

Essay- Review: The post Yugoslav space through four books.

Marcos Ferreira Navarro¹

Biserko, S. (2012). *Yugoslavia's Implosion. The Fatal attraction of Serbian nationalism*. Belgrade: The Norwegian Helsinki Committee.

Lowinger, J. (2011). *Economic Reform and the "double movement" in Yugoslavia: An analysis of Labor unrest and ethno-nationalism in the 1980s*. Charleston: ProQuest, UMI Dissertation Publishing.

Vladislav, S. (2013). *Emigration, Refugees and Ethnic Cleansing. The Death of Yugoslavia, 1991-1999*. Saarbrücken: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.

Vladislav, S. (2012). *Creation of the first Yugoslavia. How the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was established in 1918*. Saarbrücken: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.

On 6 November 2014 Vojislav Seselj, who had been in custody of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia for eleven years, was released. Of course, the release of such a controversial figure like Seselj caused a great controversy, especially in Croatia. Concerning Croatia, the situation in Vukovar is still fragile. The introduction of Cyrillic script was not nice welcomed

¹ Graduado en Historia por la Universidad de León (ULE). Estudiante de la Universidade Nova de Lisboa y la Universidad de Granada. Estudiante del Máster de Formación del Profesorado por la UCML (Campus de Toledo).

by Croatian population in the town, especially by the war veterans who observed this introduction like a treason against their effort to liberate Croatia of the weight of Yugoslavian-Serbian hegemony. Not far away from there, in northeastern Bosnia, more concretely in Tuzla, in February 2014 a demonstration against the tough economic situation of the country brought the first non ethnic-nationality demonstration since the end of the War of Bosnia in November 1995. Eventually, the past August, the first Conference of the Western Balkans was held in Berlin in order to foster the economic and politic collaboration between the former Yugoslav republics plus Albania and accelerate the integration process to the European Union of most of the countries which were at the summit.

Which is the connection point between these different events? Simply, all of them are related with Yugoslavia somehow. My objective with this essay-review is to analyze the importance of Yugoslavia (both its creation and its extinction) in the current events of the Yugoslavia successor states through the next four books: *Emigration, Refugees and Ethnic Cleansing. The Death of Yugoslavia, 1991-1999*; *Yugoslavia's Implosion. The Fatal attraction of Serbian nationalism*; *Economic Reform and the "double movement" in Yugoslavia: An analysis of Labor unrest and ethno-nationalism in the 1980s*; and *Creation of the first Yugoslavia. How the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was established in 1918*. For example, the Vojislav Seselj release and the concerning and worry that his release is causing in the Croatia authorities can be traced and tracked with the examination of the first two books named. The first one written by Vladislav Sotirovic and the other one by Sonja Biserko. Both are Serbian authors, nevertheless their views are totally

opposed like it is going to be seen later. On the other hand, the tough economic situation for majority of people in Bosnia and the **derivative** protests can be analyzed with the book written by Jake Lowinwer. Eventually, the need of collaboration between the Balkan Western countries within some kind of framework can be dissected with the information contained in the work about the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Concerning the first book reviewed *Emigration, Refugees and Ethnic Cleansing. The Death of Yugoslavia, 1991-1999* the first thing to say is that the book deals with the disintegration of Yugoslavia from the ethnic cleansing perspective. Written by Vladislav Sotirovic, it is a good book to analyze the characteristics of the Serbian historiographic regarding such a controversial period like the breakup of Yugoslavia. The book is divided in two different parts. The first one is an explanation about the creation and development of the different national ideas and national movements in the Western Balkans and how these movement and ideas were usually against each other because several national projects embraced the same people and the same territory. The second part deals with the phenomena of the ethnic cleansing. According with Sotirovic, this strategy was used like a tool in order to achieve the construction of “greater state nations”². In other words, the ethnic cleansing had the target to “clean” the “others” to the regions embraced in those “greater projects”. The biggest problem with the analysis of Sotirovic is not that he considers that the breakup of Yugoslavia was uniquely

2 With this Sotirovic means the creation of the Greater Serbia, the Greater Croatia, the Greater Slovenia (known as United Slovenia) and the Greater Albania.

due to the nationalist forces, but the solution that he offers to avoid in the future a new armed confrontation that he sees inevitable if the frontiers are not reformed. Thus, Sotirovic's proposal to prevent a new conflict is the reform of the borderlines. But how would be that possible? According to the Serbian scholar, the frontiers of the successor republics of Yugoslavia should be redrawn following ethnic, historical and moral parameters. Doing so, Sotirovic believes that the relationships between several nationalities are going to ameliorate and the war could be avoided. Nevertheless, there are three problems with the Sotirovic's approach. Firstly, to accomplish what Sotirovic proposes it would be necessary to transfer and place a large amount of population from one territory to another to construct one-ethnic states. Secondly, because the historical right is profoundly ambiguous and it exists more than one right over the same territory. And thirdly, regarding the moral right could be applied for more than one nation over the same territory. Actually, what Sotirovic is proposing as a solution is not a settlement between the former republics of Yugoslavia that permits the republics to establish cordial and friendly relationships, but it is a group of parameters for the establishment of the Greater Serbia.

