

**Ruling the Bloodlands:
The Relationship between Space, Resources, and Genocide**

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Honors Essay in Geography Fall 2017

Hofstra University

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Part 1: The Meaning of Genocide

Introduction

Genocide is one of the most common and universal aspects of human history. Genocide has occurred on every continent and has accompanied almost all eras of human existence. Yet despite differences in time and place, there is one major commonality between these events: the need for space and resources. Virtually every genocide stems from the desire of the aggressors to eliminate a group of people from a location to either fill it with their own kind or to gain the natural resources in that area. While genocides also frequently contain racial, religious, and cultural hatreds, it is the dominance and drive for better control over land and resources that spurs genocidal violence.

In 1992, at the end of a century filled with so much violence against innocent civilians, genocide erupted again in the former Yugoslav country of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Perpetrated by Serbian nationalists who invaded Bosnia, the Bosnian Genocide saw the attempted systematic removal and extermination of the ethnic Bosniak presence by the Serbs. 35,000 Bosnian and Croatian civilians were killed as a result of targeted ethnic killing, with more than 8,000 Bosniak men and boys killed in the two-day Srebrenica Massacre in 1995 alone. In total, more than 100,000 Bosnians were displaced by the Bosnian War (Ingrao & Emmert, 2013). Similar contemporary events, such as the ongoing Syrian Civil War and the Rohingya Ethnic Cleansing against the predominantly Muslim of southwest Myanmar, have produced much of the same kinds of violence. This paper will look at historical instances of genocide as well as a more contemporary case study of the Bosnian Genocide to learn more about the causes, signs, and implementations of genocidal violence.

This paper will attempt to answer historical and contemporary questions regarding genocide. Firstly, I must set the parameters of my research. By this, I mean to find a consistent definition for the term genocide, as the word itself is swarmed with controversy. I will consider the term's etymology, international understanding and legal status, cultural perspectives, and scale. Some believe only widespread, institutionalized murder constitutes genocide and view local massacres as just that, regional conflicts. Solidifying the definition of genocide that I will use is essential before delving into the research itself. On a related note, it will also be necessary to explicitly define the ethnic groups and entities of the Balkan states, as those also often lack clear definitions. Secondly, I will endeavor to analyze the trends between genocide and the desire for the expansion into new lands or dominance over more resources. This is a defining factor of genocide, I believe, and the bulk of this project will attempt to prove this. Thirdly, I will take this project from a historical perspective to a contemporary one, and will examine a recent catastrophe: that of the Bosnian Genocide that occurred during the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s. The Bosnian Genocide follows many of the same trends seen only 50 years prior in Nazi-occupied Europe and indeed other genocides around the world. Despite all preventative measures and warning signs learned from the European Holocaust, similar instances of ethnic and genocidal violence erupted only a few hundred miles south of the Holocaust's largest concentration camps, albeit for very different reasons.

My motivation for carrying out this research is inherent in its importance. Genocide is happening today. Even though there are many institutions in place to prevent genocide, it still occurs on an all too frequent basis. They happen all over the world, in a myriad of environments. I believe that genocidal activity is more closely linked to the land it occurs on than previously thought. It is clear that we must better understand the relationship between space and genocide.

Positionality and Purpose

Before presenting my research, I would like to first explain my positionality and relation to my topic. I am a white American male who has lived most of his life in California. Personally, I have never experienced any form of persecution, and to the best of my knowledge, no one in my family ever has either. My experience with the Balkan states or any of the other regions discussed is extremely limited. I have studied in Germany and speak German, but besides that I have no personal or emotional proximity to Europe, let alone Serbia or Bosnia and its peoples. I believe that this relative distance from the locations and spaces of this topic will be advantageous, namely because I have no emotional connections to the Bosnian Genocide or genocide as a whole. However, I do empathize with the Bosnian people and care deeply for their collective wellbeing, as well as those of all suffering nations. The fact that many nations are still suffering due to genocide is why I have chosen to study it. The intentional killing of innocent civilians has found its way into the 21st century.

Genocide is often seen as a 20th century tragedy. While the 1900s was consistently marred by totalitarian dictators, genocidal policy, and a general lack of understanding of the phenomenon, our contemporary world suffers from many of the same problems. Genocide, as it happened before, is happening today. Under the guise of civil wars in the 2000s, the governments of Sudan and Sri Lanka committed genocide against minorities in their respective countries. Government-sanctioned and systematic persecution against the Rohingya, the predominantly Muslim population of southwestern Myanmar, continues to this day, resulting in the complete destruction of villages and mass exodus to neighboring Bangladesh. Most recently, the militant group of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have set their hateful killing policies against virtually every minority group under their domain, including Shiite Muslims,

Christians, and, most notably, the Yazidis, an ethnoreligious group living in the mountains of Kurdistan. The age of genocide is far from over.

The purpose of this thesis is to illuminate the often unstated motivations behind genocidal violence. By blaming most violence on the “ancient hatreds” inherent to specific groups, it localizes the violence, making it easier to believe that the problem can only happen to others, and never to oneself. However, there is a certain universality to genocide. While each genocidal event may be unique in its tragedy, the underlying reasons and materiality behind them can be found in most, and it is this universality that I intend to highlight in this paper. This paper will be an analysis of the relationship of violence and its location. There is a reason why and how genocide occurred where it did. People's actions are more closely tied to the land they live and work on than many realize. This paper will seek to inform its readers about the relationship of genocide with the space it inhabited and the resources those involved had access to.

Definitions: Genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity, and war crimes

Genocide means different things to different people, and a word as nuanced as genocide has many definitions. These definitions have certain emotions behind them and the power to influence the actions of those who read or hear them. Samantha Power demonstrates this power in her book *A Problem from Hell: America in the Age of Genocide*. US and UN policymakers and leaders—those who had the most potential in alleviating international violence—spent so much time debating the exact definition of genocide that they were stymied, among many other reasons, from ever intervening in the conflicts (Power, 2002). Defining the meaning of genocide is important as it sets the parameters of this analysis. There is a myriad of interpretations of genocide, ranging in definitions of scale, intention, and methodology. To create consistency

within this paper, I will evaluate the merits of common definitions of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and related terms.

It was Polish jurist Raphael Lemkin who first coined the word genocide in 1943 to describe the policies that National Socialist Germany was then currently implementing in occupied Europe during World War II. In doing this, he attempted to differentiate the focused attempt to exterminate Jewish presence from Europe from other mass killings throughout history. His coinage of the word derives from the Greek word *génos*, meaning a family, ethnicity, or nation of people, and the Latin suffix *-cide*, meaning the act of killing. Thus, the modern term genocide, as intended by its creator, describes the killing and destruction of an entire nation of people. However, the scope and relevance of this definition is highly debated. The United Nations, in its 1948 General Assembly Resolution, defines genocide as

any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, *Definition*).

According to the United Nations, genocide is its own legal, international crime, and is “the denial of the right of existence of entire human groups.” Henry R. Huttenbach, co-editor of the *Journal of Genocide Research*, attempts to find a common ground between many of the popular definitions of genocide and to lay out the basic structure that all genocides have followed.

Huttenbach argues that it is almost impossible to solidify a definition for the word genocide, as actual genocides are all different; words generally associated with genocide, such as annihilate, eradicate, and exterminate, are sometimes too strong or too weak depending on the

historical instance (Huttenbach, 2002). He also lays out the groundwork for what makes up the bare-minimum of a genocide, which is the desire to eliminate an ethnic, religious, or cultural presence from a land through forced expulsion or murder (Huttenbach, 2002). The scale and intensity of genocide for which many genocidal leaders have advocated would also not be possible without the support of their governments (Huttenbach, 2002; Kiernan, 2009). Extremist groups or independent paramilitaries are not usually capable of operating at the level necessary to commit genocide in its truest form. This is why incidents such as the Holocaust and the Bosnian Genocide, events that were state-sponsored, are often classified as genocide.

Huttenbach's article is essential in forming the basic definition that this research paper will operate on. When referring to genocide, I will defer to Huttenbach's description that it involves the attempted complete elimination of a people from a certain region, as well as the United Nation's ruling that genocide is its own category of international crime.

However, genocide is not the only word used to describe the eradication of groups of humans. One term often confused and wrongfully thought to be synonymous with genocide is "ethnic cleansing." While iterations of this phrase have been used since the early 1900s, it gained world-wide acceptance in the 1990s during the Bosnian War. During the course of the War, it became painfully obvious that one of the central war aims of the invading Serbs was the elimination of the Bosniak (and often Croat) presence from Bosnia. This was clearly an example of targeted ethnic violence, and one of the first instances to be widely reported by journalists and international watchdogs (Power, 2002). When describing the violence, reporters more-often-than-not opted to use the term "ethnic cleansing." Once this term was used in a 1992 article by the New York Times, it became the preferred term for the conflict (Power, 2002). Since its inception, ethnic cleansing has come to mean different things than genocide.

The term ethnic cleansing is much less specific than that genocide. Ethnic cleansing, and all related phrases, imply a goal that is less holistic than that of genocide. Whereas genocide unambiguously aims at the complete and irrevocable destruction of a group of people, ethnic cleansing is decidedly less final than genocide. Ethnic cleansing strives for the “purification” of the land via the removal of all the “non-pure” people (essentially, all genocides entail ethnic cleansing, but not all ethnic cleansings rise to the intensity of genocide). This removal can come in many forms. Forced deportation is often employed when a strong presence asserts dominance over an area of land and new rules are put into place. If deportation is not effective, the aggressors often strive to maximize misery, as the Serbs did in Bosnia. Serbian generals often commanded their troops to make life so completely unlivable for the local Bosniaks that they would have no choice but to leave “on their own volition” (Kressel, 1996). This method includes sporadic incidents of terror, enacting strict, ethnically based rules that are doggedly enforced, and the destruction of all physical objects that the minority group holds dear. There are many, many more methods of driving an ethnicity away without resorting to killing, but killings did of course occur, and were often widespread. It is only when the killings become so indiscriminate that the killers demand everyone of a group suffer the same fate that ethnic cleansing bleeds into genocide.

In their rhetoric, the Serbian and Bosnian-Serb leadership and those orchestrating the removal of all non-Serbs greatly favored the Serbo-Croatian term “etničko čišćenje,” literally meaning ethnic cleansing, over that of genocide (United Nations, Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, *Definitions*). This understatement echoed the euphemisms other genocidal leaders utilized to mask their intentions, such as the Nazis calling their mass murder of European Jewry the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question”. Unlike genocide, ethnic

cleansing is not an independent crime in the eyes of the United Nations. The acts which *cause* ethnic cleansing, such as forced deportation, killing, and general war crimes, are, however. Some of these crimes are called “crimes against humanity.” There is a subtle difference between genocide and crimes against humanity: genocide focuses on the destruction of entire groups or nations of people (and can only be applied when action is directed at the entire group), whereas crimes against humanity focuses on the individual. In this sense, incidental atrocities such as the torture, mutilations, enslavement, and murder of an individual or small groups whose nation is not necessarily targeted for extermination are considered crimes against humanity (Huttenbach, 2002). Essentially, genocides consist of multiple counts of crimes against humanity.

Given the muddled nature of the Bosnian conflict in its early years, it was impossible to indict certain war criminals for certain crimes, and without the declaration of genocide, it was difficult for the international community to intervene. These gross violations of human rights during times of war are considered war crimes, and are generally perpetrated against noncombatants. These crimes must be judged individually, as genocide was never explicitly sponsored by Serbian leadership.

Part 2: Genocide and Resources

Material Murder: The Link between Genocide and Resources

There is rarely a genocide that occurs outside the context of a larger war. The Young Turks committed the Armenian Genocide against the minorities of Turkey under the cover of World War I (Powers, 2002). The Nazis and their allies used their dominion over Europe to inflict countless atrocities upon minority populations before and during World War II. The

governments of Cambodia, Guatemala, Sudan, and Sri Lanka all enacted genocidal policies while fighting their own civil wars (Kiernan, 2009). The Bosnian Genocide is no different. Bosnian Serbs operated within the confused and complex nature of the Yugoslav Wars to implement their ideas of an ethnically pure state free of Bosnian Muslims. To understand many genocides, one must understand the wars surrounding them.

War has shaped humanity's history more than most other aspects of society. War, with its pervasiveness throughout our collective history, has occurred in a multitude of variations. Fighting ranges from imperialistic campaigns, to interstate conflicts, and civil wars. They are fought in the name of religion, ideology, culture, history, and sheer glory (and, more often than not, fought for some mixture of these reasons). Yet many wars share a common element: the conquest for greater influence over a geographic space and the resources it holds. Historians and conflict scholars consider these "resource conflicts," and they constitute the majority of historic wars, both interstate and civil (Ross, 2004). One fights a resource conflict primarily not over ideology, religion, or politics, but rather for material gain. This comes in many forms. Historically, governments and empires fought to claim large swaths of land for their own people, and to expand the borders of their dominions. Since the advent of the Industrial Revolution, fossil fuels have become an increasingly valuable resource that entire countries fight over, with more than one war being fought over the possession of fossil fuels such as oil. With populations on the rise and resources dwindling, natural resources such as water and oil have become more valuable than money (Dobkowski & Wallimann, 1998).

