

Religious and Ethnic Diversity in the Second Half of the 20th Century: War and Political Changes in the Territories of Former Yugoslavia

Matjaž Klemenčič

Univerza v Mariboru



Nekdanja Jugoslavija je bila versko in narodnostno ena najbolj raznolikih držav na svetu. Odnosi med posameznimi narodnostnimi in verskimi skupnostmi pa so tudi določali razvoj dogodkov v zgodovini tega prostora.

Prispevek obravnava zgodovino odnosov med verskimi skupnostmi in komunistično državo v času po drugi svetovni vojni ter vprašanje odnosa Cerkve do demokratizacijskih procesov na prelomu devetdesetih let 20. st. ter odnosa posameznih verskih skupnosti do razpada Jugoslavije ter vojn, ki so temu razpadu sledile. Medverske odnose v nekdanji Jugoslaviji so najbolj zaznamovale Pravoslavna, Katoliška in islamska verska skupnost. Odnos jugoslovanskih komunističnih oblasti do verskih skupnosti sta zaznamovala stopnja »trdosti« komunističnega režima pa tudi različen odnos po posameznih republikah nekdanje Jugoslavije.

Drugi del prispevka obravnava razpad Jugoslavije in odnos verskih skupnosti do tega vprašanja. Nobena verska skupnosti ni želela krvavega razpada, kakršen se je zgodil. Vendar pa so potem, ko so vojne izbruhnile, zagovarjale svoje interese, ki so bili v glavnem tudi interesi določenega naroda.



Born in 1955, Matjaž Klemenčič studied at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He is professor of history at the University of Maribor and also teaches at the University of Ljubljana. He specializes in history of American immigration and history of nationalism. His books include *Slovenes of Cleveland. The Creation of a New Nation and a New World Community*, and, with M. Žagar, *The Former Yugoslavia's Diverse Peoples. A Reference Source Book*, Santa Barbara-Denver-Oxford 2004.



Former Yugoslavia was among the religiously and ethnically most diverse countries in the world. Relations among ethnic and religious groups also determined historical development in this region.

This chapter deals with the history of relations among religious groups and the Communist state during the period after World War II and deals with the question of the relation of churches to the processes of democratisation at the crossroads of the 1990s and relations of individual religious groups towards the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the wars which followed. Inter-religious relations in former Yugoslavia were

marked primarily by the relations among the Orthodox, Catholic and Islamic Religious Communities. The relations of Yugoslav communist authorities towards religious groups were marked by different degrees of “harshness”; furthermore relations were different in the various republics of former Yugoslavia.

The second part of the chapter deals with the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the relations of religious groups towards it. None of the religious groups wanted the bloody demise of Yugoslavia as in the end occurred. After the wars broke out, however, they defended their interests which were also the interests of individual nations.

INTRODUCTION

With respect to both religious affiliations and ethnicities/languages, the region of former Yugoslavia was one of the most heterogeneous in Europe. After World War II, more than 30 religious communities were registered. The largest among them were the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Islamic religious community. The others, such as the Greek Catholic Church, the Russian Orthodox Church, the Old Catholic Church, Protestant and Evangelical Churches, were smaller and locally organized and run. The destiny of some religious communities was marked by World War II. During that period most of the Jews were destroyed by the Holocaust; some Evangelical religious communities lost many of their members when almost all Germans were compelled to leave Yugoslavia after World War II. Religious adherence went hand in hand with ethnicity; so,

Table 1. Population of former Yugoslav republics and autonomous regions according to religion in 1953 (in thousands).

	Total population	Serbia	Vojvodina	Kosovo	Croatia	Slovenia	B&H	Mace- donia	Monte- negro
Orthodox no.	7,012	3,669	780	175	449	4	998	747	190
%	41.4	82.2	45.5	21.6	11.5	0.3	35.1	57.3	45.2
Catholics no.	5,384	51	565	25	2,878	1,231	609	5	20
%	31.8	1.1	33.0	3.0	73.5	84.1	21.4	0.4	4.8
Muslims no.	2,083	145	5	546	7		918	387	75
%	12.3	3.3	0.3	67.5	0.2		32.4	29.7	17.9
Others no.	365	21	139		81	89	26	7	2
%	2.2	0.5	8.1		2.1	6.1	0.8	0.5	0.4
Atheists no.	2,086	575	225	63	499	139	293	158	134
%	12.3	12.9	13.1	7.9	12.7	9.5	30.3	12.1	31.7
Total no.	16,930	4,461	1,714	809	3,914	1,463	2,844	1,304	420
%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: *Statistički bilten br. 26* (Beograd: Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1954), p. 60.

for example, most Serbo-Croatian-speaking Serbs were adherents of the Orthodox Church and most Croats were Catholics ¹.

