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InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies

Title

Memory Slain: Recovering Cultural Heritage in Post-war Bosnia

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/28c783b6>

Journal

InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies, 1(2)

ISSN

1548-3320

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Publication Date

2005-06-21

DOI

10.5070/D412000539

Peer reviewed

Introduction

Communities affected by war needlessly lose the lives of their members, normalcy for those left behind, as well as tangible aspects of their cultural heritage. Conflicts between ethnic and religious groups in the former Yugoslavia between 1992 and 1995 found both civilian lives and cultural institutions targeted for annihilation. This paper will first discuss how factions attacked the cultural heritage of other groups, acts that both violated the laws and customs of war and served to destroy these groups' collective memory, both internally and to the outside world. It will then address current ways in which the collective memory of these groups can be reestablished and archived for themselves and the world. Finally, it will end with a proposal that archivists work with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia to establish a system in which evidence set forth in the Tribunal, such as oral testimony, may be preserved and added to a new, replacement Bosnian archive, so that voices that were once silenced may be heard again.

War and Peace: Destruction and Loss in Bosnia

The region encompassing the former Yugoslavia has had more than its share of nationalistic and religious strife and conflict since the medieval period. The former Yugoslavia is made up of a plethora of separate groups distinguished by cultural, linguistic, and religious characteristics (Mojzes, 1994). They include Albanians, Bosnians, Croatians, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbians, Slovenians, and others (Mojzes, 1994). Some of these groups are related to others but see themselves as distinct based upon their nationality (i.e., the geographic area or republic in which they live) (Mojzes, 1994). Led by Josip Broz (known as Tito), Yugoslavia was one nation containing these numerous republics during its communist manifestation in the second half of the twentieth century (Riedlmayer, 1993). Under Tito's régime, overt manifestations of nationalism and religion were proscribed as rivals to the official ideology (Riedlmayer, 1993). Cultural expression, however, was allowed to the extent that it did not pose a political threat to the régime (Riedlmayer, 1993). With Tito's death in 1980 and the subsequent unraveling of communism, nationalism once again rose to prominence in many of the Yugoslavian republics to fill the ideological void (Riedlmayer, 1993). Each republic reacted in its own way. For example, the rise to power of Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia allowed for an extreme nationalist agenda to take hold (Riedlmayer, 1993). On the other hand, Bosnia-Herzegovina strove to maintain its long-standing tradition of multiculturalism, so that religious and

cultural diversity might remain part of the normal fabric of life, particularly in cities like Sarajevo (Riedlmayer, 2001).

Yet, Bosnia's peaceful multiculturalism was not to last. The former Yugoslavian republics began to break apart as nationalists secured control and amplified their message of separation. Slovenia first, and then Croatia, gained their independence and became independent states in 1992 after struggle with the Yugoslav army that was then controlled by Serbia (Riedlmayer, 1993). At this stage, Bosnia-Herzegovina decided to put the prospect of its own independence to a vote one month later, with the vast majority of Bosnians voting in favor of independence (Riedlmayer, 1993). During a mass demonstration for peace following Bosnia's parliamentary declaration of independence, the Yugoslav army and Serbian nationalist militants opened fire on a crowd of civilians, killing and wounding many (Riedlmayer, 1993). The army commenced shelling Sarajevo the next day, beginning the violent conflict between the Serbian-controlled former Yugoslavia and a newly independent Bosnia (Riedlmayer, 1993).

The Serbian onslaught, driven by extreme nationalism and its concomitant desire for "ethnic cleansing," targeted for attack not only people of other ethnic and religious groups but also their books, libraries, archives, museums, religious sites, and historic architecture (Riedlmayer, 2001). The deliberate destruction of cultural heritage throughout Bosnia thusly enabled the attackers to take away much more than the lives of their victims, as it also sought to rob people's identities and traces of the opposition's humanity. One scholar describes the widespread destruction of cultural heritage in Sarajevo during the summer of 1992 as "the largest single incident of book burning in modern history" (Riedlmayer, 2001, p. 273). Bosnia's National Library, which contained an estimated 1.5 million volumes, was torched and gutted (Riedlmayer, 2001). Lost to the fire were almost all (approximately 90 percent) of the main research collections of the University of Sarajevo, 478 manuscript codices, 600 sets of periodicals, over 155,000 rare books, archival materials, and special collections, as well as a complete set of all books, newspapers, and journals published in Bosnia since the mid-nineteenth century (Riedlmayer, 2001).