Genocides follow many of these patterns, as they are, in their most basic form, wars against a certain minority. Many governments or organizations seek specific material gains from their genocidal campaigns against their targets. The foundation of these campaigns is generally

ideological, but their results are physical. Rarely does the ideology of the perpetrator evolve during an ongoing genocide; that is often solidly established before the killing process begins in order to rally potential comrades to their cause. Ideology may perhaps strengthen *after* a genocide is completed, as this may, in the minds of the perpetrators, prove their ideology's veracity or strength, but this is rarely the case, as so few ethnic killers achieve the level of eradication they desire. In the end, it may be irrelevant to most people whether or not the conflict proves an ideology correct or false. It is the physical effect on the land that matters most. It is the materialistic, not ideological, effects and goals that predominantly motivate the implementation of genocidal activity. Entire cities are razed. Cultural, economic, and educational institutions are destroyed. Most irreparably, entire populations are erased and lives are ended, never to be lived again. Although shaped by intangible ideology, genocide engenders tangible results.

The killing policies of Europe during the 20th century were no different. The ethnic wars waged by Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler in the 1930s-40s had very practical effects on their empires, from increasing their food reserves to fueling war machines. When Bosnian Serb nationalists began to destroy Bosniak populations, they began to use their ideology to conquer physical space and resources. Land, forest coverage, and waterways were taken from Bosniak and Croatian settlements, often resulting in their deaths, to benefit the Serbian people (O'Brochta, 2016). This war against these ethnicities was also a resource conflict, made evident by the resource wealth gained by the Bosnian Serbs.

In the case of genocide and ethnic cleansing, people are willing to terrorize and exterminate other humans to gain specific resources. After reading and analyzing many different primary and secondary sources on the history of past and contemporary genocides, I decided to divide these resources into four distinct categories: land, fuel sources, human resources, and

cultural/urban resources. Each one of these types of resources yields material gains for the persecutors and devastation for the victims. One can find each of these categories throughout the history of genocide, including the Bosnian Genocide.

Land

The space we humans occupy and live our lives in is one of the most fundamental things keeping us alive. We grow our food on this land, build comfortable houses on it, and express our cultures on it. Land use defines entire civilizations, and influences their trade, religion, and economy. Good, useful land is absolutely vital to carrying out a successful life. That is why so many fight wars and kill for it.

Colonialism would prove a primary source of genocide in the modern era. European colonialism and imperialism ushered in a new wave of genocidal practices with their pursuits to grow their various empires. This most often came in the form of settler colonialism, which is the process of enacting policies and developments on an area in the endeavor to secure the land for the imperialists' own peoples. Settler colonialism was practiced wherever imperialism was at play; Australia, India, Central and Southern Africa, Central and South America, and the United States all experienced genocide in the name of settler colonialism (Kiernan, 2009). Most imperialistic powers saw it necessary to remove native populations to make way for the new populations arriving from the invaders' homelands.

19th and 20th Century Imperialism. The age of Imperialism defined most of the modern world. The act of countries and empires physically expanding their borders to encompass new lands saw a scale and intensity never seen before or since. European powers invaded virtually every continent and major landmass, with other global powers including Japan and China also

seeking to grow their domains. With almost every invasion or campaign of conquest came violence against the indigenous people living there. These people, when not enslaved, were often summarily killed or denied the ability or resources to survive; rarely did the indigenous peoples and the colonizers live in harmony (Kiernan, 2009; Spencer, 2013).

In the early contemporary era, settler colonialism and genocide reached their apex in the West starting in the first half of the 1800s (Schaller & Zimmerer, 2008). The events that drafted future genocidal endeavors include the Manifest Destiny of the United States and the destruction of the Herero and Nama ethnicities in German Southwest Africa.¹ These instances influenced future genocidal architects and set the templates for many events to come. In each of these scenarios, the native population was deported, assimilated, or killed to make way for those of the colonial power settling the land for themselves. While each of these are significantly different, the precedent of exterminating a minority to repopulate with the majority is one that is found in many genocides, including that in Bosnia.

In the case of the United States and Australia, the use of the word genocide is contested; however, the governments of both these regions at times explicitly advocated ethnic cleansing in the name of settlement and expansion (Docker, 2014). In the United States, the greatest indicator of ethnic cleansing is the Indian Removal Act of 1830, at the command of President Andrew Jackson. Also called the Trail of Tears, this was the forced deportation of the native populations of the southeast United States to the Oklahoma territories. The unwilling travelers were woefully ill-equipped for the 1,000-mile journey, and an estimated 15,000 perished en route to a land they

¹ There are countless other instances of imperialists driving the indigenous peoples of their colonies to near and sometimes complete extinction, but these three were chosen for explanation due to their relevance concerning later European atrocities and the Bosnian Genocide (Spencer, 2013).

didn't wish to see (Kiernan, 2009; Guettel, 2013). This violence was mimicked by the American Indian Wars in the latter half of the 1800s, where massacres against the natives, women and children included, were widespread.² Most of the conflict centered on the expanding United States and the Americans' desires to settle the Western lands, where hundreds of thousands of natives still lived. The wars and atrocities against the American natives prophesied the similar events that afflicted the Bosniaks in the 1990s.

In German Southwest Africa, the first contemporary concentration camps were constructed, something that would be copied in military and ethnic cleansing campaigns throughout the rest of the 20th century. In the 1900s, German colonizers under the instruction of Kaiser Wilhelm II rounded up and deported the native Herero and Nama ethnic groups into the Namib Desert. Starving them and preventing any escape, those orchestrating the genocide not only cleared the land of natives for their fellow German settlers, but also unknowingly laid the groundwork for one of the largest and most destructive genocides in history: the Holocaust in Europe (Madley, 2005).³ A fundamental tenet behind the Holocaust was greater *Lebensraum*, or living space for ethnic Germans. Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler wanted to expand the ethnic German sphere of influence, and eyed Eastern Europe as his ideal *Lebensraum*. The Nazis constructed the *Generalplan Ost*, or the General Plan for the East, which detailed the eradication of virtually all Jewish and Slavic life in the East; the Nazis put the estimated necessary dead to number greater

² Both the Trail of Tears and the massacres that followed during the American Indian Wars should be considered genocide, as both were sanctioned by the government and intended to remove or destroy the native nations of North America. The Trail of Tears is analogous to a death march while the later massacres were carried out by killing squads (e.g. scalp hunters) such as those led by Lt. Colonel George Custer (Guettel, 2013).

³ Many of the Germans present at the Herero and Nama Genocide eventually became close compatriots with Adolf Hitler, and acted as a conduit through which genocidal ideas flowed. For instance, the colonial governor of German Southwest Africa was Heinrich Goering, father of Hermann Goering, a close confidant of Hitler and a lead architect of the Holocaust (Madley, 2005).

than 30 million, but were not able to implement the plan due to Hitler's disastrous military operations in Russia (Cesarani, 2016; Snyder, 2010). Nevertheless, these two instances of genocide committed by the Germans prove the link between genocide and land settling, something that the Bosnian Serbs would imitate half a century later.

Nationalism and the Fatherland. Land is synonymous with power. As discussed, resource conflicts and those fought over territory constitute a significant amount of humanity's strife. Humanity continues to fight these wars for virtually infinite reasons, from gold to God to glory. Yet in the context of genocide and extermination, the concept of nationalism is a ubiquitous element. It is no secret that appeals to nationalism amongst the common folk of a nation have the power to unite them under a homogenous banner and rally them against anyone not under it with them. Through conviction, manipulation, threats, and trickery, nationalists advertise their country to their fellow countrymen as a greater alternative to any other, and asserts that it can be better than it currently is. To achieve something on the scale of genocide, a large number of people must be compelled by this logic and willing to follow through with the orders. There were an estimated 200,000 Holocaust perpetrators, ranging from top Nazi officials like Heinrich Himmler, Reinhard Heydrich, and Adolf Eichmann, to lowly bakers and cobblers persuaded by nationalistic threats to join the Einsatzgruppen and execute Jews in the Soviet Union (Cesarani, 2009). Such a force would not have been possible without nationalistic tendencies, which almost universally call for the need to protect and expand the Fatherland.

The concept of the Fatherland, Motherland, or Homeland is central to nationalistic rhetoric. Nationalists and jingoists exalt their country with fiery passion, a passion that easily impresses many others to believe in similar ideas. One idea that has been repeated throughout history is that the glory of the Fatherland deserves to be spread as far as possible, meaning the

expansion into new physical territory. Naturally, the people of the Fatherland will move with it, and more often than not replace those living in the now occupied areas. As the Homo sapiens replaced the Neanderthal, so too does one ethnicity replace another through nationalistic genocide.

The Armenian Genocide. While genocide through settler colonialism was a tragedy of the age of Imperialism in the 19th century, genocide via murderous nationalism was a catastrophe of the 20th. The first instance of nationalistic genocide occurred in 1915, when Talaat Pasha and his revolutionary group, the Young Turks, sought to cleanse Turkey of the Armenian presence. Using the chaos and destruction of the ongoing First World War, a triumvirate of three senior Turkish politicians, Talaat Pasha, Enver Pasha, and Djemal Pasha (collectively known as the 3 Pashas), orchestrated the deportation and murder of over one million Armenians under Turkish control by sending the majority of them to the Syrian Desert (Power, 2002). At the time, this was the largest focused attempt to destroy a single nation in all of history (Kiernan, 2009). The 3 Pashas, while devising the murderous methods themselves, could not perpetrate such a scale of extermination without the help of their countrymen.

Since as early as 1910, Talaat Pasha began planning the eventual demise of the Armenian minority. Simultaneously, he also began to fuel the flames of Pan-Turkism, the concept of unifying all ethnically Turkic people in a single, massive country, consisting of a homogenous culture. This “Greater Turkey” would encompass much of the Middle East and Western and Central Asia, spanning from an expanded Turkey in the West, through the Caucasus, across the Caspian Sea into Kazakhstan, and reaching the Turkic people of Siberia. An extreme diversity was inherent in Talaat’s “Greater Turkey,” absorbing many regional nations and redefining political borders. Naturally, Talaat’s ideal Pan-Turkic country was free of all non-Turks and non-

Turkish Muslims, as all good Turks were Muslims, in his eyes. This necessitated a cleansing of Arabs and Christians, including Greeks and the largest minority in Turkey, the Armenians (Kiernan, 2009). In time, the 3 Pashas together passionately advocated for the creation of their Pan-Turkic state, and upon seeing the nationalistic trends rising in Europe leading to World War I, thousands let themselves fall under their alluring words in the hopes of achieving similar power for their own country.

Clearly, an extremely racist and vile political and social ideology spawned the massive Armenian Genocide, but the Young Turks made the ideological physical with the practical goals of securing a physically larger state for ethnic Turks. Enver Pasha in particular delivered virulent speeches condemning the existence of non-Turks and non-Muslims in his glorious “Greater Turkey,” and the doomed Armenians fit both categories. Fiery rhetoric, lack of education amongst the masses, and totalitarianism allowed the 3 Pashas to convince their countrymen that a greater Turkic state was possible, and swayed thousands of Turkish men, women, and children to turn against the Armenian neighbors. The Armenian Genocide is the second most studied instance of systematic extermination after the Holocaust, and the study always begins with the concept of Pan-Turkism and a “Greater Turkey” (Kiernan, 2009).

The Syrian Desert’s role in genocidal activities did not end with the Turks and Armenians. The terrorist group and self-proclaimed caliphate “the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)” rose to its greatest extent in 2014-2015 when it pushed out Iraqi government forces from northern Iraq and carved out large swaths of Syrian territory for itself (Warrick,

2016).⁴ With this new control over greater land, they set to eliminate all those who did not adhere to their strict form of Salafist Islam, most notably persecuting the Yazidi, and ethnoreligious group living in the mountains of Iraq. ISIL has led multiple raids on Yazidi settlements and claimed innumerable women as sex slaves (Mirza, 2017). ISIL was able to do this because of use of nationalism and religious differences to ostracize one (or in this case, many) groups from their own. That which happened and is still happening in Syria and the larger Middle East reflect the mentality of the Bosnian Serbs showed against the Bosniaks.⁵

Natural Resources

Of course, physical territory is not the only thing humans fight over. As necessary as land is to human life, it is the things that the land produces that are often more valuable. For this reason, the crux of resource conflicts is often natural resources, which fuel both humans and machines. Such resources come in the form of foodstuffs, water access, fossil fuels, natural gas, and so on. These facilitate not only life but the societies we humans have created, and a lack of any of these things causes our infrastructure and collective success to crumble. With that much at stake, many leaders throughout history have turned towards extermination and ethnic cleansing to secure any possible fuel sources (Sunga, 2014).

⁴ ISIL claims to be an autonomous power, but is in reality a proto-state, meaning that it is an emerging entity asserting its power and self-governance in defiance of established countries. ISIL has amassed their followers to do this by manipulating their sense of nationalism and radicalizing their notions of Islam (Warrick, 2016.)

⁵ The situation concerning ISIL is rapidly changing. On 17 October, 2017, ISIL was defeated in the Syrian city of Raqqa, which acted as their capital. Although ISIL still has a strong presence throughout the Middle East, their proto-state is rapidly collapsing (“Raqqa: IS ‘capital’ falls to US-backed Syrian forces”).

The Holodomor. During his reign as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin led countless brutal campaigns against both his enemies and his own people. Despite having many enemies abroad, most of the deaths attributed to Stalin come from his own Soviet Union (Snyder, 2010). During the four years of World War II alone, an estimated 20 million Soviet men, women, and children perished under his command. However, mass death became commonplace in Stalin's Soviet Union long before World War II. In the 1930s, he considered the peoples of Ukraine, one of the Soviet Union's satellite states, his enemy, and set his genocidal mind against them in the form of the Holodomor.

