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Bosnia–Herzegovina and Lebanon: historical lessons of two multireligious states

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ABSTRACT *Bosnia–Herzegovina and Lebanon have been frequently subject of superficial comparisons: Similar images, the horror of internal strife, religiously and ethnically motivated killings initiated such observations. Nevertheless, Lebanon and Bosnia–Herzegovina are two multireligious countries, which deserve comparison. Bosnia–Herzegovina, as well as Lebanon, are reminders of the diversity that existed throughout the Ottoman Empire, before it was leveled by the emergence of nation states. Beyond the historical, Bosnia–Herzegovina and Lebanon have developed many comparable traits, which help understanding the war that ensued in 1975 in Lebanon and in 1992 in Bosnia–Herzegovina. The fragmentation of the political sphere along national/religious lines, the destructive role played by neighboring countries and the economic crisis are just some of the factors which can be observed in both countries.*

In 1995 a senior Serbian journalist, Milutin Milenković, published a short book in Belgrade entitled *From Lebanon to Bosnia: Déja Vu* in which he ought to trace the parallels between the wars in Bosnia and Lebanon. His comparison begins with a question: 'Is it simply the similarity of the religious, structures, cultural roots and political passions hinging on the heated theories of "blood-ties and the soil," that produce similar processes and events?'[1] He continues his analysis by outlining the failures of Western policy and places the blame in both cases on 'Muslim fundamentalists'. Although he attempts to base his argument on factual evidence, his fundamental message resembles a statement by the former Minister of Information of the Republika Srpska, Velibor Ostojić, who claimed that 'Islam is rising everywhere. Christian Lebanon and Cyprus have fallen already. Furthermore Muslim reproduce very quickly.'[2] Such claims necessitate a more profound comparison of Bosnia with Lebanon, beyond mere propaganda. Other comparisons between the two countries have been undertaken, though largely focusing on the outcome of the wals rather, than on their origins.[3]

At the level of global politics, the year 1989 has become as *annus mirabilis*, the caesura between the Cold War and the 'New World Order'. When focusing on conflicts at the intra-state level, the year has been less of a watershed then an embodiment of continuity. The war which had been ravaging Lebanon since 1976 slowly came to a close with the Tai'f agreement, signed in 1989 by the

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warring factions under Syrian auspices in a Saudi Arabian city of the same name and, initiating the necessary political reforms to end the fighting a year later. At the same time the break-up of Yugoslavia gathered momentum, leading to the war in Bosnia three years later. The images flickering across the TV screens from Bosnia reminded the average media consumer of the war in Lebanon: the destruction, the killings and the seemingly incomprehensible hatred. While the Lebanese conflict was labelled by many commentators as 'Balkanisation', the war in Bosnia was described as 'Lebanisation'. Thus, 'Balkanisation' returned to the Balkans through Lebanon, just as some journalists described Sarajevo as the 'Beirut of the Balkans'.[4]

The term Balkanisation first appeared in the aftermath of World War I to label the dissolution of the Habsburg monarchy into small, mutually hostile states. While referring to a similar phenomenon which occurred in the century preceding the war in the Ottoman Empire, it referred primarily to demise of the great Central European empire. 'Balkanisation' swiftly became a popular term to describe all types of disintegration, from the sphere of economics to the war in Lebanon. If 'Balkanisation' refers to the break-up of multinational states, or rather empires, into smaller states, 'Lebanisation' can be used to describe an even greater atomisation, the breaking up of multireligious or multinational states into statelets or fiefdoms, themselves hardly viable units, which fight over control of the state.[5] Here one stumbles over the first major discrepancy between the wars in Bosnia and Lebanon. The temporary dissolution of central control in Lebanon was the result of competing groups trying to dominate the state, while in Bosnia it was not dominance that was the bone of contention, but rather the very existence of the state.

The superficial parallels between both states may serve as the premise from which one should analyse both countries in greater depth. The focus here is not on the war in Bosnia–Herzegovina or in Lebanon, but the periods preceding these was, which are indispensable for the understanding of the ensuing violence. At the heart of this article stands an attempt to examine factors which might have contributed to the war in both countries and thus to observe certain historical and political similarities of both multireligious countries.[6] A comparison between both states will enhance the differentiation of truly unique characteristics of one state and help us discover developments which can be generalised: 'The observer who studies just one country could interpret as normal what in fact appears to the comparativist as abnormal'.[7]

Historical considerations

Lebanon and Bosnia–Herzegovina are two states which have been the site of coexistence of numerous religions and nations in the course of their history. The long phases of peaceful coexistence, however, led in the 20th century to outbreaks of violence and deep divisions within their societies which can be overcome only slowly and painfully, certainly lasting well into the twenty-first century.