A few months earlier, Sarajevo's Oriental Institute was also torched to the ground, reducing to ashes the Institute's 5,263 bound Islamic manuscripts, 200,000-document Ottoman archive and registry, and 300 microfilm reels of Bosnian manuscripts held privately or by other institutions (Riedlmayer, 2001). The Institute's catalog and reference collection, which was the most comprehensive special library on that subject in the region, were also destroyed (Riedlmayer, 2001). In addition to these losses, other prominent cultural and religious buildings targeted included the Bosnian National Museum and ten of the sixteen faculty libraries of the University of Sarajevo (Riedlmayer, 2001). This cultural destruction paralleled the ethnic cleansing and mass killings of the people

in Sarajevo's communities, the individuals whose collective memory was once contained within the crumbled walls of their cultural institutions. The scraps of items and remnants of documents that remained in this tortured society were at times reconstituted by the oppressed for their immediate needs. A death certificate previously housed in a government archive, for example, becomes a cigarette wrapper:

The cigarette I am smoking now was wrapped in a paper confirming someone's death: the cause of death is written on it, and you can see the signature and official stamp of the physician. I admit that this is the last piece of paper a cigarette should be wrapped in; at the same time, I must admit there isn't much left that can shock me (Mehmedinoić, 1998, p. 89).

Sarajevo was not the only part of Bosnia bereft of its people and heritage. For example, Janja, a small town in eastern Bosnia, was the site of a particularly brutal ethnic cleansing campaign led by a Serbian paramilitary unit (Riedlmayer, 2001). Once the paramilitary unit decimated the town's inhabitants by killing them, sending them to concentration camps, or otherwise expelling them from the area, the unit then destroyed two of the city's mosques, including the major central mosque and its private library, which contained about 100 Islamic manuscripts and was considered the town's cultural treasure (Riedlmayer, 2001). In another example, the Bosnian Croat nationalist militia forced the Muslim men of Stolac, a small town in Herzegovina, into concentration camps and terrorized the rest of the population. The militia then proceeded to destroy original manuscripts, unique documents, and community records from the Library of the Muslim Community Board, the libraries of the town's mosques, and various private collections (Riedlmayer, 2001).

In this way, Bosnia's archives, libraries, museums, and other cultural institutions were specifically targeted for obliteration and a concerted campaign "to eliminate the material evidence—books, documents, and works of art—that could remind future generations that people of different ethnic and religious traditions once shared a common heritage of life in Bosnia" (Riedlmayer, 2001, pp. 278-279). As Miriam Valencia (2002) notes, in this war "for the power to define the ethnic composition of the country, cultural institutions that offered a different vision of that country's society had to be tamed or destroyed by the aggressor" so that the aggressor's own visions could be erected in their stead (p. 7). This systematic destruction of cultural heritage was a violation of multiple international laws, treaties, and customs, including the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (United Nations, 1954a) and the 1949 Geneva Conventions (United Nations, 1954b), along with their protocols. The destruction of documentary records inhibits legal

claims to land and other property once the conflict has ceased but it also makes the pursuit of justice, including the punishment of the perpetrators of this destruction, a much more difficult undertaking (Valencia, 2002; Riedlmayer, 1995). At its conclusion, the hostilities in the early 1990s found approximately 5000 civilians killed, 800,000 people expelled from their homelands, and 60,000 homes, as well as hundreds of mosques and historic buildings destroyed (Paris, 2000).