The Holodomor, also known as the Terror-Famine, occurred in the southern Soviet Union from 1932 to 1933, and was an exacerbated, man-made famine. For the first part of the 1930s, terrible harvests and, subsequently, famines, ravaged the Soviet Union, causing mass starvation and death. Amidst the death, Stalin saw in Ukraine the possibility to exploit their remaining foodstuffs and destroy those he considered his enemy, namely the Ukrainian nation and the kulaks who lived among them. Kulaks were affluent farmers who controlled the production and sale of almost all grain in Ukraine and beyond, and their resistance to Stalin's attempts to collectivize their crop production upset his communist policies (Ellman, 2007). They lived predominantly in Ukraine and were mostly a part of the Ukrainian nation. Ukraine, as the largest and most powerful republic under the USSR's domain besides Russia, had an independent spirit, and fought tooth and nail to leave the Russian sphere of influence. Although in reality it was disastrous agricultural policies, poorly implemented attempts at industrialization, and poor weather that caused the original famines, Stalin had little trouble blaming them on the Ukrainians due to their kulak population, even though Ukrainians were suffering just as harshly as everyone else. If famine was occurring, Stalin concluded, then it should affect Ukraine, and only Ukraine,

to save Russian lives elsewhere. In 1932, Stalin exacerbated the famine in Ukraine in an attempt to destroy that nation (Sabol, 2017; Snyder, 2010).

The Holodomor was an engineered, man-made phenomenon. While it is true that famine was already plaguing Ukraine, Stalin's policies deliberately heightened the problem there and elsewhere such as the Soviet Republic of Kazakhstan, which suffered similarly under Soviet policy (Sabol, 2017). He did this not only to eradicate the Ukrainians, but also to seize their wheat and grain surpluses to ensure the survival of those he deemed worthwhile. He froze all Ukrainian imports, and sent in paramilitary squads to steal any grain or other foodstuffs they could find, and to transport it back to Russia. These paramilitary groups also summarily executed resistant Ukrainians, and virtually all kulaks on sight; mass shootings and hangings were common in Soviet Ukraine. Having literally no food in the entire country, the Ukrainians resorted to widespread cannibalism, and lost more than 25% of their population in the eastern regions (Ellman, 2007). Estimates of the death toll vary wildly, with Ukrainian politicians placing the number around 20 million, and original Russian documentation reporting the number at less than one million. More conservative, unbiased sources place the number anywhere from 3 to 5 million deaths in the single year (Snyder, 2010). It is also unknown exactly how much food Stalin stole from the Ukrainians, but estimates place it to be around 2 million tons, enough to feed over 5 million people throughout the famine's duration (Ellman, 2007).

Joseph Stalin led his war against the peoples and social classes of Ukraine because his country had run out of food. While economic and classist ideologies pervaded the conflict, it was a genocide crafted with resources in mind. It is true that he had long beforehand desired to rid his communist country of the Ukrainian presence, but it was amidst the Great Soviet Famines 1932-33 that he saw his chance to kill through the seizure of resources (Sabol, 2017). Crops were

stolen outright and appropriated for Stalin's preferred class and ethnicity. It is unknown if Stalin would have brought death and ethnic cleansing to the Ukrainians if he wasn't in desperate need of food. However, historical hypotheticals are irrelevant. The reality of history is that Ukrainians were killed for their resources, in this case, fresh crops. This is not the last time genocide and ethnic cleansing occurred in the name of food.

Iraq. In the late 1980s, Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and his Ba'athist Party launched the Al-Anfal Campaign: an organized attempt to regain control of autonomous Kurdistan in Northern Iraq and expel, through deportation or death, any Kurdish life there. Chemical attacks against civilians, concentration camps, and the mass execution of men-of-age were a central facet of the Al-Anfal Campaign, as Ba'athists believed that any living Kurd endangered the chances of a submissive northern province (Trahan, 2009).⁶ This state-sponsored campaign ended the lives of tens of thousands of Kurds, Yazidis, and Assyrians and better established Iraqi dominance there (Kiernan, 2009; Trahan, 2009). In addition to outright executions and the "Arabization" of the region, the wholesale attainment of Kurdish resources reveal Saddam's intentions with his campaign.⁷

In the Arabic language, the term "Al-Anfal" literally means "the Spoils of War." The main architect of the genocide, Saddam's cousin and Iraqi Defense Minister Ali Hassan al-Majid, was inspired by a chapter of the Qu'ran entitled "Surat al-Anfal," which describes the military victory of Muslims over Pagans during the early days of Islam, and the Muslims'

⁶ The term "men-of-age" is a common identifier during wartimes. The age range includes all men who are generally perceived as being physically capable of combat or serving in the armed forces. In the case of Bosnia, Bosnian Serbs often detained any male Bosniak who appeared to be aged anywhere between 16-60 years old (Jones, 2013; Leydesdorff, 2015).

⁷ Saddam and Al-Majid did not only want to spread Iraqi influence into the northern mountains, but rather replace the Kurds there with actual Iraqis, whom they thought of to be "true Arabs" (Kiernan, 2009).

newfound gains (Trahan, 2009). Al-Majid gave his soldiers explicit instructions to commandeer their deserved *Anfal* from the murdered Kurds. Most often, this came in the form of livestock, money, and smuggled weapons (Powers, 2002; Trahan, 2009). Al-Majid intended all along for the war against the Kurds in northern Iraq to follow the trend of attack, kill, loot. It was a campaign defined by theft and acquisition as well as ethnic cleansing.

In addition to the money and other valuables acquired by the soldiers, there was a vested interest in the presence of oil in the northern fields. Iraq is today the second largest exporter of raw oil, and a significant portion of this is drilled and barreled in the north. With a rebellious Kurdistan occupying the precious oil fields, Iraq had restricted access to a major source of revenue. This too was a central goal of the Al-Anfal genocidal campaigns: the removal of Kurdish presence from the north in hopes of reclaiming the oil that they lived on top of (Kiernan, 2009). As usual, make no mistake in understanding that racist, nationalistic, and totalitarian policies also dictated the extermination of Iraq's mountain peoples. Yet the fact that a parallel objective alongside the campaigns was the theft of the Kurdish people's goods and oil in the region proves that material goals again accompanied the ideological.

Rwanda. In Rwanda, where genocide erupted with unprecedented suddenness and ferocity, it may have been the death of Rwanda's president that catalyzed the killings, but economics underscored it. A Malthusian situation boiled the ethnic tensions in the central African country, where in 1994 anywhere from five hundred thousand to one million ethnic Tutsis were murdered in only 100 days by the ruling Hutus; this reduced the Tutsi population by almost 70%, making it possibly the most ferocious attack on a human group since World War II (Diamond, 2011). As with every conflict before it, underlying inequalities, (in this case created by Rwanda's Belgian

colonizers, who racialized the difference between social groups in the country) are what pushed the two groups to the brink, yet it was unequal food distribution that pushed them over it.⁸

Since the end of colonial rule in Central Africa, the total population (and thus population density) increased exponentially, with no accompanying increase in farmland or territory. This put immense strain on local resources that had already suffered due to poor agricultural practices, such as farming resulting in soil erosion and massive deforestation (Diamond, 2011). By the 1990s, there was not enough food to keep the entirety of the population alive. With this grim fact weighing on the minds of everyone there, old animosities started to rise. To be sure, there had long been antipathy between the Tutsi and Hutu population, a result of the disparity created during colonial rule. The Belgian rulers gave Tutsis (comprising 15% of the total population), far more preferable treatment than the majority Hutus, leading to inevitable rivalry between the groups (Kiernan, 2009). The Malthusian situation in Rwanda caused that rivalry to grow to unimaginable heights, and violence became inevitable (Verpoorten, 2012).

When the Hutu president of Rwanda's plane was shot down in 1994, Hutu-supremacists launched their attacks on the Tutsi minority. A completely unorganized campaign against the Tutsi, Batwa, and moderate Hutu populations ensued, with the goals of the majority Hutu to finally take control of the country. As evident from the desperation of the food supply in the country, one would think economic stability would be a central goal of the fighting, yet this was not the case. For around 100 days, butchery and rape devastated the central African country, eradicating all chances of a resurgent economy after the killing ended (Power, 2002; Verpoorten,

⁸ The Belgian colonizers who introduced the concept of separate races and racial differences exacerbated any perceived difference between the Tutsi and the Hutu groups; although there were already social distinctions between the Tutsi and Hutu peoples, the Belgians racialized the problem (Domosh et al., 2015).

2012). Despite the food shortages that helped create the original situation, the combatants sought no solution to the issue of resource distribution during the fighting. In the frenzied chaos that followed the outbreak of violence, no faction implemented efforts to solve the issue that partially created the conflict in the first place. Unlike policies created by Stalin or Saddam, any war aims of the Hutus were very disorganized and did little to alleviate their situation or better the lives of the perpetrators. The problem of food and population persisted after the Rwandan genocide ended, and now fewer people were available to do anything about it (Power, 2002).

Human Resources

As one can now surely deduce, one of humanity's darkest blights is its treatment of fellow humans. Even within one's own community, extreme hatred and animosity can fester between neighbors, producing environments ripe for violence. Human cruelty towards others of the same race, ethnicity, and even neighborhood is a fundamental testament to violence inherent in human behavior. This violence is often employed in order to exert dominance over others, intimidating them physically or mentally to relent and submit to the wishes of the aggressor. The pinnacle of dominance, of course, is the institution of slavery, and the relations between slavery and genocide are manifold.

Contemporary slavery continues the trends set by historical slavery, that being the involuntary subjugation of human beings to perform work they do not consent to, with little or no pay, under acts of violence and/or threats to remain there (Bales, 2012). Those currently enslaved are often trafficked into that situation, which is where the term human trafficking appears. According to the UN, modern human trafficking is defined as follows:

“the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud,

of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.” (UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Person, Especially Women and Children).

This explains human trafficking as the unwilling subjugation of people by others for enslavement. This encompasses the sex trade, which traffics men and women throughout the world via black market deals, and recruitment into “traditional” slave labor (e.g. forced labor on farms or in sweat shops/factories), which still exists in every region of the world (Bales, 2012)

In the context of genocide, it seems counterintuitive to enslave others. Many definitions of genocide explicitly state it as the desire to rid a people, through murder or deportation, from a certain geographic area. If the perpetrators wish to cleanse the land of an ethnicity, why then would they choose to keep many of them around in the form of slaves? There is no one answer for this, because as every genocide is committed for different reasons, perpetrators have different intentions with the conquered peoples. These reasons range from economics to ideology to pure human cruelty and perversion.

Slave labor. I do not intend to discuss the technicalities of institutionalized slavery in this thesis; that is an immensely large topic deserving its own time. However, it would be irresponsible to ignore the perpetual exploitation of human resources in many genocidal events. In the context of ethnic murder, death or subjugation through slavery was most often found in colonial settings. Virtually every colonial and imperial power employed slave labor to a certain extent, even after those very powers had in theory ended slavery and its associated slave trade. The United Kingdom, for example, formally outlawed slavery in areas under its direct control in 1833, yet retained slave holding in certain plantation colonies (Kiernan, 2009). The colonizers of the aforementioned United States, Australia, and German Southwest Africa attempted to enslave

the population to benefit their own people, but rarely did this work as intended, as it is extremely difficult to subdue an ethnic group in their indigenous lands if unable to also completely suppress their free will (Kiernan, 2009). When genocide was eventually pursued in these (and many other) areas, some of the indigenous people were kept alive and separated in the hopes that they would provide labor for the colonizers and help settle the land for the rest of their people. This strategy was unsuccessful virtually everywhere, and those originally kept alive more often than not joined the doomed fates of their countrymen.

Another example of genocide dependent on slavery is the Holocaust. Jewish slave labor was vital to the Nazi operations on the Eastern Front, despite Nazi wishes to wipe the Jews off the face of the Earth. Clearly, the Nazi regime organized the systematic obliteration of Jewish life in Europe to ensure maximum death and destruction, yet even in the death camps of occupied Poland, they kept some Jews alive. Most often, those spared were forced to do the jobs no “proud German” could in good conscience do, such as cutting the hair off those about to enter the gas chambers, performing latrine duty, and comprising the *Sonderkommando*, task units employed to clean the corpses out of the gas chambers, operate the crematoria ovens, and exhuming existing mass graves (Snyder, 2010). It is no surprise that no Germans wanted to take those jobs, necessitating the need for Jewish slave labor. It was not only Jews who were subjugated to those horrid jobs; POWs, communists, and ethnic Poles too were forced to work for the Germans.

These brief examples are not the only instances of slavery under the umbrella of genocide. The process of invading and conquering goes hand in hand with the enslavement and oppression of local ethnic groups. It has happened before, it is happening now, it will happen again.

Sexual Slavery and Gendercide. Even amongst the groups targeted for murder, things are not equal between the victims. Of the same group, some can meet different, often worse fates than those merely killed. While it is men who are usually yoked into performing slave labor, women often are forced into sexual slavery to serve the conquerors. This illustrates the unequal treatment of the victims as well as the primary motivations of many genocidal events. Women, like the men made slaves, were also treated as disposable, human resources to either pleasure the perverse fantasies of the invaders or to propagate their “superior genes” (Kressel, 1996).

The discrepancies between how men and women are treated give rise to a relatively new and unstudied concept: gendercide. Gendercide is the extermination or persecution of a specific gender, rather than an ethnicity, culture, or religion (Jones, 2013). In many historical instances of ethnic cleansing, genocide, or general wartime atrocities, the perpetrators follow a basic pattern: neutralize any male in the area and claim the women as their own (Kiernan, 2009). Men are seen as more likely than women to lead a revolt or fight back against the invaders, necessitating their immediate suppression. In traditional, historical societies, men often forced women to assume a subservient or docile role, which leads the perpetrators of these crimes to once again force women into those roles. (Nellans, 2017). Usually, this dominance over women takes the form of rape, and can be seen throughout the history of violence.