The geography and history of Lebanon and Bosnia have favoured the development of extremely heterogeneous populations. Persecuted minorities and remnants of the Ottoman rule in Lebanon and Bosnia have survived longer than anywhere

in their vicinity. In the 19th century technological progress and the expansion of the European powers ended centuries of seclusion and exposed both countries to the ideas of nationalism. Since then Bosnia and Lebanon have no longer remained the secluded refuges of diverse religions and nations, but rather the intersections of the interests of several neighbouring and European states.

Despite being 2000 kilometres apart, both states are interrelated through their common history as parts of the Ottoman Empire for 400 years. The Millet system of the Sublime Porte has made belief a key component in the development of identity building. While in Bosnia the strength of national ideology contributed to the rise of nations separated by religion and its cultural values, religion itself remained paramount in Lebanon. Thus, before the twentieth century, secularisation never took hold successfully in Bosnia or Lebanon. As a consequence religion, or nations based on religious differences, became the most important determining criterion of both societies.

Although tensions between the national and religious groups of Bosnia and Lebanon were commonplace before the twentieth century, armed conflicts did not occur before the beginning of the 'short twentieth century', as Eric Hobsbawm put it. An explanation for this development is the late emergence of national and/or confessional identity. While the Millet system prevented, at least in principle, territorial delimitations, nationalism placed land and territory at the heart of identity building. In countries like Bosnia or Lebanon the emergence of nationalism and/or territorially orientated confessionalism presented a threat to peaceful coexistence.[8]

In Bosnia–Herzegovina the battles and massacres of World War II heightened national tensions, coming to light again with the decay of Yugoslavia in the early 1980s with increasing intensity.[9] Lebanon experienced no such confrontation before 1975. None of its conflicts, like the short civil war of 1958, can be compared in intensity or consequence with World War II in Bosnia. The extraordinary length of the civil war between 1975 and 1990 has, however, contributed to strengthening the tensions between the different religions and to deepening mutual suspicions. Thus, the preceding phase of the war served as justification for the next interlude in the 15-year long civil war.

In Bosnia and in Lebanon informal and official forums for intra-confessional and intra-national dialogue, which would have been able to mediate between the different sections of the population successfully, were missing. In the second half of the twentieth century numerous attempts were made by the political leadership to decrease these tensions through repressive politics.[10] In Bosnia and Yugoslavia the lack of an honest and non-ideological discussion on wartime events prevented a real reconciliation of the nations.[11] The authoritarian system made debates beyond the imposed propaganda impossible and linked the Yugoslav state closely with the Communist Party. The linkage also created a dependence of the state on the system, placing a common Yugoslav identity on an extremely narrow footing. With the decline of the League of Communists the existence of the state was also called into question.

In Lebanon 'Shihabism', promoted by the country's president after the brief

civil war of 1958, sought to strengthen the state and reduce confessional identities by eliminating religious particularisms. However, this attempt failed. The reason for its defeat was the absence of fundamental political reforms, which would have addressed the balance of power between the confessions and which would have taken into account the demographic changes of the postwar period. Furthermore, Shihab did not strive, unlike the communist party in Yugoslavia, to gather a mass movement, thus denying 'Shihabism' popular support from its inception.

The national and confessional tensions in both states largely resulted from a lack of consensus over the form of government and the identity of the country. Since the end of the 19th century the faiths and nations of Bosnia and Lebanon were frequently confronted with clashing views over which kind of country and which type of political system the members of the nations and confessions wanted to live in. With strong partners outside both countries different groups could enforce their ideas at different stages, but could never eliminate all possible opposition.

