to psychoanalysis and to the particular relation of psychoanalysis and ethics put forth by Lewis S. Feuer in *Psychoanalysis and Ethics* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1955).

⁹ There are many definitions of genocide, but the standard definition that has been used as the basis for the UN Geneva Conventions on war crimes and which is the basis for the UN War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague is from Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944), p. 79: "By 'genocide' we mean the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group. This new word, coined by the author to denote an old practice in its modern development, is made from the ancient Greek word *genos* (race, tribe) and the Latin *cide* (killing), thus corresponding in its formation to such words as tyrannicide, homicide, infanticide, etc. Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be the disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of a national group."

¹⁰ Roger Cohen, "CIA Report Finds Serbs Guilty in Majority of Bosnia War Crimes," *New York Times*, 9 March 1995, p. A1. Cohen notes that: "The report makes nonsense of the view—now consistently put forward by Western European governments and intermittently by the Clinton Administration—that the Bosnian conflict is a civil war for which guilt should be divided between Serbs, Croats and Muslims rather than a case of Serbian aggression. . . . 'To those who think the parties are equally guilty, this report is pretty devastating,' one official said. 'The scale of what the Serbs did is of a different order. But more than that, it makes clear, with concrete evidence, that there was a conscious, coherent, and systematic Serbian policy to get rid of Muslims through murders, torture and imprisonment.'"

¹¹ See, for instance, United States Congress. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. *Hearings Before the CSCE in Europe, One Hundred Third Congress, First Session, War Crimes and the Humanitarian Crisis in the Former Yugoslavia* (Washington, DC.: Government Printing Office, 25 January 1993).

¹² See, for instance, specific reports from August 1992 and April 1993.

¹³ The conference of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe issued a statement on 4 April 1995 which quotes Chairman Chris Smith, Republican Congressman from New Jersey, as noting that "the State Department human rights

report refers to genocide in Bosnia." See also "Ethnic Cleansing—And a Cry for Help from Bosnia," *Newsweek*, 17 August 1992, pp. 16-27; Tom Post, "A Pattern of Rape," *Newsweek*, 11 January 1993, pp. 32-6; John F. Burns, "Bosnian Survivors Tell of Mass Ethnic Killings: Comparisons With Nazis Are Drawn as Attacks Rage in the Republic," *New York Times*, 21 May 1992, p. A28; Laura Silber, "The Street Was a River of Blood," *Washington Post*, 28 May 1992, p. A1; Roy Gutman, "Ethnic Cleansing: Yugoslavs Try to Deport 1,800 Muslims to Hungary," *Newsday*, 3 July 1992, p. 5; and Roy Gutman, *A Witness to Genocide: The Pulitzer Prize-winning Dispatches on the "Ethnic Cleansing" of Bosnia* (New York: Macmillan, 1993).

¹⁴ "Serbs Implementing Policy of Rape, Says UN Study," *The Dallas Morning News*, 22 March 1995, p. A12. For additional accounts of systematic mass rape of Croatian and Bosnian women, see Alexandra Stiglmeier, (ed.), *Mass Rape: The War Against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994); Beverly Allen, *Rape Warfare: The Hidden Genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); and Draga Kovačić-Kovačić, Vera Folnegović-Smalc, and Ana Marusić, "Rape, Torture, and Traumatization of Bosnian and Croatian women: Psychological Sequelae," in *Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, Vol. 65, No. 3 (July 1995), pp. 428-433.

¹⁵ Crimes committed against Serbs include summary executions of soldiers and civilians, torture and mistreatment of prisoners in detention, arbitrary arrests and disappearances, destruction of civilian property and robbery, killing, assault and harassment of journalists included are perhaps best documented by Helsinki Watch in an extensive and well-documented "Letter to Croatian President Franjo Tudjman," Vol. 4, Issue 4 (13 February 1996). For a detailed scholarly description and analysis of the nature and causes of war crimes and atrocities committed by Croatian and Muslim forces in Bosnia, see Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of "Ethnic Cleansing"* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), pp. 123-138.

¹⁶ Thus, writing early on in the conflict in September 1991, Human Rights Watch noted that "The majority of abuses committed by the Croats involve discrimination against Serbs: the Croats' beating of prisoners in police custody and their failure to rigorously prosecute a killing are also serious violations. The abuses committed by the Serbs involve physical maltreatment — including the beating and use of electric shocks against prisoners — and egregious abuses against civilians and medical personnel, including the use of human shields and the taking of hostages. The Yugoslav army is also committing serious human rights violations by attacking civilian targets in coordination with the Serbian insurgents. Recent examples of such attacks occurred during the week of 19 August, when the Yugoslav army attacked civilian targets in Osijek and Vukovar," Human Rights Watch/ Helsinki, "Yugoslavia: Human Rights Abuses in the Croatian Conflict," Vol. 3, Issue 14 (September 1991), p. 27.