After World War II, communists under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito took over in Yugoslavia. The new authorities did not recognize leaders of the religious communities as partners: they forced their will upon them "from above". There were many changes in the religious structure of the population. In the 1953 census, the Yugoslav State inquired for the last time about the religion of the population; in later censuses this question was not asked, in accordance with the policy of separation of Church and State. Still, according to the data for 1948 and 1953 the most numerous religious groups remained the Serbian Orthodox, the Catholic and the Islamic.

The geographical distribution of religious communities in the region of former Yugoslavia was very complicated due to historical circumstances. The most diverse were the populations of Vojvodina, Kosovo and Macedonia as can be seen from Table 1.

The first censuses of population in the newly established states showed fewer people who wanted to be counted as adherents of any religion; for example, in Slovenia, in the census of 2002, a little less than one-third of the population did not answer the question about religious affiliation!

THE CHURCH IN YUGOSLAVIA AFTER WORLD WAR II

After the Yugoslav communists came to power, they tried to compromise the Church among the people and force it to resign from public life. They supervised Church activities and tried to make Church leaders loyal citizens of the State. After the nationalization of most of the wealth of the Church (including some Church buildings), Yugoslav Communists expected that the Church would soon die. As to Church-State relations, this period was one of open hatred, political prosecution and even physical beatings of priests. In September 1945, the Catholic bishops reacted with a letter of protest against this situation, and they also raised their voices against atheism and against the new authorities in general. The answer of the authorities was a trial against the Bishop of Ljubljana, Gregorij Rožman. The Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac, was another victim. The authorities arrested him in September 1946, put him on trial for cooperation with the Ustaše, the group that had led the Independent State of Croatia (a Nazi-Fascist puppet State), convicted him and sentenced him to sixteen years in prison. The Vatican protested, and the Pope sent a cardinal's hat to the imprisoned Stepinac.

There were several reasons for such actions on the part of the authorities. In addition to wanting to retaliate for the real cooperation of the Church with the occupying forces during World War II, the Communists also feared that the Churches could threaten their new revolutionary authority. Also the Vatican's criticism of the new authorities is worth mentioning. The Church did not die, in spite of the wishes and deeds of the Communist authorities. The Church could not be part of society any more, it could not be active socially and politically and did not have a large presence in society. It had churches full of believers, however; and there were many students of theology. Relations between the Church (especially Catholic) and the Yugoslav State became more difficult, especially at

the end of the 1940s and at the beginning of the 1950s. In the second half of the 1950s, with general changes in Yugoslav society towards democratisation (the authorities freed almost all priests from prison), relations between the authorities and the religious hierarchies became better. This is true especially for the Orthodox Church, in spite of the fact that Montenegro Metropolitan Arsenije was sentenced to eleven years in prison because he was against the establishment of State-sponsored societies of priests, which the authorities had initiated in the whole State, among all priests and all denominations. During this period the new Patriarch of the Orthodox Church did not conceal his wish to cooperate with the Communists authorities. At the same time, relations between the Communist authorities and the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia (which the Communists considered a very dangerous opponent of unity among South Slavic “nations”) became less strained. In 1958 Slovene and Croatian bishops for the first time were allowed to visit the Pope. In 1960, when Cardinal Stepinac died while interned in the parish manor-house in Krašić, the authorities allowed a funeral appropriate for a cardinal to be held. Later, in October 1960 at a meeting in Zagreb, the Catholic bishops issued a memorandum in which they recounted all the problems that would have to be solved to re-establish dialogue between the Catholic Church and the State. After the authorities also showed readiness to begin a dialogue, relations between Yugoslavia and the Vatican bettered. The pressure of the authorities towards the Islamic religious community also softened. In the 1950s it was the harshest; at that time the Community had to bend to modernization, since the authorities forbade women to wear veils.

The search for ways to appease both the State and the Church continued through the 1960s. Churches and their leaders continued to be kept under strict surveillance, but in the eyes of party ideologues they no longer constituted the number one opponent. After the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and ratification of the so-called Belgrade Protocol between Yugoslavia and the Vatican, it was generally agreed that the State's domain was to take care of the economy and politics, while the spiritual life of citizens remained the domain of the Church. For those fields where the interests of the two sides clashed (charities, culture, education etc.), continuous negotiations took place.