The institutional framework

Lebanon and Bosnia are marked by large institutional differences. While Lebanon had a long continuity as a state before, during and after the civil war, the state structure of Bosnia underwent dramatic changes. In Lebanon opinions diverged largely over the nature of the state and its administration; there was, however, a consensus among the majority of religious communities on preserving the state. Only a few groups demanded integration into a neighbouring country or the division of Lebanon into several small para-states. In the interwar period large sections of the population supported close ties with Syria, or even unification. At the time of the outbreak of the civil war. however, national identity was already consolidated to the extent that Syria could serve as an ally for some conflicting groups, without being called an to annex the country.[12] Joining Israel was even over down the agenda, even among pro-Israeli Maronites. Neither was a division desirable for the majority of all religious groups, largely because of the small overall size of the country and the lack of appeal to join any of its neighbours: 'None of the local "governments" which resulted from so many local *coup d'états* ever went so far as to dare a war of secession or to advocate separatism ... There was, all along, a unanimous call for a strong united Lebanon, but differences as to how its unity would be best structured. Partition as thus self-defeated.'[13]

On the other hand, Bosnia the Srpska Demokratska Stranka (Serbian Democratic Party) openly pursued secession and integration of Serbian-held lands in Bosnia and Croatia into a Greater Serbia. With the outbreak of war the third largest party, the Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica (Croatian Democratic Community), also strove for the disintegration of Bosnia. A large segment of the population, backed by military might thus opted for the dissolution of the common state, unlike in Lebanon. These different political objectives lead to a higher degree of institutional change in Bosnia and promoted a weakening of the institutional centre.

A fragmented political landscape

While the Communist Party prevailed for 40 years in Bosnia, Lebanon had possessed a multitude of parties ever since the French mandate. Only a few of these parties can be compared with European parties. In most cases no firm structure existed and the respective parties were rather organised around a leading politician. Party, platforms played only a subordinate role, consequently coalitions were often nothing more than agreements between political leaders, lacking any programmatic conversion or co-operation. In the parliament most parties could not rely on a firm number of deputies. In the early 1970s, when intra-religious conflict became more likely, most parties added a military wing to their political structure. The arming of the parties had already began some years before the start of the war, so that direct linkages between militias and parties emerged, often based on kinship: in a large number of cases the sons of the party leaders actually became the heads of the respective paramilitary forces. The war itself also led to a change in the party spectrum. Before and during the war the Kata'ib or Phalange was the only party which possessed the characteristics of parties in developed countries. Not only was it better organised, it also possessed a programme and a stable membership. Nevertheless, also in the Kata'ib one family predominated. As the dominant party of the Maronites, the most influential religious community, it entered the war as the most formidable and powerful party.[14] During the course of the war the weight shifted to the Shiite population and their representation. Thus, the Hizbollah emerged as the best organised party, while the rest of the political landscape continued to organise itself through loose personal unions and broad coalitions.[15]

In Bosnia, a clearly outlined party structure emerged after the end of the Communist Party monopoly, changing only slowly after the end of the war in 1995. This structure displays similarities with the preceding division along national lines during the Austro-Hungarian rule and the interwar period. After the elections the three national parties gained over 80% of the seats in parliament and the parties represented an overwhelming majority of their respective nation. These parties subsequently attempted to revive co-operation on the model of earlier coalitions during the interwar period and under Austro-Hungarian rule in the early twentieth century.[16] Nevertheless all national parties were strictly mononational and had no deputies from the other nations.

The parties in Lebanon have traditionally been more flexible. Although one religion would usually dominate, some of its members came from other religious groups. This is reflected in the policies of the parties. Even the Kata'ib and the Hizbollah, which both have the strongest confessional basis, had members and even deputies from other religious communities. One reason for this difference is the Lebanese electoral system. Deputies are divided according to their religion, but their constituency is regional rather than confessional. Thus, a Maronite could vote for the Sunni candidate of his choice, given that he is a candidate in his electoral district, meaning that candidates have to seek the support of other confessions or at least engage in coalition building with candidates running for other confessional seats in the same electoral district.[17] While this electoral system occasionally improved co-operation, it also

weakened the legitimacy of deputies among their own religious communities and shifted confessional political mobilisation from parliament to the streets. As a major difference from Bosnia, it also important to bear in mind that one party never monopolised the representation of a whole religious community. The intracommunal competition thus encouraged more pluralism, even during the war, than was the case in Bosnia.