Remembrance of Things Past: The Manipulation of Memory

The tactics of human and cultural destruction used by the various factions within the former Yugoslavia are stark and disturbing, but are by no means unusual in violent conflict, and have been used since in Kosovo and other areas of the region. Obliterating monuments, buildings, archives, and books further dehumanizes an already oppressed and diminished people, denying them not only their lives and normalcy, but also their identities and their abilities to remember. It is made through "the active construction of present knowledge out of continually evolving informational materials together with the elaboration on data relationships collected in the past" (Brothman, 2001, p. 71). Randall C. Jimerson (2003) discusses the concept of memory as four intersecting types: personal memory, collective (social) memory, archival memory, and historical memory. According to (Jimerson, p. 93), personal memory is based on individual experience and can be manifested through oral or written testimony. Collective memory deals with shaping the self-identity of social groups and it is often based on myth, or over-simplification, and is constantly reinterpreted to suit current needs. Archival memory enables memory to attach itself to tangible forms, such as artifacts, documents, and even geographic sites. Historical memory uses the tools of archival and personal memory to counterbalance collective memory, by interpreting the past based on evidence and analysis (Jimerson, 2003). These interacting concepts of memory provide a vocabulary with which to discuss the loss of lives and cultural heritage in Bosnia and how this destruction may affect perception and history.

Memory has played an "overpowering role" in the conflicts within the former Yugoslavia (Bet-El, 2002, p. 222). During these conflicts in the early 1990s, personal, collective, and archival memories were all manipulated so that historical memory too might be changed. The various ethnic groups have used memory as "both a legitimising tool of destruction and as a defensive barrier of self-justification," and still do so today in continuing conflicts such as those in Kosovo (Bet-El, 2002, p. 221). In this context, memory involves each group remolding historical information to recreate identities, both their own and those of

other ethnic and religious groups in the region (Brothman, 2001). As noted, personal memory was directly manipulated and lost through the mass killings and expulsions of the population. After all, how can the stories of other groups be told when the people themselves who maintained those stories are gone? Another weapon used in the Bosnian conflict was the destruction of cultural heritage sites and the archival record in an effort to eradicate the collective and archival memories of, and about, other ethnic and religious groups. These physical manifestations of memory can be seen as a way of "extending the temporal and spatial range of human communication" (Foote, 1990, p. 379), and so what was destroyed therefore limits access to the past and prevents the unfolding of future cultural memories. For example, the sites where destroyed churches and mosques once stood throughout Bosnia were flattened into mud fields, and even replanted with new grass and foliage, as if the monuments of the communities displaced from those areas never existed (Hedges, 2002; Riedlmayer, 1995). Consequently, this eradication makes it seem as though the communities related to those institutions never existed themselves. The communities that lose their mosques and churches may then sanctify the landscape itself as a testament to their extreme loss. Regardless, the site is transformed into a place of even greater meaning, even if the meaning found there is drastically different based upon the varying perceptions of each group. Collective memory is, once again, split along cultural lines.

All of this destruction amounts to a "state-sponsored forgetting" (Hedges, 2002, p. 72). Though remembering and forgetting are both essential elements of memory and necessarily reliant on one another, it is the forcible forgetting of a culture and a people that is troublesome. The displaced are denied their homes and their rights to remember where they once belonged (Hedges, 2002). One Serb-appointed mayor said of his town that once had a dozen mosques, "There never were any mosques in Zvornik" (Hedges, 2002, p. 76). Nationalists use these strategies to deny that any groups other than their group ever lived in the towns and cities that they claim as their own. Yet the heritage and memories of the other groups are never entirely eradicated. Such violence and tragedy is imprinted in the minds of survivors and on the landscape itself (Foote, 1990) and it is possible to return them to the collective memory, for whether it be a positive or negative force, these memories linger. In Tito's Yugoslavia, memories of long-standing ethnic and religious strife were suppressed, but upon their return in the wake of rampant nationalism, they were more potent than ever (Bet-El, 2002). Slobodan Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman, the then-leaders of Serbia and Croatia, respectively, both gave speeches where they turned the collective memories of their own groups into weapons of destruction (Bet-El, 2002). Memory is inextricably linked to power, and power uses memory—all types of memory, but especially collective memory—as a method of self-preservation, both in the

present and in manufacturing its own legacy for the future (Blouin, 1999; Jimerson, 2003).

