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Crossing the River Drina: Bosnian Rape Camps, Turkish Impalement, and Serb Cultural Memory

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Source: *Signs*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Gender and Cultural Memory (Autumn, 2002), pp. 71-96

Published by: The University of Chicago Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175701>

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Crossing the River Drina: Bosnian Rape Camps, Turkish Impalement, and Serb Cultural Memory

On February 22, 2001, at the trial of three indicted war criminals from Foca, the Hague International War Crimes Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY) concluded for the first time that rape and sexual enslavement were violations of sufficient gravity to be considered as “crimes against humanity” under international law. This overdue move to place sexual crimes on the list of most serious crimes for prosecution came in the wake of the international outrage generated by the Bosnian war, where the mass rape and forced incarceration of women in so-called rape camps had been one of the chief strategies used by Serbian forces primarily against the Muslim populations of both Bosnia and Kosovo. Thus, in what the Associated Press described as “wrenching, horrific testimony” (Associated Press quoted in Gartenberg 2000), those Bosnian women courageous enough to testify became symbolic speakers for the many thousands of women who did not appear, either because they had been killed after being raped, or because their rapists remained unapprehended, or because they remained silent for fear of being ostracized within their own culture.

Conservative estimates of the number of women raped during the Bosnian war run between twenty thousand and fifty thousand; what happened in the rape camps of Bosnia includes a list of atrocities as endless as the sadistic imagination might devise.¹ Throughout 1992 and 1993, truck-

I owe a special note of thanks to Nermina Zildzo, Nenad Filipovic, and Drazan Lopic for sharing insights into their culture with me and to Annabelle Winograd for her invaluable help in commenting on the manuscript.

¹ The two books that have become the standard references for documented information about rape and the Bosnian war are Stiglmeier 1994 and Allen 1996. A lesser-known but excellent account, published in English, comes from Montenegrin journalist Seada Vranic (1996), whose work includes the perspective of Bosnian psychologists as well as the voices of rape victims. Additionally, see Bernard 1994; Ramet 1999; and Drakulic 2000. Recently made available is the English translation of a text originally published in Belgrade; Vesna Nkolic-Ristanovic's collection of essays ([1995] 2000) written by four women all from the present Yugoslavia (the Serbian-controlled remnant of the former federal Yugoslavia) offers a variant perspective on the Bosnian war and its particular violence against women. By its

loads of eastern Bosnia's Muslim women arrived in the central cities of Travnik, Zenica, and Visoko, and from there they were taken in busloads to the nearest hospital for abortions. Speaking of the likelihood of psychological rehabilitation for the rape victims of this war, Bosnian psychiatrist Muradis Kulenovic makes the point that even the terms by which psychology understands the word *rape* are rendered grossly insufficient if not meaningless by the experience of large numbers of Bosniak women,² for whom rape commonly occurred within an interlinked sequence of traumatic events in which, Kulenovic says, "the victim, prior to the rape, had experienced the massacre of children and parents, then had to watch the murder of her husband, who had been forced to watch the rape of his wife. Finally, . . . terrified and probably naked, she had to flee under a rain of bullets from her burning village, stumbling on the mangled and charred bodies of her relatives, neighbors and friends" (quoted in Vranic 1996, 194). Under such circumstances, the term *rape* exceeds any context in which traditional forms of therapy can assume its meaning.

While several decades of feminist pressure have brought at least some change in the view of rape within North American and western European societies, in most other cultures the way that rape is socially constructed makes it primarily a violation defiling the male members of both the victim's family and her community, and thus the narrative of the raped woman has always been a text that is simply disallowed from the culture's self-story.³ Yet while this very reaction hands the invader a useful weapon

attempt to hide an evident Serbian nationalism under the guise of feminism, however, and by its insistence throughout on a purportedly apolitical stance that wants us to read the violence of the Bosnian war as equally suffered and enacted by all three ethnic groups, the book exposes its unacknowledged participation in that particular discourse that seeks to minimize the enormity of Serb responsibility by redistributing responsibility to those who were disproportionately the war's real victims—the Bosnian Muslims. Ironically enough, by implicitly invoking such claims, the book seizes on the same strategy that the United States adopted during the Bosnian war as a means of glossing over the reality of victim and victimizer and rationalizing its own decision to avoid military intervention in a war that the U.S. military hierarchy balked at entering.