Nationalist or confessional parties inevitably stand in conflict with the foundations of a multinational or multireligious state. While a nation-state can represent the national interests of the dominant nation, the multinational state has to compromise. As the state cannot fulfil the role expected of it by nationalist or mono-confessional parties, they latter seek to take over this role and claim to 'protect' national interest. Education is one example: while a nation-state can teach national history without much opposition, a multinational state has to pay respect to various different histories. Consequently national parties have sought to remove teaching from state prerogatives in order to teach their respective national history. This conflict cannot be solved as long as national or confessional parties dominate states with diverse national and religious groups. Thus the party development in Bosnia could best be described as the 'necessary hegemony of fragments'.[18]

The national and confessional parties embody a multitude of economic and social programmes among their membership, as the prime unifying element is not the economic, but the national or confessional programme. Even the latter can vary greatly within the parties. In the course of the wars in both countries the more moderate wings of the national and confessional parties were sidelined and split away from the parties. Although relations with the respective militias remained close in Bosnia, they never reached the same level of personal and structural linkages as in Lebanon. In Lebanon only a small minority strove for the destruction of the state, although concepts of the future political system of Lebanon varied greatly. In Bosnia, on the other hand, the party of the second largest nation, the Serbian Democratic Party, pursued a policy of disintegration, soon joined by the Croatian Democratic Community after the outbreak of the war.[19]

Thus the war in Lebanon could only end when unity was re-established and a compromise of sorts between different conceptions of statehood was achieved. In Bosnia, the division brought an end to the war, giving rewards to the disintegrative forces, although also forcing some compromises on them. The re-establishment of Lebanese unity after 15 years also resulted in clear losers who are nowadays living in exile, while in Bosnia all major forces were able to ensure their survival, despite attempts of the international community to reduce their hold.

In conclusion one can note that in both countries confessional and national parties dominated before, during and after the war, with little respect of fundamental change. The parties cannot and do not seek to represent the interests of the whole population, but rather view themselves as the organs of a clearly delimited collective, not the political representation of a number of individuals. In Bosnia and Lebanon the national and confessional parties claim to be the exclusive representatives of their religious community or nation. The president

of the oppositional Bosnian Serb Council, Ljubomir Berberović, has characterised this claim as being egoistic: 'The so-called national interests of Serbs and Croats were formulated by political parties, which claimed to represent the whole Croatian or Serbian population. In my view, Democracy, however, can only function in order to empower political, not national parties.'[20]

All parties took on the characteristics of state institutions during the course of the war. While destroying the state by creating one-party statelets, they sought to fill the void created by the collapse of the state. Two of the three Bosnian nationalist parties declared their own states, which were basically one-party dictatorships until not too long ago, staffed with party functionaries at all levels. These para-states served the interests of the parties in expanding their sphere of influence, ensuring the economic prosperity of the party and its leadership and in suppressing other nations, as well as internal opponents (real or imaginary).

The party structures which developed in Lebanon in the course of the war are similar. The parties ensured social services, provided their respective population with food and other basic needs, developed their own administration and army. All these state functions were funded through the levy of taxes in the territory under their control, but also through illegal means, such as drug trafficking, plunder and hostage taking. These para-states never possessed territorial delimitations, as in Bosnia. Often several confessional party states operated on the same territory and only interacted with their respective religious group. Thanks to frequently changing alliances their structures were in constant flux.

Thus the national and confessional parties in Lebanon and Bosnia succeeded in strengthening their monopoly on their groups in the course of the war. The collapse of the state drove members of all nations and religions into the arms of the radical para-states, which often provided the only structure which offered at least some of the basic services expected of a state, thus strengthening these structures.[22]

Social and economic development and crisis

Lebanese and Yugoslav society underwent substantial economic and social modernisation, in the post-World War II decades, despite starting from quite different premises and having pursued different approaches to modernisation. Although employing opposite economic strategies—free market economy and state-run communist command economy—the consequence for the vast majority of the population were rather similar: urbanisation, drastic reduction of the rate of illiteracy, and tensions between traditional family structures and new social networks.

These changes nevertheless did not effect the whole population equally. Lebanon particularly was marred by a sharp division between the lower stratum of society and an upper class which was prosperous even by European standards. In Bosnia differences occurred largely based on the dichotomy of urban modernisation and traditional rural development. Even within this differentiation the range remained much smaller as a result of communist rule. While cities developed through industrialisation, and later on the development of a small

service sector, many rural areas remained untouched by this modernisation. Besides, Bosnia remained relatively underdeveloped in comparison to Croatia, Slovenia or Vojvodina.[22]

The economic crisis after Tito's death contributed greatly to the revival of nationalism in Yugoslavia since the mid-1980s. Communist economic policy, as well as nepotism and corruption, as was shown by the *Agrokomerc* scandal, discredited the communist elite. Thus, this elite had either to regain legitimacy through the adoption of a nationalist agenda, as was the case with Slobodan Milošević, or face the loss of power in the first free elections throughout Yugoslavia in 1990. The close connection between economic crisis and nationalism can be observed when examining national stereotypes. The richer nations routinely accuse the poorer nations of laziness; in return the wealthy nations are accused of exploiting others and of being greedy. In Lebanon social differences had an even stronger impact on confessional tensions, as the differences in wealth between the religious communities were extreme. The parallels between religious community and prosperity are the result of a geographic concentration of wealth and a traditional elite, which controlled the riches of the country. Thus, a few Shiite families were also part of that stratum, despite the overall Shiite population being the poorest religious community.[23]