In contrast with the previous book, the one written by Sonja Biserko is the antithesis. If Sotirovic defended a pro serbian view concerning the breakup of Yugoslavia, Biserko defends a pro western view concerning the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the evolution of the Serbian political sphere. For Biserko, the Serbian nationalism is the unique responsible for what happened in Yugoslavia during the decade of 1990s. In this book the central key is the Biserko's criticism to

the Dobrica Cosic's ideas about the Serbdom and the Serbian nation. Actually, the ideas proposed by Sotirovic in his books are based in ones proposed by Dobrica Cosic when he denounced the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution like an instrument used by Yugoslav Western republics in order to weaken Serbia.

It is extremely interesting to compare those two books and to extrapolate the information reflected in the books to the situation that now is facing Serbia. The country, like the other ones in the region, is seeking to enter in the European Union as soon as possible. Slovenia and Croatia already did it, so Serbia does not want to delay much its entry. However, and this is a difference with other states of the regions, Serbia has a good relationship with Russia, which is not well considered by the European Union, especially after the eruption of Maidan in Ukraine more than one year ago. Thus, the two books represent the contradiction that Serbian politicians (and Serbian population) are currently facing. On the one hand, they are trying to move towards Western. But on the other hand, the ties with Russia are still strong and more importantly, Serbia needs Russia in important fields like the trade or the energy resources. So, the Sotirovic's book reflects on the classic Pan Slavism values which means closer ties with Russia, the most powerful Slavic country, meanwhile the book of Biserko reflects the opposite, it reflects on the Western values that Serbia must pursue and achieve as soon as possible, according to her.

Bosnia i Hercegovina is, at the same time, a failed state and a European Union's colony. That is the reason why Bosnia i Hercegovina is still working under the scheme drew in the Dayton Agreements. Otherwise, it is probable that BiH

does not exist like we currently know it. The politics and the economics of Bosnia i Herzegovina does not work. There are a huge gap between the politcal and economical elites and the rest of the society. This gap produces that the majority of the population do not rely on in their political representatives and look with distrust and hopelessness the economic situation within they have to live or better said, to survive. It was in this context in which the protest of February of 2014 exploded. Thousands of people went to the streets to protest against the lack of jobs, the low salaries and the misery that most of the population is facing in Bosnia i Herzegovina currently. The demonstrators organized themselves in political plenums where everybody had the opportunity to participate if he or she wanted so. Nevertheless, even though the plenums had a great force in the first months of the demonstrations, passed that time their light was burning out until eventually, the plenums dissapeared. In addition, in the Bosnian general election, 2014, the business as usual triumphed again and the most voted parties where those which have an important ethnic component in all their proposals.

The situation lived in Bosnia during the past months is not strange in the region of Western Balkans. Actually, like Jake Lowinwer demonstrated in his book *Economic Reform and the "double movement" in Yugoslavia: An analysis of Labor unrest and ethno-nationalism in the 1980s* the situation in Bosnia 2014 was as equal as it was in Yugoslavia in the decade of 1980s. In this decade, the final one of the existence of Yugoslavia, following the scheme designed by Karl Polanyi, Lowinger argues that the destruction of the Yugoslav common basis is explained as "double movement". On the one hand, there was a group formed by the Federal authorities

and the IMF. On the other hand, there was another group formed by the workers's organizations. The former wanted to establish "self organized market" policies which would convert Yugoslavia from a self-management socialist country into a free market country. That supposed salary cuts, privatizations of enterprises and put the productivity and the profit above the economic and social rights. The latter, reacting against the IMF plans and the privatization of the economy, started a series of mobilizations in order to protect the basis of the economy and the society of Yugoslavia just as Josip Broz "Tito" had designed from 1943. Following the line traced by Polanyi, Jake Lowinger argues that the reforms that the Federal and the IMF authorities tried to implement in Yugoslavia provoked that the workers considered the economic sphere like something not connected with the society, producing a strong wave of strikes during the period studied. The mobilizations in this process clearly showed a class character and not an ethnic-nationalist one. However, why most of the people voted and moved to nationalist parties and ideas that in most of the cases mean denial of the coexistence among different nationalities? The response is simple. Although the worker mobilization had a solidarity character inside of it, it was not able to construct a general movement inside of the Federation. No organizations were created to organize and coordinate different mobilizations throughout the entire territory of former Yugoslavia. Thereby, in the end, the workers did not seek for a federal solution for the maintenance of the socialist model of Yugoslavia. Connecting with this, the opposition of movements between the federal authorities on one side, and the workers on the other side, led to a vacuum of power, where none of the parts

was satisfied. This blocked situation led to a power vacuum in which the nationalist forces took advantage and were able to, firstly, control the demonstrator and then, to convince them that all of the solutions of their problems were in different nationalist-ethnic projects and not in Yugoslavia.