¹⁷ Brendan Simms, "Review of *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of 'Ethnic Cleansing'*" by Norman Cigar (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M Press, 1995) in *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (1996), p. 576.

¹⁸ Patrick Moore, "Milošević's War: The Tide Turns," in *Transition: Events and*

Issues in the Former Soviet Union and East Central and Southeastern Europe, Vol. 1, Number 20 (3 November 1995), p. 5.

¹⁹ Dorothy Smith, *Conceptual Practices of Power: A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990), p. 12.

²⁰ Two most notable examples of such critiques are the works of Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987) and William J. Bennett, *The De-valuation of America: the Fight for Our Culture and Our Children* (New York: Summit Books, 1992).

²¹ This important distinction between moral relativism and cultural relativism is made clearly and compellingly by Daniele Conversi, "Moral Relativism and Equidistance in British Attitudes to the War in the Former Yugoslavia," in Cushman and Meštrović (eds.), *This Time We Knew*, p. 246. Conversi establishes a point that is central to this paper, namely, that equivocation and equidistance in historical interpretation are a consequence of moral relativism.

²² Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 399-404.

²³ See, for instance, Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); and *Holocaust Denial in France: Analysis of a Unique Phenomenon* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Faculty of the Humanities, Project for the Study of Anti-Semitism, 1995); as well as Deborah Lipstadt's work *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York: Free Press, 1993) which provides a critique of what she refers to as "immoral equivalence" which denies the fact that the Nazis were the main aggressors during World War II. Such equivalence seeks to "understand" the "German side of the story" by examining their supposed case against the Jews. In similar fashion, equivalence works in the Balkan situation by giving voice to the Serbian argument that Muslims, the principal victims of genocide in the Balkan War, are Islamic terrorists and fundamentalists who seek to re-establish "Turkic hegemony" over Serbs.

²⁴ Ernest Gellner, "La Trahison des La Trahison des Clercs", in Ian Maclean, Alan Montefiore, and Peter Winch (eds.), *The Political Responsibility of Intellectuals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 23-24.

²⁵ Karl Mannheim, "Conservative Thought", in Kurt H. Wolff (ed.), *From Karl Mannheim* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction, 1993 [1953]), p. 261.

²⁶ Using a Mannheimian approach to explain relativistic thought styles is odd in the sense that relativism is the charge that is most often raised in criticism of Mannheim's approach. This is a complex issue. I consider it ironic, rather than contradictory, to use Mannheim to ground a critique of relativistic thought styles in relation to the war in Bosnia. Mannheim himself sees the task of the sociology of knowledge not to deny the possibility of absolute truth, but to increase the possibility of objectivity in the pursuit of knowledge: "The problem is not how we arrive at a non-perspectivistic picture, but how, by juxtaposing the various points of view, each perspective may be recognized as such and thereby a new level of objectivity attained" (quoted in A.P. Simonds, *Karl Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978] pp. 179-180). The best defense of Mannheim against the charge of relativism can be found in Simonds' work.