The relationship between the state of the economy and the coexistence of the nations and confessions was different in both countries. Lebanon enjoyed economic growth even after the beginning of the war, lasting until the Israeli invasion of 1982. While a segment of the population prospered in this period, the inequalities grew during war. The repercussions for the economy in Bosnia were different. As the unequal distribution between the nations played no major role, the reduction of overall wealth and its redistribution stood in the foreground. Within this framework nationalist motives were utilised to shift the blame for the crisis to others and to claim a larger share of the overall wealth.[24]

Bosnia and Lebanon were shaped by a social crisis in the immediate prewar period. Although its roots were largely economic, they took on nationalist and religious overtones. This equation of economic crisis and intra-group conflict was largely engineered by a political elite which sought to improve its popularity. Instead of seeking a reform of the system, large parts of the elite sought to blame other groups within the multinational and multireligious societies. In consequence, the economic and social crisis played an important role in the heightening of tensions, while the confessional or national component is largely the imaginary construction of a particular elite.[25]

Religion as tool for political mobilisation

Although the role of religion increased in importance in the years leading up to the wars in Lebanon and Bosnia, religious practice played only a small or even decreasing role in both societies. A study of the Lebanese population in 1972 concluded that only 2% to 5% regularly visited churches or mosques.[26] One can conclude from this seeming contradiction that individual belief played a decreasing role in society. Instead religion served as a tool for ideological and communal

mobilisation in Bosnia and Lebanon. The metaphor of religion being armour and emblem, used in the context of Lebanon, could also be applied to Bosnia:

> As emblem, because one's confessional identity has become the most viable medium for asserting one's presence and securing vital needs and benefits. Without it, one is, literally, rootless, nameless, and voiceless. One is not heard or recognised unless one's confessional allegiance is disclosed first ... As armour, because it has become one's shield against real or imagined threats. The more vulnerable the emblem, the thicker the armour. Conversely, the thicker the armour, the more vulnerable and paranoiac other communities become.[27]

The role of religious hierarchies during the conflict highlights the schizophrenic role of religion during the war and at times of national and confessional mobilisation. Nearly all religious leaders, ranging from the patriarch of the Serbian-Orthodox church to the head of the Shiite council, at least paid lip service to reconciliation and a peaceful solution of the crisis. At the same time they frequently failed to distance themselves from the radical forces of their national or religious communities which appropriated religion for their own political goals. This proximity prevented many religious leaders from gaining credibility among members of other nations or religious communities, which would have been necessary for them to play a mediating role. In numerous religious communities in Bosnia and Lebanon proponents of a radical programme could be found at the lower echelons of power. Not only Maronite monks and Muslim clergy in Lebanon, but also representatives of all three major religions in Bosnia have at times directly supported the warmongers.[28]

This close link between some religious figures and the warring factions was not initiated by the church or its representatives. Religion was mostly hijacked by radical nationalist or sectarian politicians to increase their own legitimacy.

Islam presents itself as a particular problem with regard to national identity, which will be briefly mentioned. The Islamic renewal, which includes some modernisers such as Sayyid Qutb, has sought to redefine Islam as an all-embracing religion since the end of the 19th century and sees nationalism as a threat to the unity of Islam. Nationalism and ethnicity are seen as dividing the global Muslim community, the *umma*. This has resulted in Bosnia in a peculiar separation of Bosnian Muslim identity and Islamic belief. Thus the defining element of Bosniaks in Bosnia stands in contradiction to the very concept of national identity.[29] This conflict has delayed the process of national identity building considerably. Lebanon never possessed such unity of nation and Islam. Unlike in Bosnia, two major Muslim communities coexist in Lebanon. The differences between Sunnis and Shiites reduce the likelihood of a unified *umma* in Lebanon. Several national programmes which touch upon Lebanon, such as greater Syria or pan-Arab nationalism, are not compatible with Islam and are furthermore largely advocated by Christian Arabs. In addition, Lebanon is also home to the Druze community, which is not recognised by other Muslims as true believers and does not sees itself as Islamic, but which has, however, developed from Islamic foundations in to a closed proto-national community. Thus in Bosnia, as well as Lebanon, the Muslim communities have to struggle more than others with overlapping and mutually exclusive loyalties.[30]

Media between state and party control

The media reflect a society and its political system, but also reinforce societal developments. In Lebanon and Bosnia national and religious divisions were already apparent in the media before the war. A fragmented media landscape encouraged divisions and frequently spread hatred and violence.