The State and the party still used different means to try to hinder the operations of religious communities and weaken their power within society. In order to weaken the power and authority of the Serbian Orthodox Church, federal officials supported the creation of a separate Macedonian Orthodox Church, which would be independent from the Serbian Patriarch. As long as Aleksandar Ranković continued to be the Secretary of the Interior, controlling the secret police and supporting a strong federal State – and also protecting the Serbian Orthodox Church – Macedonians could not fulfil their wishes, in spite of the fact that Yugoslav authorities supported “nation building” of the Macedonian “nation.” Soon after, in 1966, Ranković was ousted because he had directed the secret services to interfere with leadership of the country (he even bugged Tito's bedroom). The Macedonian Orthodox Church then became an independent Autonomous Church (1967).

In spite of strained relations between religious communities and the State during the 1970s, the leaderships of the former discussed openly what should be written in the new Constitution of Yugoslavia, adopted in 1974. The Catholic Church was especially active, trying to convince the authorities that the Constitution should forbid the expression of

hatred towards religion. The Church also tried to define, with the greatest precision possible, an article in the Constitution that proclaimed religion to be a matter regarding man's free will and a private affair.

THE ROLE OF CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF YUGOSLAV SOCIETY IN THE 1980s AND 1990s

The search for a compromise that would satisfy both the State and Church authorities continued and strengthened in the 1980s. In Slovenia both political and Communist leaders adopted quite a liberal attitude towards religion. The leadership of the other Yugoslav republics and the federal authorities criticized Slovenes vigorously for this, while democratically oriented people welcomed the Slovene authorities' view. When Alojzij Šuštar became Archbishop of Ljubljana in 1980, the Catholic Church changed its method of communication with the authorities. In a friendly way, Archbishop Šuštar told the authorities the basic points of his requests: cessation of unequal treatment of believers in society, access of the Church to public media, the right of the people to celebrate and observe religious holidays, the right of the Church to be active in charitable activities, and the right of priests to have access to people in hospitals and homes for the aged. His demands also included consolidation of the social status of priests, so that they got healthcare and pensions provided by the State, etc. During this decade, the Slovene leadership and the leadership of the Slovene Catholic Church spent time discussing ways to realize the demands of the Church and not worsen the relations of Slovenia with the federal authorities and the other republics. Problems in relations between the Slovene leadership and the Catholic Church hierarchy continued through the 1980s and into the beginning of the 1990s, when the Church placed the dialogue with the authorities first on its agenda. The Catholic Church in Slovenia also played a significant role in the support of the emerging political opposition but did not cease its dialogue with the Communist authorities.

The situation of the Church in Croatia at the beginning of the 1980s was much worse; the authorities introduced quite a harsh Communist regime after defeat of the so-called "Croatian Spring" at the beginning of the 1970s. As an answer to repression, the Croatian people's interest in the Catholic Church increased, although at the beginning of the 1980s this was more a way of showing national identity than a demonstration of the religiosity of the Croatian people. As part of this response, however, we must note the great echo in the Croatian public of visions of the Virgin Mary that occurred in Medjugorje (in Bosnia and Herzegovina) from 1981 onwards. The Communist authorities at first forbade visiting Medjugorje and holding religious processions there. After a while, the visions of the Virgin Mary became famous in Europe and in the USA and became a factor in tourist revenues (six to ten thousand tourists visited Medjugorje daily), and the authorities gave in.

In spite of this, Communist authorities worried very much about the strengthening of religious feelings among the Croats. In 1984 they even cancelled the visit of Pope John Paul II, who was scheduled to come on the occasion of the 1300th anniversary of the Croats' becoming Christians. Although the Pope did not come, the celebration on September 9, 1984, in Marija Bistrica, the most important pilgrimage Church in Croatia, attracted so

many people that the demonstration became political. During the mass, the Archbishop of Zagreb, Cardinal Franjo Kuharić, demanded that the authorities grant more religious freedom and tried to create an alliance with the Serbian Orthodox Church on this common ground (a representative of Patriarch German of the Serbian Orthodox Church was also present). The alliance between the Catholic Church and the Serb Orthodox Church was not accomplished, however, since the Orthodox Church (in Croatia as well as in Serbia) became the main messenger of Serb nationalism in the next years.