Survivors, perpetrators, and eye-witnesses have unquestionably documented and recounted rape in virtually every genocide that has reliable data (Barkan, 2002; Chang, 2012; Kiernan, 2009; Nellans, 2017; Power, 2002). Rape is a tool used to subdue an individual, reducing them to a powerless state and extinguishing their will to retaliate (Nellans, 2017). Much like the issue of slave labor, it is difficult to determine why women would be kept alive when the goal of the aggressors is to wipe a people from the world. Even more perplexing is why rapes are

conducted in the hopes of impregnating the women. If rape is condoned by the aggressing government, the fallacious logic usually involves the “strength” of their genes “overpowering” those of the captured females, and thus the women can bear genetically superior children and grow the population of the majority ethnic group. (Jones, 2013; Kiernan, 2009). Many see this as strained logic used to justify hedonistic pleasure during times of war, when accountability is difficult to designate. Whatever the reason, when men are mostly killed, women are subjected to the endless cruelty and sadism of their genocidal captors (Barkan, 2002).

In the 20th century, mass rape occurred most notably in the Chinese city of Nanking, where in 1937-1938 Imperial Japanese forces eliminated all men and embarked on a campaign designed to rape, humiliate, and torture the female population of the city. Women of all ages and professions, including girls as young as five and women as old as eighty, endured months of gang-rapes, forced orgies, and ritual genital mutilation (Chang, 2012). Truly, none were spared from the horrific thoroughness of Japanese rape campaigns. Although sources widely differ, estimates put the total death toll past a minimum of 40,000 and ranging up to 300,000, with the vast majority being unarmed women (Chang, 2012). The scale of the massacre prompts many historians to consider the case of Nanking as genocide, and it may be the first case of gendercide in the 20th century.

Gendercide did not end in Nanking. In the contemporary era, it reached its climax during the Bosnian War and Genocide, which I will discuss more in-depth in the following section. However, one has seen gendercide recently and still today. The Tutsi women in Rwanda were categorically raped, and, at its peak, ISIL was notorious for capturing women after genocidal campaigns in occupied Syria and Iraq, keeping them as sex slaves, then executing them after they had lost interest in them (Mirza, 2017; Nellans, 2017; Power, 2002). In the eyes of many

genocide perpetrators, these women are viewed as nothing but sex objects who can be raped at any time and killed afterwards. They, along with the enslaved men, are thought of as little more than tools of war.

Cultural and Urban Resources

For the purposes of this thesis, I will define cultural and urban resources as that which compose the collective identity of a nation. Government buildings, economic institutions, ethnic neighborhoods, cultural centers, places of worship, and historical sites all contribute to the success and survival of people in a local community. The destruction of any of these hinders the abilities of people to organize themselves and can severely terrorize them and lower their morale. In truth, rarely does the theft or loss of these resources result in death outright, but it absolutely eases and contributes to the annihilation process (Kiernan, 2009). As with the procurement of the other resources discussed, urban resources play a part in not only genocide but war as a whole. In the strategy of war, urban areas can provide invaluable cover or operating grounds. In the process leading up to the genocides, appropriation over the urban resources that the local population considers an integral part of their society can have a devastating effect on them.

These resources are not only located in large cities; rural towns and villages too hold significance for a people, and are just as vulnerable, if not more so, than the larger cities. Villages and cities alike hold political, cultural, and national importance to people, and so should be equally counted when they are targeted for ruination. The structures that together form the fabric of an ethnic group's community provide a sense of place and security, and when that is threatened, attacked, or destroyed, the intangible aspects of that group, their politics, history, and culture are subject to violence. If the intangible elements of a people are endangered, their entire lifestyle is as well. While it is possible to rebuild buildings, the moral despair that follows the

destruction of a church or neighborhood, which one often holds dear, is enough to force people to leave forever. For this reason, destruction of cultural resources plays a vital role in genocide.

Although a lot of the cultural resources of a society are located in urban areas, cities are not usually the scenes of mass murder; while thousands have been killed on their front doorstep, killing generally occurs on the perimeter of these areas, and seldom in the city center. The murdered people may come from urban areas, but rarely do cities or villages contain the space or secrecy necessary to carry out genocide-scale massacres. There are of course exceptions to this rule, but by and large, genocide committers move their victims to fields or forests nearby to perform the executions: the Herero and Armenians were sequestered to the desert during their respective genocides, and Cambodian peasants and intelligentsia alike were led to what was dubbed the Killing Fields during the Cambodian Genocide of the 1970s. For instance, despite many viewing the cattle cars of Holocaust trains (which shunted hundreds of thousands of Jews and others to their deaths) as the iconic symbol of that genocide, historians estimate that well over half of all Holocaust victims never saw those trains, and were instead killed less than 5 kilometers from their houses (Cesarani, 2016). The Jews lived (or were forced to live) in Jewish designated neighborhoods and ghettos, and were then marched outside their home city where Waffen-SS soldiers killed them, such as what happened on the outskirts of Kiev, Ukraine, in 1941. The Nazis first cordoned off certain city blocks, then systematically led groups of Jews to a ravine in the woods where an *Einsatzgruppe*, or mobile death squad, made them lie face-down in a ravine and shot them in the back of the head. In total, the *Einsatzgruppe* shot more than 33,000 Jews to death in a single day (Cesarani, 2016; Snyder, 2010). This monstrously large and efficient operation would not have been possible if the Nazis and their Ukrainian auxiliaries had not first controlled the city and reorganized those living in it.

Cities are usually population, cultural, and political centers within countries. They exert a significant influence on the local land and are hubs of commerce and science. For much of human history, cities have been a focal point of strategy during times of war. Control over a city generally means control over the surrounding country, and are thus vital to war or genocidal efforts (Kiernan, 2009). The ubiquitous goal of capturing cities means that the destruction of the opposition's cultural treasures and living spaces occurs in almost every major conflict. For this reason, it is difficult to pinpoint moments when urban resources were a central genocidal aim, as they often accompany these endeavors and act as a backdrop or precursor to the violence. Yet the desolation of cityscapes does set a precedent for the slaughter that follows, and the methods of citywide destruction can provide insight to the intentions the perpetrators have for their victims.

Killing a culture. The genocidal architects and engineers tasked with their immense goal often find it necessary to first kill the will to live in a human before killing their body. In their attempts to both oppress and dehumanize their enemies, the genocide perpetrators regularly mock, deface, or tear down iconic or important cultural sites in urban areas. These sites include places of worship, historical monuments, neighborhood stores, and anything else that helps a group of people identify with their home. The violation of all that a people holds sacred has resounding effects on their mental health, breaks them down, weakens them, and makes them more susceptible to influence later on. The terrifying and brutal repression of home life and limiting what people have access to acts as a sort of prelude to the killing process. The control of cities sets the stage for the moral, cultural, and ethical nadir that usually follows.

An example of the destruction of urban resources foretelling impending doom is the case of *Kristallnacht*, or Crystal Night. *Kristallnacht* occurred from 3-4 November, 1938 all across Nazi Germany. Under the orders of the SS leaders and local policemen, pogroms and riots were

incited in most major German cities, wherein ethnic German citizens and officers alike desecrated any and all Jewish establishments (Cesarani, 2016). SS soldiers and civilians of all kinds razed synagogues, looted Jewish-owned stores, assaulted Semitic neighborhoods, and killed over 100 Jews (Cesarani, 2016; Snyder, 2010). Many historians view *Kristallnacht* as the start of the Holocaust, and, discounting the anti-Semitic laws constantly being passed, it was the first government-sanctioned attack on German Jews (Snyder, 2010). The victims of *Kristallnacht* were not so much the Jewish people themselves, but rather their presence in the cities they occupied. The attacks on their temples, stores, and homes were an attempt to terrorize the Jewish people into fleeing German-held land and to erase their impact on German society. By attempting to eradicate first the Jewish buildings and their methods of self-sufficiency, the Nazis set the stage for what was to come later: the annihilation of entire European nations.

The Nazis riled their compatriots to the point of desecrating the cities they too inhabited for many reasons, one of the most important being dehumanizing the Jewish character in the eyes of fellow Germans. Ethnic cleansing and genocide on the scale the Nazis intended would not have been possible without the aid of thousands and thousands of co-conspirators. Although the systematic extermination of European minorities repulsed the majority of German society, a significant portion of the population bought into it. The German government indoctrinated thousands of impressionable citizens by painting the Jews and others as alien. Those who collude together to execute genocide generally adhere to the same ideology, something that their superiors make personal through the use of brainwashing and propaganda. When ideology is made personal, anything besides it immediately becomes impersonal, different, and threatening. Attacking the identity of a people by attacking their cultural and material possessions in their

places of residence is an excellent, albeit heartless, method of turning people against each other, and sowing the seeds of hate.

Neglected Neighborhoods. Outright violence is not the only way attackers utilize urban resources to facilitate their murderous machinations. An immense amount of planning is necessary to carry out their intentions, and thus the organization of their victims is vital to their operations. When it comes to cityscapes, this most often takes the form of ethnicity-based laws and demographic reorganization to group the condemned people together. The Turks did this to the Armenians, the Nazis did this to the Jews, and the Serbs did it to the Bosnians (Aquilué & Roca, 2016; Cesarani, 2016; Power, 2002). This binds the people into a small, often cramped and dirty area which is easily managed, administered, and eventually, liquidated. To be sure, planned ethnic neighborhoods still exist today and have existed where genocide was not being planned. The United States and South Africa both had famously racist segregation and apartheid laws to separate races, policies which survived late into the 20th century. Environmental racism today creates many of the same patterns as before, forcing low-income families (who are often minorities) to live in dirtier, more polluted, and rundown locations. Much like the destruction of cultural or urban establishments, forcing a people into a smaller, assuredly more squalid area characterizes them as “other,” “dirty,” and “different.” It separates them from the majority group, further driving home the point that they are unneeded and unwanted in the current society.

One must note that ethnic neighborhoods are not inherently bad. Citizens constituting a minority group regularly choose to form their own homogenous enclaves within cities and suburbs; there is a perceived comfort, safety and security in living with one’s own people. Ethnic neighborhoods are seen in many cities around the world today as a celebration of the survival of culture and heritage in diasporic setting. But when a government forces a portion of its citizenry

to live in horrible, unkempt, and purposefully neglected living quarters, the neighborhood becomes a prison or tomb trapping the disenfranchised of the city.

Final Notes on Genocide and Resources

Though the power of ideology, language, and belief has the ability to change the world, the reality of our collective lives is that we inhabit the physical world. The misguided ideas that brings one to believe with full conviction that the annihilation of a certain race or nation will end their own troubles often begin in the abstract, but their actions affect the earth more than the mind. Hunger, cramped living spaces, dwindling fuel, and an overall struggling life are sufficient forces to drive people to a desperation strong enough to make them strike with cruelty and malice at others. Again, I must state clearly that no genocide has been initiated solely over the need for material resources. The absolute sadism and hatred genocidal perpetrators inflict on their often-helpless victims does not and cannot stem only from the need for material gain. There have been (and still are) many people in the world who truly derive pleasure in the torture, mutilation, and murder of innocent men, women, and children who, like their killers, have hopes and dreams and fears. The moral abyss found in those who orchestrate these events house a deep, intractable hatred, one that years of indoctrination and fear mongering form. Still, as I have demonstrated, there is ample evidence to suggest that there are parallel motivations in these actions. Their ideology satisfies the mind, but the resources satisfy the body. Genocide is perpetrated to ensure that both of these are gained through campaigns designed to inflict suffering and death upon the world. When studying, understanding, and fighting genocide, the knowledge of both the tangible and intangible is required in order to make a difference in the world.

Part 3: The Bosnian Genocide

Characters and Location: The Geography of a Genocide



Fig. 1 The Balkan states as they appeared at the outbreak of the Yugoslav Wars (Note: Vojvodina and Kosovo were autonomous entities under Serbia's administration.) (Image credit: Jugo_kort/Wikimedia Commons/CC BY-SA 3.0).

The Balkan region has a nebulous border. There is no consensus as to where the boundaries between the Balkans and the rest of the world lies. One definition relies on physical features by placing the Balkan States on what is called the Balkan Peninsula. This peninsula is bordered by the Adriatic Sea to the west, the Mediterranean Sea to the South, and the Black Sea to the East. At its greatest extent, it stretches from Greece in the South, Turkey to the East, Italy to the Northwest, and Romania to the Northeast. While this provides a rough physical context, it is often easier to think of the Balkans as a cultural area.

Under cultural definitions of the Balkans, including a shared heritage, language, and genealogical background, there are seven countries that can be considered Balkan States: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia (Fig. 1). In the case of the Bosnian War and Genocide, there were three that had the greatest influence: Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia. These three countries share land borders and each have an ethnically diverse population, the most diverse being Bosnia. Within Bosnia's territory, people of different religions and ethnic backgrounds mix, work, and live together. Some would consider this heterogeneity to be a good quality, as it fosters the spread of ideas and promotes harmony among different peoples. On the eve of the Bosnian War, Serbian leadership did not agree.