Neither Bosnia, nor Lebanon had a tradition of independent media before the war. While the media in Bosnia were controlled by the state or the Communist Party, parties and surrounding Arab countries owned and controlled the media in Lebanon. Thus, the media were not observers of political developments, but the instruments of the actors in those developments. Without the involvement of the media the war in both countries would have been almost unthinkable. The structure of the parties, or rather the lack thereof, made communication between the political elite and its voters difficult; in Bosnia the new parties lacked the traditional channels of communication. Thus, the media were forced to fill this gap in communication. The media contributed to defining a national or confessional identity, to excluding others and to reinforcing tensions:

> 'Notions of strategic and tactical uses of communication are far from alien to our understandings of the construction of cultural collectivities and the workings of media. This is no accident, for the media and wider cultural fields are indeed to be conceived of as battle fields, as spaces in which contests for various forms of dominance take place.[31]

The war in both countries required preparation by the media.[32] Propagandist reporting cannot be prevented through the mere absence of state control, as was the case in Lebanon. Rather, political control over the media, whether the actor is a big or small party, prevents objectivity and tends to lead to escalation in times of high tension. Many papers, radios and TV channels in Lebanon and Bosnia only had legitimacy in the eyes of their respective backers, thus enhancing the group identity and defying attempts to create any kind of overarching identity or loyalty.[33]

Concluding remarks

All the elements described above do not inevitably lead to war. Here they rather created a climate which favoured the manipulation of the population by politicians and social elites. The reasons for this manipulation are diverse: some politicians pursued selfish interests like enrichment, personal power and enlargement of their own sphere of influence. Others used the confessional and national identities to avoid a potential change of elites which would have eliminated their influence. And some 'manipulators' were convinced that the division of society and the mass murder of other nations and confessions was acceptable to further their own nationalistic or religious conviction. The war in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995 has divided the country into national camps. These divisions, constructed in the minds of nationalist ideologists, have since been transformed into physical entities. A Bosnian identity and the will to coexist were displaced through the war and will only be able to emerge in the distant future.[34] In

Lebanon the 15 years of war have actually strengthened Lebanese identity: 'In Lebanon all the fighting factions claimed to represent Lebanon as a whole, while this entity was considered as a pure French imperialist creation only a few years earlier.[35] This difference partly arises because confessional identity does not *per se* exclude coexistence with other confessions in one state, while the national conceptions in Bosnia are largely incompatible with the existence of a multinational state.[36] In addition the invasions by the neighbouring countries, Israel and Syria, have been a traumatic experience, even for the confessional groups which called for their aid. Adherence to a Greater Israel or a Greater Syria never had the same appeal as the equivalent national claims in Bosnia.

A comparison between Lebanon and Bosnia underlines the fact that national and religious conflict is never mono-causal, it is rather the result of a volatile mix of a multitude of factors. It is not history which predestined both countries for violent internal strife in the last decades of the twentieth century; however the analysis of history offers a deeper understanding of the wars and their causes. Comparison of both states from other angles offers other very promising aspects, which would merit further academic analysis.[37]

Notes

[1] Milutin Milenković, *From Bosnia to Lebanon: Déja Vu*, Belgrade: Zavet, 1995, p 9.

[2] Quoted from Ömer Erzeren, ' "Kreuzzug Gegen den Islam", Die Reaktion der Türkei und der Islamischen Welt auf den Krieg in Bosnien', in Erich Rathfelder (ed), *Krieg auf dem Balkan. Die Europäische Verantwortung*, Reinbeck: Rowohlt, 1992, p 122.

[3] In one study Srdjan Vrcan examined whether Bosnia and Yugoslavia would develop along the lines of Pakistan and India, that is, into clear partition and the creation of new states based on religious criteria, or along the lines of Lebanon, a country were the divisions led to endemic instability and a long-lasting war. Srdjan Vrcan, 'A European Lebanon in making or a replica of Pakistan/India drama?', in Tonči Kuzmanić & Arno Truger (eds), *Yugoslavia, War*, Ljubljana & Schlaining: Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution & Peace Institute, 1993, p 117.