Succumbing to ongoing pressure by the Communist authorities at the beginning of the 1990s, the Catholic Church in Croatia openly supported a process of democratisation and the introduction of multiparty democracy in the State. It also supported the creation of the Croatian Democratic Union and Croatian independence. The Croatian Catholic Church, in accordance with the Vatican Council's views, demanded that war be avoided (*de bello vitando*). Misunderstandings should be solved politically and peacefully; it condemned violence and war unconditionally.

A similar position was adopted by the Catholic Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina, not surprisingly since the majority of the Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina were Croats. It is interesting to note that during this time, as the Yugoslav crisis deepened, members of the Catholic and Islamic communities became allies. This was based primarily on the fact that both religious communities opposed the ideology and institutions of the Communist regime, which was then under Serb domination. There were quite a few other reasons for alliance between Bosnian Catholics and Bosnian Muslims. Bosnian Muslims were already open to Western European cultural and civil values. Bosnian Muslim society never developed a fundamentalist wing, which demanded that all social and political life should be based on and should follow the patterns of the Koran. The Yugoslav authorities helped to prevent the spreading of Islamic fundamentalism in Bosnia, when, in 1968, they recognized the Bosnian Muslims as the sixth constitutive nation of Yugoslavia. The fact that most of the Muslim priests (imams) had not attended Arabic medreses (religious schools) and had not had any conservative theological education contributed to the fact that, instead of fundamentalism, a pro-European attitude and cultural-civil alliance with the Catholics prevailed among Bosnian Muslims. Once the Yugoslav crisis deepened, representatives of the Muslim faith (together with Catholics) supported the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially after Slovenia and Croatia declared independence in 1991.

The Serbian Orthodox Church, which even during the Yugoslav socialist period proclaimed itself the only defender of Serbdom, worked in the opposite direction. Since it was excluded from public life until the end of the 1980s, its comments did not have any effect. The situation changed at the end of the 1980s, once the then president of the Serb Communists, Slobodan Milošević, openly spoke about how Serbs outside Serbia were threatened. The Serb Orthodox Church was happy to embrace Milošević's idea that "Serbia which will be great, or will not exist"², and advocated Milošević's great Serbian policy.

This orientation of the Serbian Orthodox Church is not surprising; since in the traditions and historical memory of the Serb Orthodox Church, the myth of a hero, who would conquer new regions, was very much present. Even before Milošević, the Serb Orthodox Church spoke widely about Serb military tradition. In the publications of the Serb

Orthodox Church, the Battle of Kosovo polje (1389), the Balkan Wars and the First and Second World Wars were always present. The main explanation for that is contained in the 1989 *Predlog srpskog crkvenonacionalnog programa* (Proposal of Serb Church for a National Program). Here among other things, they find written:

Serbs are a nation of State builders. They built their State over many centuries, they adored and respected its nation as their own house, and therefore they defended it vigorously. This nation shall do that today as well, if only there is a goal behind this ...³.

This demonstrates that the Serbian Orthodox Church already in 1989 expected a military struggle in Yugoslavia, especially since Milošević's great Serbian nationalism day by day became more and more unacceptable to other Yugoslav nations. Later events showed that they were not mistaken. The building of the Serb Orthodox Cathedral in Belgrade, for which funds were gathered from Serbs all over the world, showed that Serb nationalism and the Serbian Orthodox Church were unified in their interests.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church identified with the policies of the Macedonian State in the 1990s and decided to support Macedonian politicians who, after Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, decided on Macedonian independence too.

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH DURING THE YUGOSLAV CRISIS OF THE 1990S

The Yugoslav crisis began to become evident in 1991, when Croatia and Slovenia declared independence while the Yugoslav army tried by force to convince them to stay in Yugoslavia. The period of bloody wars began, which in the course of events encompassed most of the regions of Yugoslavia. The refugee crisis and ethnic cleansing also produced a complete change in the ethnic, religious and language structures of quite a few regions.

In Slovenia both the Catholic and Protestant Churches supported the Slovenian path towards independence at the beginning of the 1990s. At the same time they opted for peaceful solution of open questions; and played an important role in international recognition of Slovenia. The Vatican was among the first States in the world to recognize Slovenia (and Croatia).

The Catholic Church in Croatia preached peace and fought against violence even after 1990, when Croatia already had to cope with the armed rebellion of some of the Croatian Serbs. At one of his sermons in Sisak, Cardinal Kuharić said that the Bible emphasizes four principles on which to build interhuman relations: truth, justice, freedom and love. These principles exclude hatred, which is the "... source of violence and the reason for crimes against human beings"⁴. In January 1991, the Commission *Iustitia et Pax* (Justice and Peace), which convincingly was against the widening animosity and use of force, also asked all the decision makers in former Yugoslavia to reach a peaceful agreement⁵.