Bosnia-Herzegovina itself is where most of the violence took place. At the time of the Bosnian War, Bosnia was rapidly disintegrating into several emerging proto-states, nationalistic endeavors, and separatist movements. While most of these entities went largely unrecognized by any formal government, two emerged as the main contenders for power in Bosnia: the Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia and the Republika Srpska, created by and representing the interests of ethnic Croats and Serbs, respectively. The Bosniaks, the primary targets of Bosnian Serb ethnic killing, were stateless, generally not being included in either entity.⁹ These two entities (Herzeg-Bosnia and the Republika Srpska) made up the bulk of political power in Bosnia at the time, and were supported by Croatia and Serbia in the War, with each trying to spread their own ethnicity's agendas throughout the land, with little regard for the other people living there.

There are many different groups of people who live in Bosnia and were involved in the War. While there were many who were affected by the War, there are four groups who were

⁹ The Bosniaks were primarily supported by the Bosniak Army, a remnant of the defunct central government of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Power, 2002).

mainly affected by the Bosnian Genocide. They are the Bosniaks, Croats, Bosnian-Serbs, and Serbians. These are all closely related groups who have lived together for 600 years. Many of them share ancestors, history, and land. Though their religions and ethnic background may be different, they have all called the Balkan region home for generations. Those generations have seen times of peace and violence, but have lived together in Bosnia.

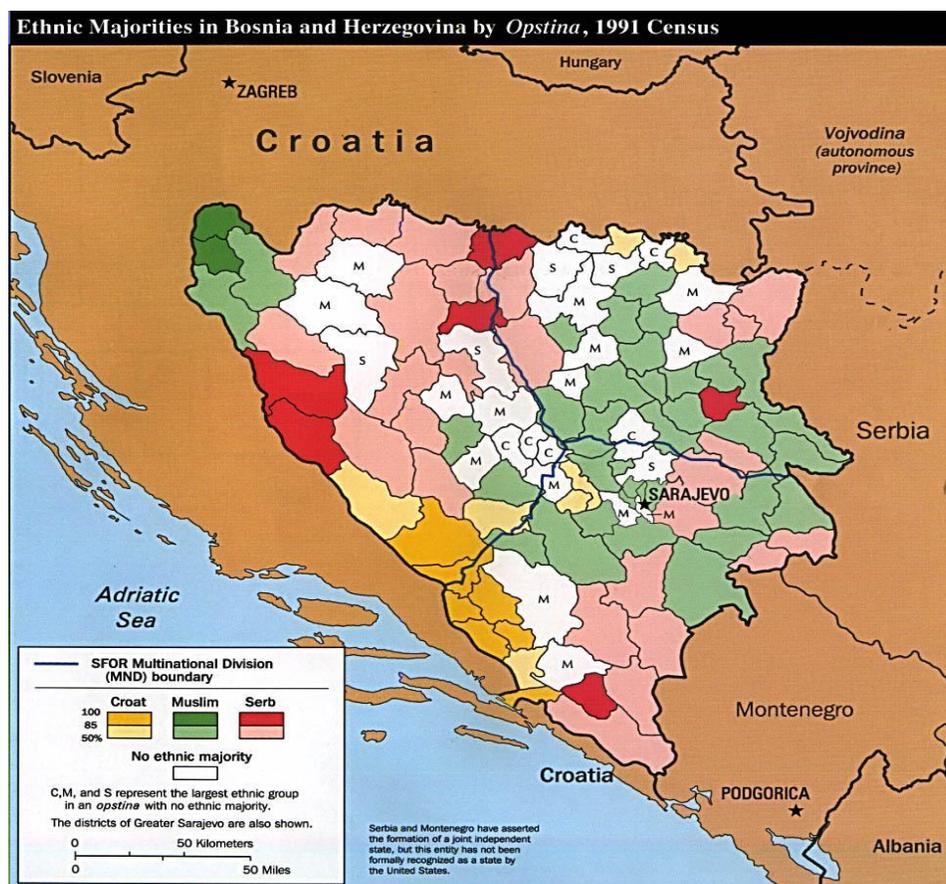


Fig. 2 The ethnic distribution in Bosnia on the eve of the Bosnian War (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013)).

Those who faced the bulk of Serbian persecution were the Bosniaks. Bosniaks, also called Bosnian Muslims, are a south-Slavic nation who predominantly follow Islam, and form the second largest Muslim population in Europe (with Albanians being the largest). There exists

a considerable Bosniak diaspora due to the Bosnian War, but before the War, the vast majority of them lived in Bosnia, with recognized minority status in Croatia. The Bosniak ethnic group are the remnants of Ottoman conquest in the Balkans, which was defeated in the early 1900s with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan Wars. This is a large facet of the targeted ethnic hatred. Serbian aggressors, like many genocide perpetrators before them, were easily able to paint the Bosniaks as “others” (Kiernan, 2009). The Bosniaks have a different religion, are the offspring of an empire considered foreign, and have different traditions than the Serbs. Islam is a central tenet of the Bosniak identity, and Serbian war criminals often used this to their advantage in fostering animosity against those they considered “impure.”

Another group that both faced large amounts of persecution and added to the war against the Bosniaks were the Croats. Although the Serbs never explicitly stated their desire to cleanse their country of the Croatian people, Croats more often than not found themselves in the crossfire of the War, and when they were intentionally killed, it was for far different reasons than the Bosniaks. Additionally, ethnic Croats living in Bosnia are considered Bosnian Croats, similar to their Serbian counterparts.¹⁰ Like their Bosniak neighbors, the Croats are a south-Slavic people, having lived in the Balkans for thousands of years. They form the overwhelming majority of the population of Croatia and are primarily Roman Catholic.

The perpetrators of the Bosnian Genocide were mostly of Serbian descent. This can be broken down into two major groups: the Bosnian Serbs and the Serbians. Bosnian-Serbs are ethnic Serbians living within Bosnian territory; their legal nationality is Bosnian, but they consider their cultural background and identity to be Serbian. Within the context of Bosnia, the

¹⁰ When, in 1993, Herzeg-Bosnia and Croatia declared war on Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bosnian Croats allied themselves with the Bosnian Serbs and attacked many Bosniak towns and villages in western and southern Bosnia.

Bosnian-Serbs formed the Republika Srpska, which aligned itself with Serbia. Serbia, of course, is home to the Serbians. They too are a south-Slavic nation and are traditionally devout Orthodox Christians, as opposed to the Bosnian Muslims and the Croatian Catholics. Having long yearned for a “Greater Serbia,” Serbia sought to reclaim the ethnic Serbs it felt were trapped within Bosnia, and the two groups worked together to win the Bosnian War and claim the entire land of Bosnia for the Serbs.

Ethnicity	Number	%
Bosniak	1,902,956	43.5
Serb	1,366,104	31.2
Croat	760,852	17.4
Yugoslav	242,682	5.5
Montenegrin	10,071	0.2
Roma	8,864	0.2
Albanian	4,925	0.1
Other/Unidentified	80,579	1.9
Total:	4,377,033	100

(Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013)).

Historical Context for the Bosnian Genocide: The breakup of Yugoslavia

With the defeat of the National Socialist government in Germany and the fascist Ustaše government in Croatia at the end of World War II in 1945, communism flourished in the Balkans. Bosnia, along with Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro, and Macedonia, together created the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), which was officially neutral for the majority of the Cold War. After the death of long-time President Josip Broz Tito in 1980, and

amid rising ethnic tensions, Yugoslavia disintegrated over the next decade into a series of civil wars in 1991.

Slovenia was the first republic to gain independence after a relatively bloodless 10-day war, and violence would not overtake Macedonia until 2001. Croatia and Bosnia, however, faced more difficult challenges. With their former country unraveling, many politicians saw this as an opportunity to assert their power and gain greater control for their ethnic people. The politician who took this most to heart was Slobodan Milošević, the president of Serbia. He had long supported Serbian Nationalism, and publicly advocated for the creation of a “Greater Serbia:” a new, ethnically “pure” state for his Serbian people, encompassing the territories of Serbia, Bosnia, and Croatia (Cigar, 1995).

Milošević’s desire for a Greater Serbia was steeped in history. The first explicit indication that war might come to Bosnia was the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU), published in 1986. In the Memorandum, SANU all but explicitly called for ethnic Serbs to rally around nationalism, and protect the interests of their Mother Serbia in case that the SFRY collapsed, which looked to be an increasingly likely event (Cigar, 1995). The Memorandum also painted an image of Serbia being a persecuted nation. According to SANU,

All nations are not equal: the Serbian nation... did not obtain the right to its own state. Unlike national minorities, portions of the Serbian people, who live in other republics, in large numbers, do not have the right to use their own language and alphabet, to organize politically and culturally, and to develop the unique culture of the nation (Serbian Academy of Arts and Science, 1986).

Milošević officially denounced the Memorandum, yet often publicly echoed its sentiments. A few years later, on 28 June, 1989, Milošević gave a speech in Kosovo that became known as the

Gazimestan Speech. On the Kosovo Field, the site of a devastating Serbian military defeat at the hands of the invading Ottomans 600 years before in 1389, Milošević exacerbated the deteriorating situation in Yugoslavia by appealing to Serbian nationalism and uniting them against the “others,” namely the offspring of the Ottoman presence: the Albanians of Kosovo and the Bosniaks. He claimed lack of Serbian unity to stand against “inferior” peoples had led to Serbia’s current situation. Milošević (1989) stated;

The lack of unity and betrayal in Kosovo will continue to follow the Serbian people like an evil fate through the whole of its history. Even in the last war, this lack of unity and betrayal led the Serbian people and Serbia into agony, the consequences of which in the historical and moral sense exceeded fascist aggression.

The war Milošević mentions in this quote is World War II, during which the fascist Croatian Ustaše government led a genocide against the Serbs. At the time Milošević gave the Gazimestan Speech, many Serbs still remembered World War II personally. Specifically, they most often remembered the Ustaše-run Jasenovac extermination camp, in which more than 50,000 ethnic Serbs were detained and manually murdered. In total, Croatian nationalists murdered about half a million Serbs. Despite the fact that this atrocity occurred in living memory, Milošević still claimed the defeat by Muslim Ottomans 600 years before to be a more grievous insult to Serb identity. In Milošević’s eyes, those “borne of a foreign ethnicity” posed a greater threat (Milošević, 1989).

There is a certain security in hiding behind the past. Explaining contemporary tragedies through ancient reverberations absolves those who are currently alive and who themselves contributed to the problem. It is true that history played a key role in priming the Balkans for war, but the political situation in SFRY during the 1980s is what truly dismantled the country.

After the death of President Tito, there was a wave of liberation that swept through the country, and talks of independence circulated throughout each of Yugoslavia's republics. Croatia, Bosnia, and Slovenia were the most ardent propagators of independence, while Serbia, generally seen as both the economic and political powerhouse of Yugoslavia, was strongly against such talk (Hoare, 2014). As the 1980s wore on, and amid a collapsing economy and dissolution of their communist ally, the Soviet Union, the inevitability of Yugoslavia's disintegration became clear. Though Milošević originally condemned the notion of the breakup of Yugoslavia, he actually took the initiative after Slovenia declared independence in 1991. From his perspective, should Yugoslavia die, a stronger Serbia should rise from its ashes, and he saw in Bosnia the resources to make his dream a reality.¹¹

The country of Serbia worked closely with the Republika Srpska, the Serb government within Bosnia, to gain support for this movement. Many of the Bosnian Serbs within this entity supported Serbian aggression against their own countrymen, leading to the Bosnian War to be considered a civil war. The president of the Republika Srpska, Radovan Karadžić, sought to unite his entity with Serbia. With the support of Slobodan Milošević, Karadžić set about making this unity a reality. He placed Ratko Mladić, a fellow Bosnian Serb nationalist, at the head of the Bosnian Serb military. Together, the three, along with many other Bosnian Serb leaders and soldiers, plotted to eliminate all non-Serbs from Bosnia, and to pave the way for a Greater Serbia. Their machinations set a genocide in motion.

¹¹ After the SFRY erupted into civil wars and wars of aggression in 1991, Serbia and fellow Yugoslav republic Montenegro officially consolidated into the rump state of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), a remnant of the SFRY. Montenegro would often assist Serbia in providing men and supplies to the Bosnian Serbs attacking Bosniaks (Power, 2002).

The Course of the Genocide

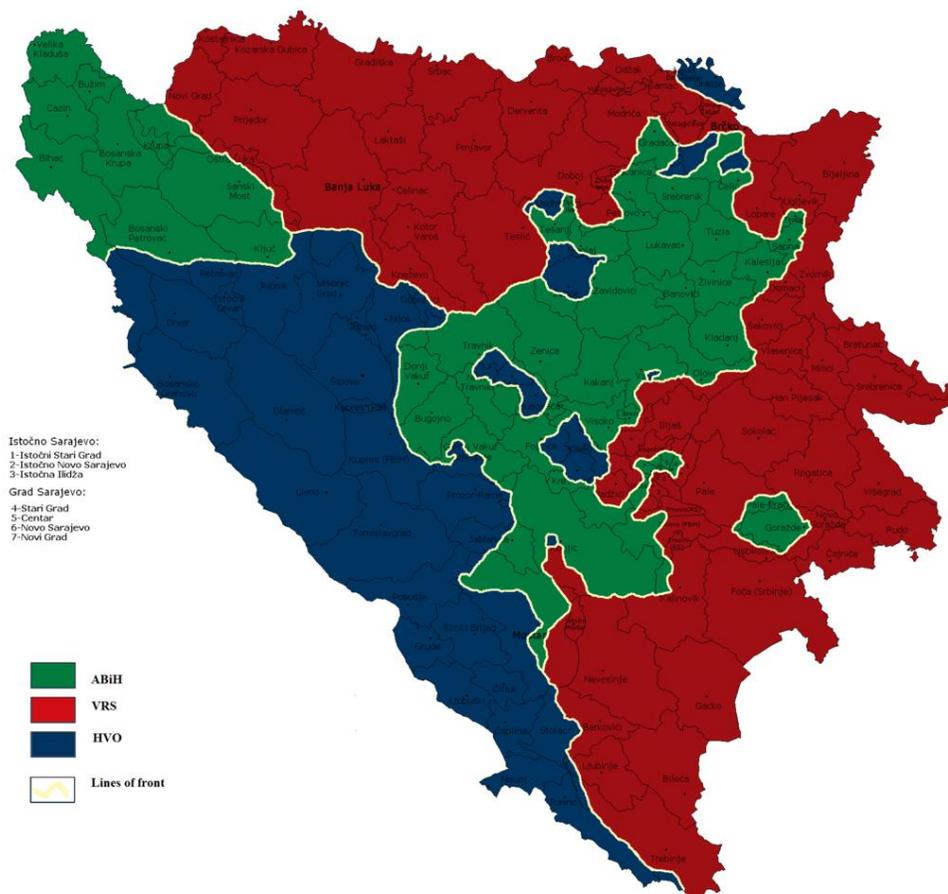


Fig. 3 The boundaries of the intra-Bosnian entities during the Bosnian War. Green: Bosniak territory; red: Serb territory; blue: Croatian territory. (Image credit: Ceha/Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain).