- ²⁷ Ernest Gellner, *Relativism and the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 84.
- ²⁸ There is, as yet, no complete English-language treatment of the Ustasha period. While uncritical of Partisan atrocities in World War II, Richard West offers a detailed account of the scope and ferocity of the Ustasha terror. See *Tito and The Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1993), pp. 77-102.
- ²⁹ Franjo Tudjman, *Bespuća povijesne zbiljnosti: rasprava o povijesti i filozofiji zlosilja* (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1989).
- ³⁰ Article 15 of the Croatian Constitution states, though, that "Members of all nations and minorities shall have equal rights in the Republic of Croatia. Members of all nations and minorities shall be guaranteed freedom to express their nationality, freedom to use their language and script, and cultural autonomy." A critical examination of Serbian mistatements about the content of the Croatian Constitution (and the acceptance of those misstatements by prominent Western intellectuals) can be found in Slaven Letica, "The 'West Side Story' of the Collapse of Yugoslavia and the Wars in Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina," in Cushman and Meštrović (eds.), *This Time We Knew*, pp. 178-180.
- ³¹ Vesna Pusić, "A Country by Any Other Name: Transition and Stability in Croatia and Yugoslavia", in *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Fall 1992), pp. 258-259.
- ³² The term "symbolic violence" is used by Pierre Bourdieu in another sense to describe the symbolic processes of domination of which actors are unaware. See Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, trans. from French by Richard Nice, (London: Sage, 1990.) I use the term in a less theoretically specific way to describe symbolic action of which actors are quite aware and which causes them to react.
- ³³ For the details of the Serbo-Croat War, see Norman Cigar, "The Serbo-Croatian War, 1991-1992, in Stjepan G. Mestrovic (ed.), *Genocide After Emotion: The Postemotional Balkan War* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995). For details on the salient traits of the war and its consequences for Croatia and Croatsians, see Igor Primoratz, "The War Against Croatia: Salient Traits," in *Journal of Croatian Studies*, Vols. 32/33 (1992), pp. 91-111.
- ³⁴ Bette Denich, "Dismembering Yugoslavia: Nationalist Ideologies and the Symbolic Revival of Genocide," in *The American Ethnologist*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (May 1994), pp. 367-390.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 368.
- ³⁶ Primoratz, "The War Against Croatia," pp. 91-111.
- ³⁷ Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 11-12.
- ³⁸ Mark Thompson, "Complete Control," *New Statesman Society* (24 June 1994), p. 17.
- ³⁹ Quoted in Jacques Rupnik, "The Reawakening of European Nationalisms", in *Social Research*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Spring 1993), pp. 58-59.
- ⁴⁰ "The Road to Sarajevo", Interview with Radovan Karadžić, in *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Fall 1992), p. 50.
- ⁴¹ "Statement of the Government of the FR of Yugoslavia on the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Victory over Fascism", in *Yugoslav Survey*, Vol. 36, No. 2

(1995), p. 4 (emphasis added).

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴³ Paula Franklin Lytle, "U.S. Policy Toward the Demise of Yugoslavia: The 'Virus of Nationalism,'" in *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Fall 1992), pp. 304-305.

⁴⁴ Ivo Banac, "The Fearful Asymmetry of War: The Causes and Consequences of Yugoslavia's Demise," in *Daedalus*, Vol. 121, No. 2 (Spring 1992), p. 155.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁴⁶ Ante Čuvalo, "Croatian Nationalism and the Croatian National Movement (1966-1972) in Anglo-American Publications — A Critical Assessment," in *Journal of Croatian Studies*, Vol. 30 (1992), pp. 69-88.

⁴⁷ In very few contemporary accounts of Yugoslavia is the Croatian uprising mentioned as a social movement of resistance, when, in fact, it was an event of immense importance for the Croats themselves as a reference point for all current expressions of self-determination. For a detailed examination of negative Western responses to Croatian nationalism see Čuvalo, "Croatian Nationalism and the Croatian National Movement," pp. 69-88.

⁴⁸ For discussions of the negative imagery of Croatia, see Banac, "The Fearful Asymmetry of War"; Čuvalo, "Croatian Nationalism and the Croatian National Movement"; and Thomas Cushman, "Collective Punishment and Forgiveness: Judgments of Post-Communist National Identities by the 'Civilized' West," in Meštrović (ed.), *Genocide After Emotion*.

⁴⁹ Milica Bakić-Hayden and Robert Hayden, "Orientalist Variations on the Theme 'Balkans': Symbolic Geography in Recent Yugoslav Politics," in *Slavic Review*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Spring 1992), pp. 1-15. *Slavic Review* is regarded as the most prestigious journal in Balkan and East/Central European studies. It is the official journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS). It is worth noting that there were very few articles published in the journal on the dissolution of Yugoslavia and none about the resulting war and its salient traits.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² See Meštrović, *The Balkanization of the West*; and Cushman, "Collective Punishment and Forgiveness". For a phenomenological view of how Croats view their subordinate position in relation to Europe, see the insightful essay by Pavao Pavličić, "Lament over Europe" in *Most/The Bridge: A Journal of Croatian Literature*, Vol. 2 (1994), pp. 5-57.

⁵³ William Gamson, "Hiroshima, The Holocaust, and the Politics of Exclusion," in *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (February 1995), pp. 1-20.

⁵⁴ Iraj Hashim, "Regional Polarization in Postwar Yugoslavia and the Impact on Regional Politics," in Rabia Ali and Lawrence Lifschultz (eds.), *Why Bosnia: Writings on the Balkan War* (Stony Creek, CT: Pamphleteer's Press, 1993), p. 325.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ The most extensive documentation for Serbian orientalism is to be found in Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*, pp. 69-73. For an actual example of such orientalist discourse, which seems to be shared by a number of Western intellectuals, see

Radovan Karadžić, *Bosnia: Un Enjou Tragique* (Lausanne: L'Age d'homme, 1994), pp. 15-17, who constructs the primary identity of Bosnian Muslims as terroristic fundamentalists.