Once Croatia had to fight the open aggression of the Yugoslav People's Army, aided by Serbian and Montenegrin paramilitary forces, the Catholic Church also started to defend the theory of a "just war" (*de bello iusto*). According to this theory, the victim has the right to defend itself against aggression and the right also to re-establish peace with force. In this circumstance, the Croatian Catholic Church, as a defender of national interests, also start-

ed to advocate for the right of just defence against war and aggression instead of unconditional peace and non-violence. At the same time, in accordance with its basic mission, the Church continued to defend values of peace, love and coexistence. In October 1991, Cardinal Kuharić said that defence of the homeland, freedom, rule of law and peace are the moral right and duty of each citizen, but it has to be limited to the confines of moral values and should not overstep self defence or become a matter of revenge ⁶.

In addition to supporting just war, the Catholic bishops of Croatia spoke about the urgency of reconciliation between the Croat Catholic and Serb Orthodox peoples at a meeting in Zagreb on 15 and 16 January 1992. In a special report for the public, they emphasized that "... in military encounters the attackers and the defenders died, so that both deserved peace and reconciliation" ⁷. Cardinal Kuharić also emphasized that the Catholic Church fought for the principle "that Orthodox believers have the absolute right ... to their religion, to their freedom and that their bishops and priests have the right to pastoral activities. The Bible should help them to accept coexistence with Croats ... and to accept Croatia ... as their Homeland" ⁸.

This was the position of representatives of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Croatia. But what were the deeds of ordinary priests in Croatia? This question has not been fully researched yet, but it would appear that they committed quite a few murders and violent acts against members of the Serb minority in Croatia.

The war continued in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Fights that began in the autumn of 1991 continued on the Serb-Croat ethnic border in Croatia and after March 1992 they also continued in ethnically and religiously mixed Bosnia and Herzegovina. In spring 1993 it looked as if Serbs and Croats would really divide Bosnia and Herzegovina. That goal was also the object of a political agreement between Croatian President Franjo Tuđman and Serb President Slobodan Milošević. It is interesting to note that the Catholic hierarchy distanced itself from the agreement to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina between Serbia and Croatia. The leaders of the Croats in Bosnia, who at that time formed the para-State Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosna, tried to convince Archbishop Vinko Puljić to move from Sarajevo, which was then under Serbian siege, to Mostar. This move would have meant Puljić's support of the policy of secession of Herzeg-Bosna from Bosnia and Herzegovina and its annexation to Croatia. Archbishop Puljić stayed in Sarajevo however. He was rewarded by Pope John Paul II, who later sent him a Cardinal's hat.

The Serb Orthodox Church remained a vehicle of Milošević's great Serbian policy. A member of the leadership of the Serb Orthodox Church, Vladika Nikanor, among others, stated that "where Serbian blood is shed and where Serbian bones feel there must be Serbian land, who thinks otherwise is on the side of the enemy ..." ⁹.

The Serb Orthodox Church – like Milošević and the Serb Bosnian leader Radovan Karadžić – did not discriminate between a war for self defence and one of aggression. On the theory of international conspiracy against the Serbs, an Orthodox theologian, Božidar Mijać, wrote, among other things:

All the world turned against the Serbian people in the former Yugoslavia ... On the basis of this the question arises: is it possible that everyone in the world are wrong, and only the Serbs, one

small nation, are right?...Obviously, a problem arises here which demands clarification from the point of view of the Church and theology ... From this point of view ... it is possible that one small nation is, at a certain historical moment, the bearer of divine truth and justice against those who are attacking this nation ¹⁰.

Serbian Patriarch Pavle also tried to find excuses for the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to him, Serbia and the Serbian nation had to defend themselves because the war was forced upon them. Therefore this war was in accordance with the teaching of the Christian Church, which in general is against war, while at the same time it does not forbid war if there is no other way to reach a just solution ¹¹.

The result of war and this logic was the war in Bosnia, which brought ethnic cleansing and ruin to Bosnia. The solution was the Dayton Agreement, which meant the defeat of the idea to of establishing a Great Serbian State on the ruins of Yugoslavia.

Milošević stayed in power in Serbia after the Dayton Agreement was signed. Soon it became clear that Milošević would try to claim Kosovo for the Serbs, which demographically was no longer in Serbian hands, since the Serb minority represented only 10 percent of the population in 1991. (For the Serbs Kosovo was the cradle of the Serb State and their Holy Land: in 1389, in the battle of Kosovo polje, the Serbian army lost to the Turks).