Like all genocides, the exact events of the tragedy remain unclear to this day. While the Bosnian Genocide was the conflict to receive the most real-time news updates in the contemporary era, there is still much that we may never know (Power, 2002). Some events, such as the terror inflicted on the Bosniaks on the eve of the War, the siege of Sarajevo, the rape camps in the Foča Valley, and the massacre at the Srebrenica are relatively well understood, but

much of the incidental violence that happened day-to-day is not. What follows is a brief summation of the War in Bosnia and the ethnic cleansing campaigns that accompanied it.

The Bosnian War. The Bosnian War started in April 1992 when Bosnia-Herzegovina declared independence from the crumbling Yugoslavia, which the Serbians mostly controlled by that point. The international community largely recognized Bosnia's claim for independence, but Serbia and the Serbian presence within Bosnia would not let it leave Yugoslavia without submitting much of its territory to the Serbs (Kiernan, 2009). The three predominant ethnicities within Bosnia, the Bosniaks, the Croat, and the Serbs, aligned themselves with the formal government of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Herzeg-Bosnia, and the Republika Srpska respectively. The Croats and Bosniaks initially formed an alliance against the Republika Srpska, but this proved short-lived; the Croatians eventually declared war on Bosnia in 1993. For the duration of the war, the Bosnian Serb army set the offensive, with the Bosniaks constantly on the defensive.

Immediately after the war broke out, shells began to fall on the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. With over 10,000 men at their disposal, the Army of the Republika Srpska surrounded the city, positioning tanks and snipers in the hills surrounding it to trap the Bosnian Army and tens of thousands of innocent civilians within its boundaries. The Siege of Sarajevo was one of the most devastating battles in contemporary warfare, and certainly the longest: for almost four years, the Serbs wore down the Bosnian army, destroyed the infrastructure and killed more than 10,000 people (Power, 2002). The burning of the Bosnian Executive Council building would arguably become the most iconic image of the conflict. Other large Bosnian cities, including Foča, Goražde, and Mostar, also experienced brutal sieges and vicious house-to-house fighting. By the beginning of 1993, the entirety of Bosnia plunged into an extremely messy war, with armies constantly collapsing and reforming under new names, continuously shifting alliances,

and the western powers only providing supplementary aid and supplies to the Bosniak army and applying sanctions to Serbia (Power, 2002).

The Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian armies undertook military operations throughout the country to ensure their own people's security, but fighting and violence was particularly ruthless in Eastern Bosnia, within the Republika Srpska and along the border of Serbia. Within a year of the war's onset, Bosnian Serb general Ratko Mladić and his soldiers managed to secure more than two-thirds of the country for his own people (Cigar, 1995). After a series of initial victories, counter-offenses against the Serbs stymied them on the battlefield, and despite numerous attempts by all sides to regain control of the land, little was tactically accomplished from the beginning of 1993 through mid-1994 besides the wholesale destruction of the cities, nations, and lives of Bosnia (Kiernan, 2009). Throughout the war, the United Nations was determined to remain neutral, only offering the occasional humanitarian supply drop (Power, 2002). Along with this meager aid, the UN attempted to establish "safe areas": enclaves with predominantly Bosniak populations that would be guarded by UN and NATO troops for the refuge of civilians. The UN designated the Bosniak cities of Srebrenica, Žepa, Goražde, Tuzla, and Bihać as safe areas, all of which were in Eastern Bosnia near the Serbian border (Power, 2002). These "safe" areas proved only marginally successful in defending civilians. NATO finally intervened militarily in 1994 after an upscale of violence, deploying its own soldiers and carrying out airstrikes against Bosnian Serb troops. Increased pressure by the international community led the Bosnian Serbs to finally agree to peace talks in 1995, with Serbian president Slobodan Milošević (who at that point had not yet received charges of war crimes) representing Bosnian Serb interests while Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić fled into hiding.

Ethnic Cleansing. Throughout the entire war, the Bosnian Serbs carried out an extensive ethnic cleansing campaign against the Muslims of Bosnia. As mentioned before, Radovan Karadžić had an extreme hatred of his Bosniak countrymen, and set out to purge them from the lands he wanted to claim for Serbia. Even before the war itself started, he enacted brutal, racist laws similar to those thrust on the Jews in Nazi Germany which limited the power and agency of Bosniaks living in the Republika Srpska. The gradual removal of Bosniak rights was complemented by the allowance of Serb abuse towards to the Bosniaks: policemen, lawmakers, and store owners were actively encouraged to discriminate and harass the Bosniaks they had contact with (Cigar, 1995; Meyerhoefer, 2015; Power 2002). When the Bosnian Serbs realized that war would come between the Serbs and Bosniaks, they took the initiative to ensure their swift dominance over Bosniak territory. As early as 1991, Serbian aggressors expelled Bosniaks from their hometowns and rounded them up into concentration camps, not dissimilar to those seen during World War II. Thousands died in the squalid encampments, where torture and rape were common tools of controlling the inmates (Cigar, 1995; Power, 2002; Leydesdorff, 2015).

Once the war started, the large-scale massacres of Bosniaks began almost immediately. One sign of things to come was the ethnic cleansing in Prijedor, a region in Northern Bosnia and within the Republika Srpska. After failed negotiations between the Bosniaks and Serbs, Serb artillery fire rained down on several cities in the region, and Bosnian Serb soldiers killed anyone who attempted to escape. On the night of 29 April, 1992, Bosnian Serbs razed many villages and towns to the ground with people still in them, and sent any survivors to satellite concentration camps, the most notorious of which was the Omarska Camp, in which they killed some 400 Bosniaks upon entry (Cigar, 1995). In total, almost 4,000 Bosniak men, women, and children were murdered in the Serbian assault on Prijedor (Cigar, 1995; Power, 2002). Similar events

occurred in the Foča and Drina Valleys, where the entire local population was expelled and thousands shot as they attempted to flee through the hills. The most horrendous of these massacres occurred at the end of the war, in July 1995, outside the town of Srebrenica. A UN-designated safe area, Srebrenica was overrun by Bosnian Serbs who ousted the Dutch soldiers attempting to protect more than 10,000 civilians. Once the Dutch were gone, the Bosnian Serbs immediately separated the men from the women and loaded the former onto a large convoy. The next day, 12 July, Bosnian Serbs under the supervision of Mladić killed over 8,000 Bosniak men and boys in a 48-hour period (Cigar, 1995; Power, 2002; Kiernan, 2009; Leydesdorff, 2015). While most prefer the term ethnic cleansing when describing the events in Bosnia, the focused attempt to kill everyone in places such as Prijedor, Foča, and Srebrenica has lead scholars and war tribunals alike to classify the acts undertaken there as genocide (Hoare, 2014).¹²

However, there are many discrepancies with Bosnian Serb atrocities during the war. After the outbreak of war, the ferocity, ruthlessness, and sadism of Bosnian Serb atrocities increased exponentially. When looking at Bosnian Serb ethnic cleansing practices, it becomes clear that many of the perpetrators favored terror and spectacle over efficiency. In some areas, Bosnian Serbs specifically ignored practical ethnic cleansing methods and chose those which would inflict the most pain and suffering: in one village in northern Bosnia populated only by unarmed civilians, Bosnian Serbs killed the entirety of the citizenry with chainsaws, forcing those who attempted to escape to watch as they literally sawed their fellow villagers in half (Power, 2002). Bosnian Serbs were also known to make contests between soldiers to see who could cut the most throats of prisoners within an hour (Leydesdorff, 2015). Bosnian Serbs choosing to exercise their

¹² On 22 November, 2017, the ICTY official judged Bosnian Serb general Ratko Mladić guilty of perpetrating genocide against the Bosniak people from 1992-1995. He received life in prison for the crime (“Ratko Mladic jailed for life over Bosnia war genocide”).

most sadistic fantasies through torture and killing differentiates the Bosnian Genocides from others in history. Genocides such as the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust were characterized by their faithfulness to efficiently exterminating a minority; although these conflicts too saw their fair share of “sport-killing” and disorganization amongst the perpetrators, the large-scale endeavors favored effective killing over fear mongering (Cesarani, 2016; Power, 2002; Snyder, 2010). Such was not the case in Bosnia, where it sometimes seemed the Bosnian Serbs were more interested in torturing the population and fulfilling their own desire for cruelty than actually cleansing their land of the Bosniaks.

Another noteworthy feature of the Bosnian Genocide was the Serb leadership’s endorsement of the mass rape of all Bosniak girls and women, echoing what happened in Japanese-occupied China in the 1930s. The Bosnian conflict became especially notorious for the systematic, organized rape of a large portion of Bosniak women, creating special camps with the sole purpose of trapping women to rape and impregnate them (Leydesdorff, 2015). Bosnian Serb officers encouraged their soldiers to perform their most perverse and twisted wishes on the women of these camps: the women’s captors raped mothers and daughters together, forced lawyers and doctors to clean toilets and execution sites with their bare hands, and kept women of higher social classes as personal slaves (Kressel, 1996). Genital mutilation as a form of torture was also commonplace, with multiple testimonies by camp survivors claiming Bosnian Serbs cut off breasts, sewed vaginas closed, and sliced pregnant bellies open (Snyder et al., 2006). More so than during other genocides, women were targeted for outright sexual exploitation, and were generally not summarily executed for this reason.

The primary reasons for the Bosnian War and Genocide were rooted in ethnic and religious history and in the Yugoslav political climate. However, the cruelty inherent in the

Bosnian Serb campaigns was something visceral, something borne from personal hatreds, ideology and indoctrination. Despite this, as with most other genocidal events, there are parallel motivations for the focused killing of an ethnicity. With every military operation conducted in Bosnia, some type of material resource played a role in directing the violence along with the aforementioned hatred. Serbians and Bosnian Serbs (and even their Croat collaborators) sought in some way, land, fuel, human resources, and cultural resources in their war against the Bosniak nation.

Land

Greater Serbia. The evidence supporting the claim that Serbs killed Bosniaks to claim their land is virtually undeniable. Since long before the war had started, Milošević made clear his desires for a “Greater Serbia:” an ethnically homogenous state comprising of Serb-dominated lands in Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Montenegro (Cigar, 1995; SANU, 1986). The political situation of the 1980s Yugoslavia greatly favored the Croats and Bosnians while leaving Serbians relatively underrepresented (Hoare, 2014). Once the breakup of Yugoslavia became obvious, Milošević and other Balkan leaders knew that new countries were about to form and the borders would be redrawn. This situation was the best chance Milošević would ever have to follow in the footsteps of Serbian expansionists before him, and he capitalized on this by taking the fight to the Bosnians.

The location and geography of the two major constituents of Bosnia, Herzeg-Bosnia and the Republika Srpska lent itself well to Milošević’s plans. The Republika Srpska stretched along the Bosnia-Serbia border and connected in many places to Serbia. After the Serbians’ initial assaults on Bosnia, it was relatively easy to establish Serbian rule throughout the Republika

Srpska and defy Bosnia's central government. Karadžić and other Bosnian Serb leaders certainly welcomed greater Serbian influence into his republic, but there was one major obstacle among others frustrating Serbian control of the Republika Srpska: the Bosniak population. Roughly half of the population of the republic was Muslim, something Milošević would not tolerate in his new Serbia. Looking to solidify and consolidate Serbian influence there, Milošević, Karadžić, Mladić, and many others devised a campaign to cleanse their expanded Serbia of the Bosniak people.

The Greater Serbia so desired by Serbians and Bosnian Serbs alike necessitated the annexation and absorption of the Republika Srpska into Serbia proper. Greater Serbia was not only a physically larger Serbian state but also one devoid of non-Serb traditions and cultures. It would be an Orthodox Christian nation-state, rejecting Catholicism and certainly Islam. To "purify" what already existed, all non-Serbs, non-Orthodox influence required thorough "cleansing". The largest massacres, loss of life, and amounts of suffering all took place within the Republika Srpska. The violence seen in these areas was not the "usual" violence that occurs during war: the violence was targeted specifically at Bosniaks because they were Bosniaks. In their conscious attempt to expand Serbia, Bosnian Serbs destroyed entire Bosniak towns, detained Bosniaks in concentration camps, and slaughtered them outright. The architects of the Bosnian Genocide knew that the quickest route to expansion was through primarily Serb territory, meaning that instead of first conquering additional territory, they simply cleansed what they saw as already theirs (Hoare, 2014).