As the oppressed are compelled to forget, those in power are able to rewrite and manipulate history in the context of war so that they may tear down one national identity and replace it with another (Hedges, 2002). The cultural heritage found in libraries, archives, and museums provides a sense of identity to oppressed and minority groups. If the past is comprised of surviving physical artifacts, the destruction of the artifacts of others is then able to ostensibly erase their identities and to control historical memory in general (Brothman, 2001). The decisive absence of this cultural heritage, with its concomitant memory and documentation, skews the historical record, corrupts it in such a way that it can no longer be relied upon as a repository for the collective memory (Blouin, 1999). Nor does it seem accurate as archival memory, because of the assumption that "if something does not appear in the record, it does not exist, and its corollary—it appears in the record, therefore it exists" (Piggott & McKemish, 2002). Historical memory should be analyzed not only through what exists in the collective and archival memory, but also through a recognition of what is absent. This is especially true in the context of war, violence, and destruction.

After destroying the cultural heritage of other groups, oppressors are then able to fill the vacancy with their own grandiose nationalist myths. If only the oppressor's records remain, the other groups either cease to exist or appear only "as objects of the activities and subjects of the record, rather than as parties to transactions," so that their own perspectives and activities are lost to archival, and thus historical, memory (Piggott & McKemish, 2002, p. 10). The stress and confusion brought on by war may be so intense that individuals start to doubt their own perceptions and the rewritten history of the oppressors turns from nationalist myth into an inaccurate but powerful collective memory. Newspapers and other media publish entirely different versions of the same events, depending on their sources and perspectives, and block any information unfavorable to their cause (Mojzes, 1994). Some historians and writers chose extreme nationalism over more intellectual pursuits, by creating contributions of their own to the nationalist mythologies, thereby further shaping the collective memories created by the oppressors (Mojzes, 1994; Paris, 2000; Brothman, 2001). Of course, books can also lead to a greater understanding and tolerance between groups. In the case of Bosnia's books, nationalists burned them because they reflected the multiculturalism and inter-group cohabitation that was Bosnian society before the war (Riedlmayer, 1995).

Even those who are able to remember their pre-war lives may abdicate those memories in their struggles for day-to-day survival: "In Sarajevo, it only makes sense to remember the day that's just passed" (Mehmedinoić, 1998, p. 67). But if the various types of memory have all been obliterated, what is left of the

cultures and people who once existed there? Where are their stories now? A Bosnian poet writes that without his scrapbooks, "it was as if proof of my past had been wiped out" (Mehmedinović, 1998, p. 66). What, then, of the loss of the "scrapbooks" of an entire culture? Collective, personal, and archival memory are all linked in this systematic destruction of life and culture so that historical memory too may be eradicated and written anew to conform to the ideologies of those currently in power. Allowing one view of history and culture to dominate inevitably excludes other views, which can lead to the loss of the collective memory of entire cultural groups (Valencia, 2002). This, in turn, deprives a culture, as well as the world at large, of pieces of its historical memory.

Great Expectations: The Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage

Though the destruction of Bosnia's cultural heritage was intense and widespread, since hostilities have ended people throughout Bosnia and the rest of the world have been making an effort to preserve the memory of Bosnia's multicultural history and society. The librarians of the National University Library of Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, are attempting to rebuild their institution and its collections (Riedlmayer, 2001). Even the national libraries in Slovenia and Croatia are interacting with their Bosnian counterparts and sharing collection information and expertise with one another (Riedlmayer, 2001). Since 1995, Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), in conjunction with the University of Michigan library, has compiled online bibliographies of works produced in or about the subject of Bosnia (Riedlmayer, 2001). This project identifies North American libraries that own Bosnia-related works that no longer exist in Bosnian collections, so that replacement copies may be provided to Bosnia's national library (Riedlmayer, 2001). Also based in the United States is a book donations program, which has donated more than 30,000 books and journals to Bosnian libraries (Riedlmayer, 2001). In addition to these cooperative projects, Bosnia's own publishing industry has been reissuing hundreds of editions of classic works, as well as anthologies of Bosnian literature and new studies of Bosnian culture and history (Riedlmayer, 2001).