Milošević did not enjoy the support of the Serbian Orthodox Church in dealing with Kosovo anymore. The Serb Orthodox Church allied itself with those opposition parties that were defending traditional values and also demanded reinstatement of the monarchy in Serbia and the return of the Kardjorđević dynasty to the Serbian throne. The Serbian Orthodox Church also demanded changes in the relations between Church and State that would help the Serb nation to recover from the spiritual and moral chaos caused by the Milošević regime. Therefore Vladika Artemije demanded a political solution to the Kosovo problem and demanded that "... no ethnic cleansing or any other type of crime be permitted against the non-Serbian population of Kosovo...." ¹².

Slobodan Milošević's regime started another war in Kosovo, first against the "Kosovo Liberation Army" and in 1999 also against NATO. After the defeat of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the failure of Milošević's policy to keep Kosovo, Milošević had to accept the NATO peace plan and withdrawal of the Yugoslav Army from Kosovo. The Serb Orthodox Church then demanded the resignation of Slobodan Milošević. After that, many Serb non-governmental and civil society organizations demanded that the Serb Orthodox Church call for a "Church-National Assembly" to save Serbia. The Serb Orthodox Church later helped to unify the opposition, which in the September 2000 elections brought them to power and to the final democratisation of Serbian society in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

This did not mean the end of war in the region of former Yugoslavia, however. In February 2001, armed fights occurred between Albanian insurgents and the Macedonian army in Macedonia after the Macedonian authorities did not want to recognize Albanians as a constitutive nation of the Republic of Macedonia. The Ohrid Agreement ended the battles in August 2001. The consequences of interethnic war in Macedonia are still not completely resolved, but the Macedonian Orthodox Church unreservedly supports the Macedonian

leadership. The Macedonian Church is still an independent autonomous Church, in spite of the fact that it voted for its return under the Serbian Orthodox Church with the name "Autonomous Ohrid Archiepiskopie". The authorities in Macedonia were unhappy with decisions of the synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. This action of Serbian Church is seen as a hegemonic move by Belgrade. One has to note that the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and Greek Orthodox Church also play a role in the future "games" in Macedonia. The Bulgarian State and Church accept the existence of the Macedonian State, but not that of the Macedonian language and nation. They consider the Macedonian language to be a dialect of the Bulgarian language. The Greek Orthodox Church does not accept the independence of the Macedonian Orthodox Church; it considers Macedonia still to be under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarch.

The Serb Orthodox Church is also fighting the independence of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church. The jurisdiction of the Serb Orthodox Church in Montenegro is based on the remnant of Serb occupation forces from 1918 still in Montenegro. Montenegrin nationalists fight for the independence of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church. In 1993 a committee was formed to establish an independent Montenegrin Orthodox Church. This committee proclaimed a Serb Orthodox priest from Canada, Antonije Ambamović, as leader of the independent Montenegrin Orthodox Church. The independence of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church was not confirmed, and the *vladika* [leader] of this Church had to leave the country. This did not mean the end of the fight for an independent Montenegrin Orthodox Church, however, because of different options for the future of Montenegro: i.e. independence of Montenegro is still an option for the future.

CONCLUSION: WERE THE WARS IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA RELIGIOUS WARS?

Many scholars interested in the territories of former Yugoslavia tried to define wars in the territories of former Yugoslavia as religious wars. The American theoretician Samuel P. Huntington in his paradigmatic vision foresees that the main form of global fights in the 21st century will be "encounters of civilizations" (similarly, looking globally at the 19th century, one sees ethnic fights primarily and in the 20th century, ideological battles)¹³. As proof of his thesis he considers the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where religion is one of the main factors of national and cultural differences (Croats are Roman Catholics, Serbs are Orthodox, Bosniaks are Muslims). If differences in religion should become elements of global struggles between cultures, it would mean that future global battles would actually become religious wars.

The wars in the territory of the former Yugoslavia did not occur because of religious hatred. They did not occur because of the need to spread Catholicism, Islam or Orthodoxy. There was, however, a real threat that this war could become a religious war, especially after the Bosnian government accepted the help of Islamic countries when it was disappointed with the policies of Western Europe and the USA. There were some mudjahidin among those who fought on the side of the Bosniaks in the war of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but they did not play an important enough role to be able to define this war as a religious war. Religion and religious communities did not cause the Yugoslav wars and they could not prevent them. Indeed,

the role of religious hierarchies in making peace was very limited, in spite of their influence in the societies that emerged on the ruins of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia¹⁴.