The information written in the Jake Lowinger's book can be used to analyze the current socio-economic and political situation in Bosnia i Herzegovina. After the demonstrations, the situation seems to be as same as it used to be before the demonstrations took place. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the pattern must follow as it went in the case of Yugoslavia. The leftist parties learn the lesson from the demonstrations and now they know that if they want to succeed they must woo voters from all ethnicities and implement serious internal reforms or risk disappearing from Bosnia's political scene altogether. Those parties (or similar ones) are the hope to turn Bosnia from an ethnic-national divided country towards an multi ethnic-national country and if this does not occur, it is probable that Bosnia disappear straight away once the International Community retires its support to Bosnia i Herzegovina.

On the First of December 1918 the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was officially created. One hundred of years later, Yugoslavia does not exist anymore, but it seems to be that the idea of union between the South Slavic people is not as artificial as it was said during the breakup of Yugoslavia in the decade of 1990s. In this sense, the past August was held the first Western Balkan summit in Berlin. The idea was to get more collaboration between the Western Balkans countries in order to expand their possibilities to enter in the short-medium term

in the European Union. This conference ends the discredit that the yugoslavism has been bearing since the disintegration of Yugoslavia. But, why was created Yugoslavia? And how was the process that led to the union of all the south Slavic people (except Bulgarians) under the same state? To respond those two questions it can be used the book written by Vladislav Sotirovic regarding this historical period. The book, written by the Serbian scholar, under the title *Creation of the first Yugoslavia. How the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was established in 1918*, deals with the immediate process of creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In this process was fundamental the outbreak of the First World War and two consequences derivative from this fact. On the one hand, the Austria-Hungary disintegration process, that developed throughout the whole conflict. On the other hand, the irredentism of Italy that threatened the authority of Slovenia and Croatia over the region of Trieste, the Dalmatian Coast and the Istria Peninsula. Those elements pushed the South Slavic representatives in Austria-Hungary to pursue the unification of the Austria-Hungary's South Slavic territories with Serbia, which achieved its independence in 1878 after the Congress of Berlin, and that accepted the Yugoslavian framework for the sake of unity of all Serbian population under the same frontiers. Thus, analyzing the origins of the collaboration between the different regions it is possible to comprehend better the new connections that are currently under construction between the countries of the region, and most importantly, to know what difficulties could appear in the creation of these collaborative bonds.

To sum up this review I want to say that the main objective was not describe

profoundly the contents of the books reviewed, but to connect this books with current affairs that are developing and taking place in some countries of the Western Balkans. I wanted to do so because I reckon it is essential for the Historian to connect the study of History periods with the current affairs. I consider this maneuver like a way to change the mentality and the perception that society has of History from an erudite discipline that does not have great value to a social science that could be truly usefull to analyze and comprehend what happened in the past, but most importantly, to raise a critical awareness and perception in order to be capable of judging and comprehending what occur in the present.

Essay-Review Post Yugoslav Space. Uploaded by. Francisco Fernando Archiducque.Â profoundly the contents of the books reviewed, but to connect this books with current affairs that are developing and taking place in some countries of the Western Balkans. I wanted to do so because I reckon it is essential for the Historian to connect the study of History periods with the current affairs. Post/Yugoslav space. 30 Followers. Recent papers in Post/Yugoslav space. Papers. People. On the Politics of Feminist Knowledge Production in the Post-Yugoslav Space (Review Essay, Aspasia n.11). Review Essay of: Biljana KaÅ¡iÄ, Jelena PetroviÄ, Sandra Prlenda, and Svetlana SlapÄjak, eds., *Feminist Critical Interventions: Thinking Heritage, Decolonising, Crossings*, Zagreb: Red Athena University Press and Centre for Womenâ€™s Studies, more. Review Essay ofÂ Review of the Photographic Exhibition â€œFour Seasons in the Silver Valley: Srebrenica through the Lens of Locals and an Anthropologistâ€, Authors: MarkÃ¡ta SlavkovÃ¡, Ibro and Ibrahim BegiÄ, Charles University Jinonice Building, U KÃ¡Å™e 5, more. Free Book Review Essays samples to help you write excellent academic papers for high school, college, and university. Check out our professional examples to inspire at [EssaysProfessors.com](https://www.essaysprofessors.com).Â He is the writer of four books purposeful on the shifting world of work: New York Times best-seller *A Whole New Mind: why right brainers will rule the future*. Pink's pieces of writing on business and technology *All Brave Sailors*.Â These children have gone through difficult backgrounds, especially unfavorable home *Anna Karenina*. The book *Anna Karenina* is one of the remarkable stories written with a reflection of both tragic and fascinating events.