On the other hand, efforts to reconstruct some of the unique manuscripts and archival documents lost in the war are a much more difficult task. The challenge has been taken up by a team of Bosnian and American scholars who have established the Bosnian Manuscript Ingathering Project for this very purpose (Riedlmayer, 2001). This project primarily seeks copies in alternate media (e.g., microfilm, photocopies, or other facsimiles) of the original manuscripts and documents destroyed during the war that were reproduced by foreign scholars who had been researching the materials before their destruction (Riedlmayer,

2001). For example, a retired professor from the University of Toronto recently sent the project a packet of about 360 pages of high-quality photocopies of Bosnian manuscript codices once in the collection of the Sarajevo Oriental Institute (Riedlmayer, 2001). In addition, groups such as the International Council on Archives and UNESCO have been assisting the national archive of Bosnia-Herzegovina in their efforts to rebuild their archive service across the country (UNESCO, 1999).¹

Some restorations of architectural sites, including mosques, churches, and bridges, are being conducted with funding from the World Bank. Bosnians may also wish to seek the assistance of UNESCO's Memory of the World program, whose goal is "securing the survival of the heritage and facilitating access to this collective memory so that it is within the grasp of as many people as possible," in their efforts to reconstruct their cultural heritage (Abdelaziz, 1995).

Technological advancements can also play a role. By placing catalogs and finding aids of research collections and archival materials on the Internet, these resources can be further disseminated, which itself combats practices of ethnic cleansing and destruction of cultural heritage (Valenica, 2002). In addition, the Bosnian Manuscript Ingathering Project is currently compiling a database of copies of the destroyed original manuscripts that will eventually become a virtual online collection that will span the globe and, to some extent, resurrect the materials lost to the flames of war (Valencia, 2002). Archival and collective memory can be at least partially restored with the success of projects such as these.

Crime and Punishment: Pursuing Justice and Memory

Another route for recovering memory is through the oral testimony and evidence presented in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the United Nations-sponsored *ad hoc* war crimes tribunal with jurisdiction over these conflicts. The major goal of the Tribunal is "to bring the peoples torn apart by the war together again, by helping them to achieve a catharsis through clarifying the issue of guilt for wartime atrocities" (Fatić, 2000, pp. 45-46). The information brought forth through the Tribunal's investigations and prosecutions can be added to Bosnia's cultural archives so that the personal memories of those who testify can enter into the historical memory of the region. Though full recovery of such memory may not be possible, the Tribunal may act as a forum for "some partial rehabilitation, some recognition of the denial and perversion, some new way given to speak" (Hedges, 2002, p. 141). To successfully accomplish these difficult tasks of reconciliation and recovery of memory, the Tribunal's work must have high levels of legality, impartiality, and

legitimacy, and also should be perceived by the public as having these qualities (Fatić, 2000).

The Statute of the Tribunal (ICTY Statute) balances the protection of witnesses with the public nature of the trial and the accused's rights, so that its trials are seen as fair in the eyes of justice (ICTY Statute, 2003, Articles 20-23). Evidence for the Tribunal is gathered by the prosecutor, who can initiate investigations of her own accord or on the basis of information obtained from any source, including governments and nongovernmental organizations. The prosecutor must then assess the information to determine whether there is a sufficient basis on which to proceed with an indictment (ICTY Statute, 2003, Article 18(1)). The prosecutor has the power to question suspects, victims, and witnesses, and to collect evidence and conduct on-site investigations (ICTY Statute, 2003, Article 18(2)). State governments are required to cooperate with the Tribunal in their investigations and prosecutions, including in identifying and locating people, taking testimony and producing evidence, serving documents, arresting or detaining people, and surrendering or transferring an accused person (ICTY Statute, 2003, Article 29).