NOTES

- ¹ For more details see M. Klemenčič, *The Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia: from King Aleksandar to Marshall Tito, 1918-1980*, in S. Ellis (ed.), *Empires and States in European Perspective*, Pisa 2002, pp. 211–238.
- ² J. Pirjevec, *Jugoslavija: Nastanek, razvoj ter razpad Karadjordjevićeve in Titove Jugoslavije* [Yugoslavia 1918-1992, Conception, Development and Dissolution of Karadjordjević's and Tito's Yugoslavia], Koper 1995, pp. 385–386.
- ³ Z. Milošević, *Politika i teologija* [Politics and Theology], Niš 1994, pp. 40–44.
- ⁴ *Svi su građani dužni slušati zakonitu vlast* [All the citizens have to obey legal authorities], "Glas Koncila", 1990, n. 34, 26 August 1990, pp. 1–3.
- ⁵ *Izjava komisije Justitia et pax BKJ: Za miran dogovor medju narodima* [Declaration of Justitia et Pax Commission of (Catholic) Bishops of Yugoslavia: For a peaceful Dialogue among Peoples], "Glas Koncila" 1991, n. 5, 3 February, 1991, p. 1.
- ⁶ *Samostalna Hrvatska – ostvarenje povijesne i pravne logike* [Independent Croatia – Fulfillment of historical and legal logics], "Glas Koncila", 1991, n. 42, 20 October 1991, p. 3.
- ⁷ *Slogom u sveopću obnovu* [With unity into general reconstruction], "Glas koncila", 1992, n. 4, 26 January 1992, p. 3.
- ⁸ *Važnije je pouzdanje u Boga negoli u ljude* [It is more important to believe in God then in the people], "Glas Koncila", 1992, n. 50, 13 December 1992, p. 3.
- ⁹ D. Lakićević, *Arhipelag Balkan. Politička autoritarnost i ksenofobija u novim balkanskim državama* [Archipelago Balkan. Political authoritarianism and xenophobia in new Balkan states], Belgrade 2002, p. 187.
- ¹⁰ D.B. Djordjević, Z. Milošević, *Pravoslavlje, rat i stradanja* [Orthodoxy, War and its Victim], in B. Djurović (ed.), *Religija-rat-mir* [Religion-War-Peace], Niš 1994, p. 77.
- ¹¹ Patriarh srpski Pavle, *Molitve i molbe. Besede, razgovori, propovedi, pisma i izjave* [Prayers and Pleases. Words, Discussions, Letters and Declarations], Belgrade 1997.
- ¹² Lakićević, *Arhipelag Balkan* cit., p. 188.
- ¹³ S.P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations?*, New York 1993, p. 29.
- ¹⁴ N. Duvnjak, *Katolička crkva i izazov rata: hrvatska kušnja* [The Catholic Church and Challenge of War: Croatian Case], "Društvena istraživanja", 2001, v. 10, n. 51–52, p. 98; D. Johnston, C. Sampson (eds.), *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, New York 1994; M. Kukoč, *Konfesije i postkomunistički sukob civilizacija* [Confessions and Post-Communist Clash of Civilizations], "Društvena istraživanja", 1995, v. 4, n. 20, pp. 937–952.



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SOURCE

Izjava komisije »Justitia et pax« BKJ

Za miran dogovor među narodima

Komisija Justitia et pax BKJ na sjednici održanoj 22. siječnja 1991. godine u Zagrebu razmatrala je ugroženost mira u svijetu s posebnim osvrtom na Jugoslaviju.

Nema sumnje da je izbijanje rata u Perzijskom zaljevu teško pogodilo cijelo čovječanstvo. Polazeći od stanovišta pape Ivana Pija II, koje se o tome posljednjih dana izrazio u više navrata i od zabrinutosti naših biskupa izražena u Sarajevu 19. siječnja o.g. Komisija podupire diplomatske napore pojedinih država i međunarodnih tijela koja se trude oko prekida sukoba i oko pravednog rješenja njegovih uzroka mirnim putem.

Komisija osuđuje nasilje, povredu ljudskih, građanskih i narodnih prava koja su se dogodila poslednjih dana u pribaltičkim zemljama a usmjerena su protiv demokratski izabranih vlasti i rješavanja nastalih problema mirnim putem. Podupiremo zahtjeve tamošnje Crkve o prestanku sovjetske vojne intervencije da bi se stvorili uvjeti za život naroda u demokraciji i poštovanju prava svih građana.