[4] See, for example, Renate Flottau, 'Beirut auf dem Balkan,' *Der Spiegel*, 49, 1995, pp 159–162.

[5] Volker Perthes, *Der Libanon nach dem Bürgerkrieg. Von Ta'if zum gesellschaftlichen Konsens?* Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1994, pp 142–143; and Steven L Burg & Paul S Shoup, *The War in Bosnia–Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, Armonk: M E Sharpe, 1999. Branka Magaš poses the question of whether the war in Bosnia could be described as 'Balkanisation' or 'Lebanisation'. See Branka Magaš, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia. Tracking the Break-up 1980–1992*, London: Verso, 1993, pp 346–350. The authors Xavier Raufer & François Haut, *Le Chaos Balkanique*, Paris: La Table Ronde, 1993 also entitle their chapter on the war in Yugoslavia 'La Libanisation?'. See also Georges Corm, *L'Europe et l'Orient. De la Balkanisation à la Libanisation: Histoire d'une Modernité Inaccomplie*, Paris: La Découverte, 1991. On the topic of Balkanisation and the historical development of the term, see Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

[6] I have developed a more detailed analysis of the historical and political development in Bosnia and Lebanon before the outbreak of the respective wars in Florian Bieber, *Bosnien–Herzegowina und der Libanon im Vergleich. Historische Entwicklung und Politisches System vor dem Bürgerkrieg*, Sinzheim: Pro Universitate, 1999. Many ideas articulated in this paper were developed in this monograph.

[7] Mattei Dogan & Dominique Pelassy, *How to Compare Nations. Strategies in Comparative Politics*, London: Chatham House, 1990, p 9.

[8] See Georges Corm, *L'Europe et l'Orient. De la Balkanisation à la Libanisation: Histoire d'une Modernité Inaccomplie*, Paris: La Découverte, 1991, pp 21–31, 44–64; and Peter Alter, *Nationalismus*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1985, pp 96ff, 113–118.

[9] Robert M Hayden, 'Recounting the dead. The rediscovery and redefinition of wartime massacres in late- and post-Communist Yugoslavia,' in Rubie S Watson (ed) *Memory, History, and Opposition under State Socialism*, Santa Fé, NA: School of American Research Press, 1994, pp 167–184; and Srdjan Bogosavljević,

'Der unaufgeklärte Genozid,' in Thomas Bremer, Nebojša Popov & Heinz-Günther Stobbe (eds) *Serbiens Weg in den Krieg* Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 1998, pp 63–74.

[10] For the existing informal intra-communal fora in Lebanon, see Antoine Nasri Messara, 'The accommodation between communities in Lebanon: parliament and paraparliaments in plural societies', *Social Compass*, 35(4), 1988, pp 625–636.

[11] While some authors deny the existence of any discussion of World War II in communist Yugoslavia, it has to be noted that the public and academic debates were not absent; they were, however, riddled with ideological blinds and a dismissal of the relevance of the national conflicts for political development beyond 1945.

[12] It must be noted, not without irony, that, as one of the outcomes of the war in Lebanon, Syria permanently occupies Lebanon and has moved closer to annexation than at any time when there might have been more support for such a move among some segments of the Lebanese population, especially Sunni Muslims.

[13] Hassan Tuéni, 'Lebanon: a new republic?', *Foreign Affairs*, 61(1), 1982, p 91.

[14] Fouad Ajami, 'Lebanon and its inheritors', *Foreign Affairs*, 63(4), 1985, pp 778–799.

[15] Nizar Hamzeh, 'Lebanon's Hizbullah: from Islamic revolution to parliamentary accommodation', *Third World Quarterly*, 14(2), 1993, pp 321–337.

[16] Robert J Donia & John V A Fine jr, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed*, New York: New York University Press, 1994, p 211; and Suad Arnautović, *Izbori u Bosni i Hercegovini '90*, Sarajevo: Promocult, 1996.

[17] Theodor Hanf, 'Die drei Gesichter des Libanonkrieges', *Friedensanalysen*, 8, 1978, pp 75–77.

[18] John B Allcock, 'Yugoslavia', in Bogdan Szajkowski (ed), *New Political Parties of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, Harlow: Groves Dictionaries, 1991, pp 300–311.

[19] Lenard J Cohen, *Broken Bonds: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993, pp 141–143.