The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia Rules of Procedure and Evidence (ICTY Rules) are another important aspect guarding the reliability, to an acceptable legal standard, of evidence presented to the Tribunal. The rules require that any relevant evidence with probative value should be admitted, unless its probative value is substantially outweighed by the need to ensure a fair trial (ICTY Rules, 2003, Rule 89). The Tribunal itself may request that the authenticity of evidence obtained out of court be verified (ICTY Rules, 2003, Rule 89). Witnesses may testify either orally, or if justice allows and certain parameters are met, in written form (ICTY Rules, 2003, Rules 89, 92 *bis*). For example, a written statement from a person who has subsequently died or from a person who can no longer be found with reasonable diligence may be admitted into evidence (ICTY Rules, 2003, Rule 92 *bis* (C)). In addition, evidence of a consistent pattern of conduct relevant to serious violations of human rights laws may also be admitted in the interests of justice (ICTY Rules, 2003, Rule 93 (A)). These legal requirements are necessary if the testimony and other evidence available to the Tribunal may be added to a cultural archive. The oral testimony and other evidence presented in the Tribunal must be seen as reliable both in the context of the Tribunal and the historical memory. Even with these safeguards, problems may still arise. For example, the accused may not want to speak because his first priority is going to be, in most cases, his desire to exculpate himself. And the victims too may not want to relive the horrors that they endured for many reasons, including fear of retribution, privacy concerns, not wishing to reopen wounds, or the simple human desire to move on. Yet the oral testimony and other evidence available through the Tribunal's judicial process can be just one more

piece of the puzzle in an effort to recover the memories of the various ethnic and religious groups of Bosnia, on the way to some form of reconciliation between groups.

If reconciliation is to occur, however, archivists must be involved with the Tribunal's storehouse of testimony and evidence, once it has served its function in the cases before the Tribunal. Archivists may seek to gather this evidence, accumulating the oral testimony of witnesses, in particular (as they might do with oral histories), as a personal memory-based supplement to the post-war archival information still existing in other forms. Though there may be problems with a strict reliance on personal memory in general, the oral testimonies and other evidence before the Tribunal have been subjected to strict legal standards of reliability in the context of the trials in which they were used. While this does not guarantee historical authenticity, oral testimony and other evidence presented before the Tribunal, when combined with archival research, may be crucial to a more thorough understanding of still-extant written information (Swain, 2003). In addition, this could be the only remaining way to learn about information no longer existing in the archival record (Swain, 2003). These oral testimonies may be used by historians, scholars, and the people themselves as they seek to understand a multifaceted society, whose collective memory has been manipulated and violated, a society that has been denied much of its documentary record.

Conclusion

Just as sites and pieces of cultural heritage were targeted for destruction in Bosnia's systematic ethnic cleansing campaigns, so too can the same cultural elements "become politicized weapons and resources in the exercise of the resistance to the use and abuse of power" (Piggott & McKemmish, 2002, p. 7). The current projects seeking to reconstruct Bosnia's cultural heritage can contribute to a better understanding between groups and reestablish the collective memory of a people diminished by war. In addition, the oral testimonies and other evidence used in the Tribunal can bolster these projects by providing further information about the conflict and the lives of the people involved. Memory, be it personal, collective, archival, or historical, can play a role in the pursuit of reconciliation, "involving a genuine attempt to get to the 'truth,' followed by acknowledgment of responsibility in a concrete way" (Piggott & McKemmish, 2002, p. 3). With a better, more multifarious concept of the memories contained within this region of the world, we can begin to move toward reconciliation and renewal and hopefully, one day, a lasting peace.

Notes

¹ A list of ongoing international projects for rebuilding Bosnia's archives and libraries is available through the Bosnian Manuscript Ingathering Project's Website at <http://www.kakarigi.net/manu/projlist.htm>.

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