While Serbia never formally absorbed the Republika Srpska, the process of "Serbianization" and appeals to "pan-Serbism" were widespread during the conflict (Cigar, 1995). Serbian demonstrations of dominance before the breakup of Yugoslavia supported Serbia's wartime claims that it was "their rightful heir to the Yugoslav state" (Cigar, 1995). The

perception that Serbia was the most powerful republic within the federation and had an ethnic presence throughout the country captured both the imaginations and fears of many Yugoslavian citizens, leading some nationalistic, pro-Serbian groups to form and swear allegiance to the fatherland (Hoare, 2014). During this time, Croatian nationalistic groups also formed to support the Croatian claim for independence, and were sometimes just as extreme as their Serbian counterparts (Kiernan, 2009). With several ethnic groups expressing their nationalistic “right” to expand into Bosnia, most of the country’s land was carved away from the Bosniaks. What used to be Bosniak territory became Serbian or Croatian, and what used to be a peaceful environment became hostile towards anyone who didn’t fall under their respective ethnic group. Unsurprisingly, the creation of ethnically homogenous nation-states promoted ethnic violence against all those who violated that homogeneity.

Many wars of aggression are fought to gain better influence over a certain geographic space. Even areas not specifically eyed for Milošević’s Greater Serbia were subdued to bend to Serbian whims. Within days of the War’s outbreak, most major Bosniak settlements were damaged and invaded by Serbian forces. In time, the Croats too committed identical attacks throughout the state, bombarding southern Bosniak cities and villages. With Croatia encroaching upon the Bosniaks from the south and west, and the growing Greater Serbia continuously assaulting from the north and east, the remaining Bosniak Army and the citizens it attempted to protect became increasingly strangled between the two powers. The land grabbing that occurred during the Bosnian War put the citizens directly in harm’s way. While this is not entirely uncommon during times of war, the added dimension of Milošević’s “ethnically pure” ideals put the Bosniaks living in occupied territory in an assuredly fatal situation (Kiernan, 2009).

Natural Resources

The Bosnian War and its subsequent ethnic persecution was motivated less so by a need for natural resources than other conflicts in the contemporary era. There was no famine gripping the Balkan region at the time, and the economy of most Balkan states was recovering from rampant hyperinflation during the 1980s (Hoare, 2014). The Balkans are not known as oil or natural gas producing lands, and aside from a few deposits of mineral veins, the area is not known as a wealth of natural resources (O'Brochta, 2016). However, there is still evidence to suggest that whatever resources there were may have played a significant role in the course of the violence. Although the resources themselves did not necessarily motivate or trigger the fighting, the natural capital within certain areas of Bosnia did *intensify* the fighting, exacerbating violence primarily along the Serbian border.

At the time of the Bosnian War, much of the population was still living in rural settings, with only one major city: Sarajevo. Despite this lack of industry, most every bit of land has some intrinsic value. Access to rivers, fertile soils, and livable space would be invaluable when deciding where to establish a town or community. This was the mentality employed by Bosnian Serb strategists when designing their war against the government and people of Bosnia. In their quest for their Greater Serbia, Serbian soldiers were looking at what areas were most essential in securing early success in the war. In short, the Republika Srpska was leading a traditional war: seeking advantageous geographic locations to both facilitate the war effort and ensure the possibility of a successful society afterwards (O'Brochta, 2016).¹³ Yet the Bosniak army

¹³ Although there was a vested interest by the Bosnian Serbs to spare the basic infrastructure of cities to ensure their functionality after the war, buildings and structures with inherently Bosniak qualities, characteristics, or history were for the most part completely destroyed. More about this will follow in the section about cultural and urban resources.

defending its country against the aggressing Bosnian Serbs were looking for the exact same thing as they were subsisting off those very resources, often leading the two sides to clash over the same areas. This led to certain conflict points experiencing greater levels of fighting and violence than they otherwise would have, and this may have prolonged the fighting (Ross, 2004).

The most obvious natural resource that complicated fighting was water. River access and drinking water are essential to humanity, and its importance during contemporary warfare is as vital as it was thousands of years ago. In Bosnia, most locals and geologic scholars consider the Bosna and the Drina the most important rivers in the country, both of which flow through the Republika Srpska (O'Brochta, 2016). These rivers, while important in their own right for the local communities dependent on them, held great significance for the Bosnian Serbs eyeing them: they are both tributaries to the Danube River, one of the most valuable rivers in Europe. The Danube has long been the lifeline of Southeastern Europe, starting in the German Alps before passing through Vienna, Austria, Budapest, Hungary, the northern tip of Croatia, then straight through Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. The Bosna and Drina Rivers are offshoots of the larger Sava River which itself feeds directly into the Danube, creating a waterway connecting the Republika Srpska to its Mother Serbia (O'Brochta, 2016). The fighting along these rivers was heavy, with the Bosna supplying Sarajevo with precious fresh water during its long siege and the Drina hydrating most of eastern Bosnia including the Foča Valley. When seeking to hurt a population directly, attacking their water sources is critical to incapacitating them, which is what the Bosnian Serbs did (Ross, 2004). By late-1992, the Bosnian Serbs effectively controlled both rivers and attempted to cut off the water supplying the citizens of Sarajevo which killed thousands of civilians, and influenced the violence in Foča, when gendercide against Bosniak

women was especially prevalent. Clearly, the control of water exacerbated the violence seen in eastern Bosnia.

Beyond water, the distribution of lumber and wooded areas also significantly affected the direction of ethnic violence. When en route to certain military objectives, Bosnian Serb troops would appropriate the lumber found throughout Bosnia to make impromptu camps (Kiernan, 2009). However, the lumber reserves found in Bosnia were not truly essential to the Serbian war effort, and were only incidental uses of Bosnia's natural resources (O'Brochta, 2016). Rather it was the woods themselves that intensified the violence faced by the Bosniaks. The Bosnian Serb military strategically utilized the forests of Bosnia to mask and aid their killing processes. The dense forests of southern Bosnia, including those in the Sutjeska National Park, were often the site of fighting and killing and used to obscure the violence from war reporters, human rights groups, and peacekeeping forces (O'Brochta, 2016; Power, 2002). Dense vegetation made it more difficult for the Bosniaks to flee the violence, as they were often driven into the woods, and for any UN or NATO forces to prevent the violence (Power, 2002).

The Bosnian War and Serbian desires for cleansing their land of the Bosniak people were not motivated by natural resources or need for fuel. Rather, the attacking forces used the natural landscape and its features to further their genocidal attacks against innocents while also securing strategic military objectives, effectively changing the course of the war (Ross, 2004).

Human Resources

Mass Rape in Bosnia. The widespread and systematic rape campaigns committed by the Serbs against Bosniak men and women were virtually unparalleled. When, in 1993, the United Nations attempted to set up the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia, it had no basis from which to judge the magnitude of Serbian war crimes, especially those relating to mass rape

(Barkan, 2002). Aside from the Srebrenica Massacre, the state-sponsored rape campaigns became the most infamous centerpieces of the Bosnian Genocide.

The Serbian attitude towards human resources was fairly one-sided: almost all their thoughts were focused on claiming women as their own (Barkan, 2002). Despite their concentration camps being loosely based on those made by the Nazis and Ustaše in the 1930s-40s, the Bosnian Serbs had little need for slave labor to facilitate their war machine. Their military campaigns were largely subsidized by pre-existing sources, and anything they needed was generally supplied by Serbia proper (Cigar, 1995). These camps were nothing more than detention centers and execution sites. The inmates of these camps performed little productive work or manual labor, and their Serbian captors considered those they kept alive as prisoners of war or condemned peoples (Cigar, 1995). There was no manufacturing taking place in the camps, and the Serb camp guards expected their inmates only to submit and lose their will to live. They generally did not enslave the minority men like others had in previous genocidal events, but rather transported them from one camp to another as prisoners of war or killed them outright. The Serbian war effort had little need for the men. It was the Bosniak women who became tools, objects, and rewards for their captors.

The mass rape of virtually all women the Serbs could get their hands on occurred throughout the duration of the war. It was a fundamental facet of Serb military operations, and a defining aspect of the war against the Bosniak nation. Starting with the first genocidal acts in Prijedor, Bosnian Serbs and their Montenegrin auxiliaries deployed forces to round up all local women and transported them to different camps than those holding the men. Within these women's camps, the sole activity that occurred was rape (Barkan, 2002; Snyder et al., 2006). Trapped there with hundreds of others, the Bosniak women endured constant gang-rapes meant

not only to satisfy their Serbian captors but also to brutalize them and spread fear among the other women. The Muslim women were continuously beat down, both mentally and physically, so that the thought of resistance or any independent thought was impossible. The women trapped in the various camps never stayed there for long; they split their time between the other nearby camps, makeshift brothels, and city buildings acting as detention centers.¹⁴ Bosnian Serbs did this to increase disorientation and extinguish any semblance of familiarity in the women's environments, effectively quelling their hopes of escape. In the Serbian rape camps, women existed only to please (Barkans, 2002; Nellans, 2017).

The system of female enslavement was most prevalent in Foča, a town in eastern Bosnia within the Republika Srpska. Following previous patterns, Bosnian Serb and Montenegrin soldiers first expelled all Bosniak men from the area, forcing them to flee the city on foot. When expelling the men, they purposefully kept all women behind, proving that the Bosnian Serbs planned the mass rapes from the beginning. They then utilized Foča High School and a local gymnasium as centers in which they performed the majority of the rapes (Barkan, 2002). These locations, as well as dozens of houses around them also housing trapped women, served as "rest stops" for Bosnian Serbs between missions, where they could claim whichever women pleased them at the time. As many as 200 women were held in the high school at any one time, with more than a thousand other estimated to be trapped in the surrounding buildings (Barkan, 2002). This was the precedent found throughout Bosnia during the War in Serb-held territory. The men, when not killed, were expelled, leaving the women defenseless to be dominated by the Serbs.

¹⁴ The Bosnian Serbs formed an impromptu economy around the sexual exploitation of women. Many soldiers spent their war payments on these brothels as they would on any other form of "entertainment" (Barkans, 2002).

The “rest stops” and semi-regulated brothels that existed in Foča reveal Serbian mentality behind the mass rapes. The Bosnian Serbs committing the majority of the crimes against the Bosniak population undeniably thought of the women as spoils of war, and rewards for successful campaigns and faith in the Serbian objective (Barkan, 2002; Snyder et al., 2006). Much like the *al-Anfal* genocide against the Kurds of Iraq, Bosnian Serbs had specific instructions to appropriate goods from the conquered Bosniaks. In most cases, Bosnian Serbs took this to mean women, who would “pleasure and satisfy” their tired bodies and reward them for the bravery in battle (Snyder et al., 2006). Due to the encouragement of endorsement of these activities by their superiors, the Bosnian Serbs, Montenegrins, and Croatians fighting the Bosniaks felt that they had “earned” the right to these women, and that their dominance over them was a privilege they deserved. This thought process was rampant throughout the Republika Srpska, and explains the ease with which the Serbs committed rape on such a vast scale. Serbian leadership equated rape with war itself, saying that the two were synonymous (Kiernan, 2009). The perceived entitlement to and seeming inevitability of rape during times of war only promoted greater frequency of it by Bosnian Serbs (Barkan, 2002).

Although the Bosnian Serbs quite often raped Muslim women as a form of entertainment and “entitlement,” there was another purpose to it. Many Bosnian Serbs were encouraged by their superiors and commanders to impregnate the women they raped (Barkan, 2002; Snyder et al., 2006). There was a Nazi-esque mentality behind this command: the enslaved Bosniak women would bear their captors’ Serbian children, propagating the Serbian ethnicity and securing their future. According to Serbian wartime logic, the more Bosniak women they raped, the more Serbians there would be when the war was over. Thus, rape became an effective method of neutralizing the Bosniak nation entirely. Should the war have continued the way it was, it is

plausible that Bosnian Serbs and the Serbian leadership supporting them fully intended to breed the Bosniak nation out of existence (Barkan, 2002; Kiernan, 2009).

There are of course innumerable fallacies within this line of thinking. It is curious that the Bosniak ethnicity was “dirty” enough to necessitate “cleansing,” yet still seen as compatible with what was perceived to be the Serbian genepool (Hinton, 2002). At the time, few Bosnian Serb soldiers questioned the fact that although they were in a way attempting to eradicate the Bosniak presence from their Greater Serbia, they were preserving it through the forced impregnation of Bosniak women. Many racist Bosnian Serb leaders and their soldiers thought that the “superior Serbian gene” would overpower and destroy “the Bosniak gene” within the developing fetus, even though there is absolutely no scientific difference between the genetic makeup between a Bosniak and a Serb (Hinton, 2002; Kiernan, 2009).¹⁵ Nevertheless, the rape and impregnation of Bosniak women was a central motivator in both the Bosnian War and Genocide. Bosnian Serbs viewed the women they conquered as tools to empower their own nation while destroying that of the women. The women subjugated to sexual slavery at the hands of their genocidal captors were viewed as little more than resources for winning the war and bolstering the Serbian nation.

Cultural and Urban Resources

For years before the outbreak of war, Serbian propaganda against the Bosniak people steadily increased in intensity. Although Serbian animosity towards the Bosniaks was always present, it was exacerbated in the 1980s with the Serbian Memorandum, portraying the Serbian ethnic group as oppressed by their Muslim neighbors, namely those in Kosovo and Bosnia. The

¹⁵ There is no such thing as a Bosniak or Serbian gene. That race is now widely believed to be a social construct and that all humans stem from the same species, *Homo sapiens*, negates any supposed genetic differences between the Bosniak and Serbian people. While DNA and physical characteristics are hereditary and can become homogenous within an ethnic group, there is no separate genome inherently unique to any one demographic group (Domosh et al., 2015).