⁵⁷ For an example of sociological attempts to explore culture as an independent variable in explaining social outcomes in the Balkans, see Meštrović, *Habits of the Balkan Heart*.

⁵⁸ Kenneth Burke, *On Symbols and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) p. 180.

⁵⁹ The existence of the same kind of "left-right entente" in Great Britain is discussed by Conversi, "Moral Relativism and Equidistance in British Attitudes", pp. 256-257.

⁶⁰ Charles Boyd, "Making Peace with the Guilty: The Truth about Bosnia," in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 5 (September 1995), pp. 22-38.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 25

⁶³ See for example, Charles Krauthammer, "When Serbs Are Cleansed, Moralists Stay Silent," *International Herald Tribune*, 12-13 August 1995, p. 6. In addition, contrary to the view that Western intellectuals were silent, some very prominent intellectuals were decidedly critical of both the Tadjman regime and its various actions throughout the war. See, for instance, Ivo Banac, "Croatianism: How Franjo Tadjman Led His Country into an Abyss", in *The New Republic* (25 October 1993), pp. 20 - 22; and Ivo Banac, "Ordaining Bosnia's Fate: Shotgun Wedding in the Balkans," in *The Nation*, (23 October 1995), pp. 466-467.

⁶⁴ See, for example, James Petras and Steve Vieux, "Bosnia and the Revival of US Hegemony", in *New Left Review*, No. 218 (July/August 1996), p. 14. Of course, this accusation is meaningless when considered outside of the context of the history of the Serbian invasion and occupation of Krajina, a fact which, if acknowledged, would force the authors to acknowledge that a good number of the "cleansed" Serbs were military personnel, armed by Belgrade, and under the direction of indicted war criminals such as Milan Martić, the leader of the Krajina Serb revolt.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

⁶⁶ There were three published critiques of Boyd's article: Noel Malcolm, "Appease with Dishonor: The Truth About the Balkans", in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 6. (November/December, 1995), pp. 148-150; Norman Cigar, "False Relativism," in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 6 (November/December 1995), pp. 150-151; and David Rieff, "Denying Moral Equivalence" in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 6 (November/December 1995), pp. 151-2.

⁶⁷ *Permanence and Change* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), p. 49.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Joseph Brewda, "Bush Sees No Genocide in Bosnia as Death Toll Rises, in *Executive Intelligence Review*, Vol. 19, No. 35 (September 1992), p. 46.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Quoted in Peter Maas, *Love Thy Neighbor: A Story of War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), p. 255.

⁷⁴ Jean Baudrillard, "The Serbianization of the West," in Cushman and Meštrović (eds.), *This Time We Knew*, pp. 84-86.

⁷⁵ There are a number of recent sociological works which argue this point as their central thesis, albeit in different ways. See Jeffrey Goldfarb, *The Cynical Society: The Culture of Politics and the Politics of Culture in American Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Richard Stivers, *The Culture of Cynicism: American Morality in Decline* (Oxford, UK and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994); and Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

⁷⁶ Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989). For a discussion of the analytical distinction between late modernity and postmodernity, see Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 150. Holocaust denial groups have been enabled by such media as the Internet which allow for the anonymous denial of the Holocaust or the revision of the numbers of people killed. Cyberspace enhances the capacity for revision of historical events because it enables, in Baudrillardian sense, the lifting of signs and symbols from concrete referents. This is not a purely "postmodern" idea. In fact, it forms the basis for modernity theory in sociology and can be found in the most elemental works on modernity which argue that the fundamental characteristic of modernity is exposure to more and more ways of looking at the world. See Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990).

⁷⁷ Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in Donald N. Levine, *On Individuality and Social Forms: Selected Writings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 329-330. While written almost 100 years ago, Simmel could be describing Western intellectuals' ambivalent responses to the parties in the Balkan conflict.

⁷⁸ See, for instance, Max Horkheimer, *Critique of Instrumental Reason: Lectures and Essays Since the End of World War II* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974).

⁷⁹ The specification of cynical reason as the *zeitgeist* of late modernity is most fully developed in Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*.