[20] Ljubomir, Berberović, 'Wir sind gegen Karadžić', in Johannes Vollmer (ed), *'Daß Wir in Bosnien zur Welt Gehören': Für ein Multikulturelles Zusammenleben*, Solothurn & Düsseldorf: Benzinger, 1995, p 88.

[21] Samir Khalaf & Guilain Denoeux, 'Urban networks and political conflict', in Nadim Shehadi & Dana Haffar Mills (eds), *Lebanon: a History of Conflict and Consensus*, London: IB Tauris, 1988, pp 194–196.

[22] On the conflict between rural and urban development, see Xavier Bougarel, 'La "revanche des campagnes" entre réalité sociologique et mythe nationaliste', *Balkanologie*, 2(1), 1998, 17–35.

[23] While economic divisions tended to exacerbate religious tensions, some economic linkages actually helped to creat cross-religious loyalties. See Theodor Hanf, 'Homo Oeconomicus–Homo Communitaris: crosscutting loyalties in a deeply divided society: the case of trade unions in Lebanon', in Milton J Esman & Itmar Rabinovich (eds), *Ethnicity, Pluralism, and the State in the Middle East*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp 173–184.

[24] Milton J Esman, 'Economic performance and ethnic conflict', in Joseph V Montville (ed), *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*, New York: Lexington Books, 1991, pp 477–489. An empirical study among Sunnis from Saida (Southern Lebanon) demonstrates that their sympathies were divided according to social status and wealth. While the poorer Sunnis supported the Palestinian cause, the wealthy Sunnis sympathised rather with Maronites, but remained generally withdrawn from active involvement in conflict. See Hilal Khashan & Monte Palmer, 'The economic basis of civil conflict: a survey analysis of Sunnite Muslims', in Tawfic E Farah (ed), *Political Behaviour in the Arab States*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1983, pp 67–81.

[25] Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism. The Quest for Understanding*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994, pp 145–164.

[26] Nawaf Salam, 'Les communautés religieuses au Liban', *Social Compass*, 35(4), 1988, p 459.

[27] Khalaf & Denoeux, 'Urban networks and political conflict', p 196.

[28] See Kraft on the Serbian-Orthodox church and its role. Ekkehart Kraft, 'Kirche und Politik in Jugoslawien seit dem Ende der 80er Jahre: Die Serbisch Orthodoxe Kirche', *Südosteuropa*, 41(1), 1992, pp 53–74. For the case of the misuse of Christianity in Lebanon see Elaine Hagopian, 'Maronite hegemony to Maronite militancy: the creation and disintegration of Lebanon', *Third World Quarterly*, 11(4), 1989, pp 101–117; and Michael Kuderna, *Christliche Gruppen im Libanon: Kampf um Ideologie und Herrschaft in einer Unfertigen Nation* Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1983.

[29] The particular problem of Bosnian Muslim national identity is reflected in the difficulties surrounding the name of the national community. Recognised as 'Muslims' in post-World War II Yugoslavia, the group changed its name during the war in Bosnia in 1993 into Bošnjaci (Bosniaks), not to be confused with the all-encompassing Bosanci (Bosnians).

[30] On the relationship between ethnicity and Islam see Dale F Eickelmann & James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996, pp 99–107.

[31] Philip Schlesinger, 'Media, the political order and natinal identity', *Media, Culture and Society*, 13, 1991, p 299.

[32] Already in 1989 some observers described the relationship between the republics at the media level as 'media war'. See Melita Šunjić, 'Der Jugoslawische Medienkrieg', *Medien Journal*, 13(1), 1989, pp 41–45.

[33] Renaud de la Brosse, 'Introduction', in Brosse (ed), *Les Médias de la Haine,* Paris: Reporters Sans Frontières, 1995, pp 9–21.
[34] Marie-Janine Calic, *Krieg und Frieden in Bosnien-Herzegowina*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1996, pp 277–281.
[35] Georges Corm, *Liban: Les Guerres de l'Europe et de l'Orient, 1840–1992*, Paris, 1992, p 98.
[36] Perthes, *Der Libanon nach dem Bürgerkrieg*, pp 144–145.
[37] Other aspects of a comparison between both countries would merit further research: the parallels between Serb nationalism and Maronite confessionalism; the structure and functioning of para-states in both countries; the role of Islam in the creation of national and confessional identity building. The following political theories could be utilised: the differences between the old and new political social elites as a cause of conflict: the role of the urban–rural dichotomy in the natinal and/or confessional tensions; the connection between modernisation and national and/or confessional conflicts.