Memorandum established the precedent for the kind of racist language that could now be openly published. This began a snowball-effect of mounting tensions between the two largest ethnic groups of Bosnia, the Bosnian Serbs, who largely listened to propaganda produced by Serbia, and the Bosniaks, whom the propaganda was aimed against. And much like the nature of genocide itself, what started as intangible with words and declarations became tangible with the destruction of cultural and urban properties in Bosnian cities.

Similar to the Nazi attempts in the 1920s-30s to differentiate the Jews from the *Volksdeutsche*, Serbian efforts to “other” the Bosniaks were fairly successful, especially in the Republika Srpska. Throughout the late-1980s and early-1990s, widespread mistreatment of Bosniak institutions, including stores, neighborhood blocks, and mosques, occurred at the hands of Bosnian Serb thugs and the nascent paramilitary units. Incremental laws within the Republika Srpska systematically removed Bosniak rights and privileges until virtually none existed (Cigar, 1995; Leydesdorff, 2015). The Bosniaks’ inability to protect themselves and their belongings dimmed any hope they had of preserving their physical safety or cultural heritage from the aggressing Bosnian Serbs. Before, during and after the Bosnian War, Bosnian Serb soldiers waged a war on the Bosniak cultural identity as much as they did on the people themselves (Basic, 2015).

As it would happen, the Bosnian War epitomized two forms of killing in the contemporary era: gendercide, as discussed in the previous section, and urbicide, the intentional destruction of urban settings (Coward, 2008). For the duration of the Bosnian War, Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Croats, and Montenegrins all contributed to the wholesale destruction of the Bosniak community at its very foundation by destroying the often antique buildings, city squares, and bridges that constituted the Bosniak nation (Coward, 2008; Petrovic, 2012). Due to

their ethnic, cultural, and religious roots in the Ottoman presence in the Balkans, much of the Bosniaks' heritage can be traced to Middle Eastern, Islamic, and Turkish culture (Kiernan, 2009). Most of the greatest examples of Islamic religious architecture in Europe were found in Bosnia. When orchestrating an operation designed to annihilate the evidence of Bosniaks from Republika Srpska, the Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats often took aim at the largest targets they had: the mosques and bridges of Bosnia.

Possibly the most devastating instance of destruction of Bosnian cultural property was the Stari Most (Coward, 2008; Dahlman & Tuathail, 2005; Petrovic, 2012). The Stari Most, (also known as the Mostar Bridge), was the focal point of the Southern Bosnian city of Mostar, and connected the two halves of the city over the Neretva River. Throughout 1993, Bosnian Croats and Serbs trapped thousands of Bosniak soldiers and citizens within Mostar, advancing into the city and suppressing any escape attempts with sniper fire from the surrounding hills. Fleeing the oncoming Croat army, Bosniaks ran across the bridge to the Bosniak held western bank but were often killed by snipers when crossing. On 9 November of that year, after conquering most of the city, Bosnian Croats unleashed an unrelenting torrent of mortar and artillery fire on the Stari Most, obliterating it after striking it with more than 60 ballistics (Coward, 2008).

The destruction of the Stari Most differs from most bridges destroyed during wartimes. Bridges are often extremely valuable possessions, allowing armies to transport soldiers and supplies over rivers, saving them valuable time from finding a way around. Bridges are often the objectives of military operations, with armies fighting for their acquisition or their destruction to keep others from using them. Such was not the case for the Stari Most. The Bosnian Croats had already conquered most of the city and could have easily taken the bridge for themselves. However, they chose to destroy the bridge, which had stood in the city for nearly 500 years

(Coward, 2008). There was very little strategic need to destroy the bridge; the Bosnian Croats destroyed it to destroy the Bosniak sense of place in Mostar (Petrovic, 2012). Even if every Muslim within Serbian or Croatian reach was exterminated, their cultural footprint would still be present in the Republika Srpska and elsewhere in Bosnia. The Bosniak identity was such an affront to the aggressing forces that it needed to be cleansed along with the people themselves. Milošević, Karadžić, Mladić, and all the other higher ups of the Serbian government planned for all evidence of Bosniak existence to be eradicated from their land (Hoare, 2014).¹⁶ Along with genocide, Bosnian Serbs committed urbicide in Bosniak cities to do exactly that: erase the Bosniak culture from the Balkan region.

The phenomenon of urbicide was commonplace in most of Bosnia. All over the country, any structure that barred any likeness to that constructed by Ottomans or Muslims was destroyed (Coward, 2008). Another bridge which met a similar fate as the Stari Most was the Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge, spanning the Drina River in Višegrad. Like its brother in Mostar, this bridge, with its 11 pointed arches, is the epitome of European Islamic architecture. Standing for roughly 400 years and surviving both World Wars, the bridge was the scene of heavy violence during the Bosnian War. Bosniaks constantly fled across the bridge amidst Serbian shelling. The snipers, machine gunners, and artillerymen of the Bosnian Serb army had a clear shot at any Muslim escaping the fighting, and in one massacre, over 50 died during one attack on the bridge (Coward, 2008). Unlike what happened to the Stari Most, Bosnian Serb leaders did not order the destruction of the Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge. Instead they saw it as a way to force the

¹⁶ This concept of not only human extermination but also the extermination of all evidence of an ethnic or cultural group funnels into Henry Huttenbach's definition of genocide. In the most extreme cases of genocide, the perpetrators have attempted to wipe their victims from the history books and conceal the names of the killers in addition to killing the group's members, making it as if the minority never existed in the first place.

Bosniaks they wanted to kill into an area conducive to that. Often attacking from the west, Bosnian Serb troops strategically surrounded the entrance to the bridge, making sure that the only possible escape was over the bridge, which the snipers always had an unobstructed view of. Bosnian Serbs utilized the urban resource that is the Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge to facilitate their killing of Bosniaks.

Another focal point of destruction were the mosques of Bosnia. Mosques are symbols of Islam, and were interpreted by the Bosnian Serbs to be synonymous with the Bosniak people. Serbian leadership endorsed the wholesale destruction of Bosniak mosques (Cigar, 1995; Kiernan, 2009; Petrovic, 2012; Power, 2002). Virtually every major mosque within the Republika Srpska was demolished, razed, or damaged (Schatzmler, 2012). One city that suffered exceptionally vicious urbicide was Banja Luka, the largest city and de facto capital of the Republika Srpska (Cigar, 1995; Kiernan, 2009). Sixteen mosques and quranic schools were wholly destroyed with scores more damaged by Serbian and Croatian soldiers and extremists (Schatzmler, 2012). The most famous mosque destroyed by the Bosnian Serbs in Banja Luka was the Ferhat Pasha Mosque, the architecture and cultural significance of which was exalted similarly to the Stari Most and the Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge. Bosnian Serbs demolished the Ferhat Pasha Mosque and the nearby Arnaudija Mosque on 7 May, 1993 for many of the same reasons as they did the Stari Most (Schatzmler, 2012). The cultural annihilation which occurred in Banja Luka was a clear indication of Serbian intentions to confiscate and eliminate the Bosniak cultural identity alongside the people themselves. Although the attacking Serbs or Croats claimed the bridges and mosques begot them strategic advantages, many believe the true reason they attacked those sites was to destroy the heritage that accompanied them (Petrovic, 2012). Instead of seizing these cultural and urban resources for their own gain, Serbian

leadership ordered their acquisition mainly to demoralize the Bosniaks and wipe out any physical evidence of Bosniak presence from the landscape.

The attacks on and appropriation of Bosniak cultural sites lasted throughout the entire war. Most of these areas were heavily damaged during their respective battles, but few were the site of recurring and continuous violence against both the humans and the city they occupied. Yet the besieged city of Sarajevo, in which some 10,000 people died and tens of thousands more suffered, most certainly was. Sarajevo was the site of some of the most infamous spectacles of the war, including the burning of the Executive Council Building, which housed the executive branch of the Bosnian government, and “Sniper Alley,” the main boulevard running the length of Sarajevo which was lined with sniper posts, from which Bosnian Serb marksmen would shoot civilians crossing the street. Over the four years of Serbian oppression, the city suffered in every regard. Electricity was rarely available, water needed to be fetched from miles away, and, like most of Bosnian cities, important sites were destroyed for their national meaning. The Bosnian Serbs never fully conquered Sarajevo, and thus never truly seized much of the urban resources Sarajevo offered. However, they still targeted many of Bosnia’s national icons from afar. The aforementioned Executive Council Building was the seat of government in Bosnia and the last remaining semblance of power when war broke out. In May 1992, only a week after the siege began, Serbian soldiers in the eastern hills set the building ablaze with artillery shells, hoping to demonstrate the collapse of Bosnia as a functioning state (Coward, 2008). Along with the Executive Council Building, the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Oslobođenje News Building, producing the national newspaper in Bosnia, and several mosques were also shelled repeatedly over the years (Cigar, 1995; Coward, 2008). While the Army of the Republika Srpska occupied the National Library in August 1992 for strategic purposes, most of

the other inherently Bosnian buildings and institutions that were targeted were not vital to the Serbian war efforts. They fired on them to essentially taint and defile them, to claim them as their own, and remove the Bosniak sense of ownership of them (Di Salvatore, 2016). This was and sometimes was not successful, yet their targeting of these buildings signals their desire to take what cultural and national value Sarajevo had from the Bosniaks. If the Serbians could not subdue Sarajevo, they would at least subdue Bosniak Sarajevo.

The cultural and urban resources acquired and destroyed during the Bosnian War contributed to the genocide of the Bosniak cultural identity rather than their physical state of being. The eradication of all that made Bosnia a predominantly Muslim state—its mosques, Ottoman architecture, and historical sites—was a second campaign of annihilation that the Bosnian Serbs and their allies executed alongside their original goal of eliminating the Bosniak people from what was perceived as Serbian country. That which created the foundation of a nation, including its history, pride, and traditions, was under attack for existing, and conferred on the Bosniak people additional suffering and death for the duration of the Bosnian Genocide.

Conclusion

The Bosnian Genocide is generally considered the greatest crime against humanity committed in Europe since the Second World War (Hoare, 2014; Leydesdorff, 2015). The unprecedented targeting of civilians, state-sponsored mass rape, destruction of cultural property, and massacres of victims numbering in the thousands, made the conflict one of the worst in living memory. Over 100,000 people died in total, (about half of whom were civilians), rending the Balkans apart, splaying the relationships of the states and people there until the current day (Ingrao & Emmert, 2013). From the 1989 Gazimestan Speech, the first major indicator that war would come to Bosnia, to the end of the Siege of Sarajevo in February 1996, fear, suffering, and

death plagued Bosnia and its people, especially the Muslim communities. The Muslims of Bosnia faced daily persecution and fear of execution at the hands of their Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian neighbors.¹⁷ The desire and willingness to turn on neighbors like this stems from deep-rooted anti-Muslim and anti-Turkish sentiments produced from years of consuming racist rhetoric (Schwartz, 1999). So when the Bosnian Serbs decided to enact ethnic cleansing campaigns against the Bosniaks and their way of life, they did so with genuine hate for the Bosniaks, not a need for the things they owned and were sustained from. Yet even so, with every exploitation of women and massacre of men, Bosnian Serbs and their allies claimed something more than just the Bosniaks' mental and physical lives: they claimed their homes, cultural belongings, and very country. Bosnian Serbs commandeered the natural and urban resources of Bosnia before, during, and after the killing processes, making plain Serbian leadership's intentions to not only cleanse their lands of the Bosniak nation, but to take and appropriate their material wealth for the gains of Greater Serbia.¹⁸

The parallel goals of either claiming or destroying the resources responsible for constituting and sustaining the Bosniak nation echo those found around the world and throughout history. It remains true that each genocide is unique in its context, implementation, and fallout, but they are based in a similar end goal: the elimination of a minority group from a certain geographic area. That much is fairly clear, but what is left undiscussed in many interpretations of genocidal events is what always accompanies that elimination: the theft, seizure, and

¹⁷ Violence against the Muslims of the Balkans continued long after the Bosnian War officially ended with the Dayton Accords in December 1995. Sporadic attacks on Bosniak communities occurred after the war, and ethnic cleansing practices transpired against the Muslims of Kosovo during the Kosovo War.

¹⁸ It was not only Serbia that stole and claimed Bosnia's resources for itself. Although Serbian leadership orchestrated most of the atrocities and crimes, Croatians, Montenegrins, and non-Muslim Bosnians all contributed to the destruction and death on all sides of the Bosnian War.

appropriation of the physical resources that facilitate and compose the minority nation. As I have demonstrated, there is ample evidence to support my argument that the architects of genocide develop strategies to exploit the available resources present in the area in which their victims live in addition to strategies borne from genuine ethnic hatreds. These resources facilitate the act of eradicating a people; the acts of conquering their land, appropriating their food and fuel, exploiting their bodies, and destroying their cities form a symbiotic relationship between the perpetrators' goals: boosting themselves while weakening others. When studying and analyzing genocide, it is necessary to examine the myriad intentions of the perpetrators and to analyze the universality of the material nature of genocide, not just the localized animosity. The intangible desires to exterminate a culture and create an ethnically homogenous state coupled with the tangible desires and needs of material resources fundamentally underscore almost every genocide in history. Knowledge and comprehension of both is needed to better understand, and hopefully prevent, future violence against the people of the world.

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