⁸⁰ Of particular interest is the case of former State Department official George Kenney who resigned from the State Department to protest US policy toward Bosnia. After a period of a few years, Kenney began to reverse his earlier positions to the extent that he engages in revision of the "body counts" in the war. In what can only be described as "genocide revisionism," Kenney sought to reduce the number of Bosnian Muslims actually killed by Serbs during the war. See George Kenney, "Snowed in Bosnia", in *The Nation*, (14 August 1995), pp. 1-3.

⁸¹ This point is made strongly in a recent essay by Michael N. Barnett, "The Politics of Indifference at the United Nations and Genocide in Rwanda and Bosnia," in Cushman and Meštrović (eds.), *This Time We Knew*, pp. 128-162.

⁸² Interview with Jürgen Habermas by Michael Haller in *Past as Future* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

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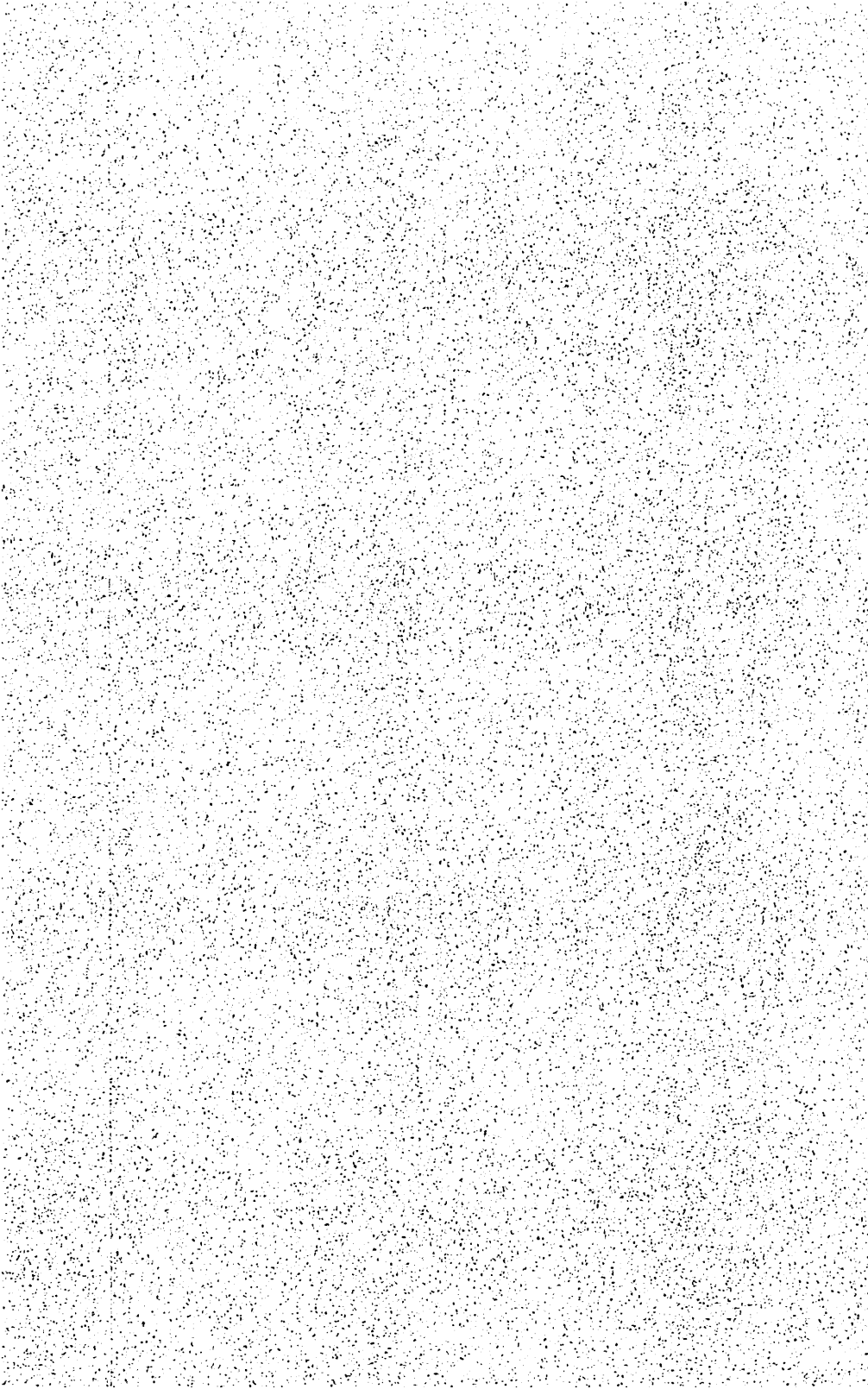
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