Ovo utjecanje nasilju nasuprot nadama u novi demokratski međunarodni sustav, zaprijetilo je već i razvoju demokratskih procesa u Jugoslaviji.

Prošlogodišnji slobodni izbori u pojedinim republikama Jugoslavije znače i ostvarenje zanemarenih ljudskih prava kao i put nacionalnog oslobođenja naroda. Sada se taj demokratski razvoj u nekim sredinama ugrožava unutarnjim pritiscima, prijetnjama i

zastrašivajem. Uporno se želi zadržati stari sustav, čak i upotrebom Jugoslavenske narodne armije protiv legitimnih vlasti izabranih na slobodnim demokratskim izborima, posebice u Hrvatskoj i Sloveniji. Čini se da je model takvih namjera nasilje koje se već dugo provode na Kosovu.

Iz toga se vidi da u višenacionalnim zemljama koje su bile pod komunističkom vlašću, još nije prestala opasnost ugroženosti, ne samo osobnih građanskih nego i narodnih prava. Bez prava naroda, koja uključuju i pravo na osamostaljenje, nema niti ostvarenja ostalih prava. Čini nam se da potpora demokratskih snaga u svijetu, koja je usmjerena na ostvarenje individualnih građanskih prava, ne vodi uvijek dovoljno računa o narodnim pravima, te stoga ne vidi cjelovitost povijesnog procesa koje je na djelu u našim prostorima. Prijetnja ovim procesima može zakočiti razvoj demokratizacije u Europi koji se je u prošlog godini s toliko nade počeo odvijati.

Komisija odlučno odbacuje sve metode sile i zastrašivanja i stvarno se zalaže za mirni dogovor među narodima, kako u Sovjetskom savezu, tako i u Jugoslaviji.

Zagreb, 22. siječnja 1991.

*Predsjednik komisije Justitia et pax BKJ
dr. Srećko Badurina, biskup*

Statement of the "Justitia et Pax" Commission of the Catholic Bishop's Conference of Yugoslavia

The "Justitia et Pax" Commission of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Yugoslavia discussed at its meeting of 22 January 1991 the dangers for peace in the world with emphasis on Yugoslavia.

There is no doubt that the start of the war in Persian Gulf has a dangerous impact for all mankind. Starting from the standpoint of the Pope John Paul II who during recent days has issued statements and of worries our bishops expressed in Sarajevo on 19 January of this year the Commission supports diplomatic efforts of individual states and international organizations with the aim of interrupting the fighting and finding a just solution of the reasons of the dispute in a peaceful way.

The Commission condemns the violence as well as the violations of human, civil and ethnic (national) rights which occurred in recent days in the Baltic States and which were directed against the democratically elected authorities and we support attempts to find solutions in a peaceful way. We support the demands of the Church in the Baltic States to stop the Soviet armed intervention and to enable the nations to live in democracy and to respect the rights of all their citizens.

This influence of violence in spite of the hopes for a new international democratic system already threatens the development of democratic processes in Yugoslavia.

The free elections which have taken place in some Yugoslav republics also mean the fulfilment of neglected human rights as well as a way to set nations free. This democratic development is now endangered in some segments of society by internal pressure and threats. The old system tries to sustain itself even by the (mis-)use of the Yugoslav Peoples' Army against the free democratically elected governments, especially in Croatia and Slovenia. It appears that Kosovo, where measures of this kind have been practiced for a long time, may serve as a model.

From this one can ascertain that in multiethnic states which were under communist rule the danger has not ceased to exist, not only with regard to human civil rights but also as regards ethnic (national) rights. Without the fulfilment of national rights which include also the right

of secession and independence, the other rights cannot come to fulfilment either. It appears that the support of the democratic forces in the world which support primarily the fulfilment of individual civil rights and rights of a citizen does not always take national (ethnic) rights into account sufficiently and therefore to clarify the complexity of historic process which is taking place in our region. Endangering these processes can be harmful to the processes of democratisation in Europe which brought so much hope in the last year.

The Commission is against all the methods using force and threats and is truly in favour of peaceful agreements among nations in the Soviet Union as well as in Yugoslavia.

Zagreb 22 January, 1991

President of the "Justitia et Pax Commission" of the Yugoslav Bishops' Conference
Dr. Srećko Badurina, Bishop