² *Bosniak* is the Balkan term for Bosnians who are Muslim.

³ Only a deeply entrenched patriarchalism can explain the story of a Kosovar Albanian family's reaction to the rape of their thirteen-year-old daughter, Pranvera, who was among the twenty young girls raped by Serb troops who ethnically cleansed her Kosovar village in 1999 and forced the Albanians to flee in exile across the border. While for four days and nights Pranvera was held in the basement and gang-raped, her family upstairs was held at gunpoint and forced to listen helplessly to her screams. The battered little girl was eventually returned to her family, but unlike the other family members, she never reached the relative safety of the Kukes camp. Before reaching the border, this deeply loved daughter was sacrificially sent by her father to join the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) guerrilla forces, where

for destroying the invaded community and may in fact encourage him to rape, even that consequence is apparently deemed preferable to the feminization of the community body implicit in the acceptance of either the violated woman or the story for which her body is text. As a vivid illustration of how resistant cultural narratives can prove when faced with such undesirable histories, it is telling to note that it is only now, more than a half century after the fact, that the national narratives of India and Pakistan are reluctantly allowing any space at all for the suppressed stories of the mass violation of Muslim and Hindu women that took place during Partition.⁴ Likewise, only recently have the equally unwelcome stories of the sexual enslavement that Korean, New Guinean, and other so-called comfort women suffered at the hands of the Japanese army during World War II finally surfaced.⁵ Culture has authorized only one narrative for a woman raped by the enemy—the one of the Roman, Lucrece, that concludes with her suicide. In postwar Sarajevo, as some forty Bosnian women survivors banded together to publish their testimonies and thereby force them into public consciousness, the bravery of the survivors ran nearly at cross purposes to the apologetic defensiveness implicit in the title they gave their book, *I Begged Them to Kill Me* (Association of Camp Inmates—Canton Sarajevo [2000]; described in Drakulic 2001).⁶ Such ambivalence itself speaks volumes about the coercive interplay of gender and cultural memory.

The rape camps of the Bosnian war have been documented as a systematically planned Serb instrument of genocide designed not merely to encourage the evacuation of all non-Serbs but to destroy parent-child and spousal bonds and render large numbers of the society's child-bearing women contaminated and thus unmarriageable. As a strategic tool of "ethnic cleansing," rape was, moreover, part of a long-range goal to undermine the ethnic mixing that had been openly encouraged in Tito's

the family fully expected her to be killed. For the parents, their daughter's life was essentially over at the moment of her rape; and thus sending her where she might at least seek revenge against her attackers and possibly redeem her family's (read father's) honor in death was a fully responsible way of caring for her. See Williams 1999.

⁴ For what happened on a mass scale to both Hindu and Muslim women during Partition, see especially Butalia (1998) 2000.

⁵ The first book to expose the story of the "comfort women" was Hicks 1995. Subsequently, the women began to speak for themselves. See Schellstede 2000; Stetz 2000; and Yoshimi 2000.

⁶ This women's organization, which has self-published its members' stories, calls itself the Association of Camp Inmates—Canton Sarajevo, and it lists a telephone and fax number in Bosnia at (011) 387-71-232925. The information about this source comes from Drakulic 2001.

Yugoslavia, where intermarriage had become increasingly common and people had really begun to see themselves as “Yugoslavs” rather than Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, and so forth. Hence, the Serb army, apparently acting on orders, frequently forced Bosnian Serbs not just to witness the rape and murder of their Muslim neighbors but to participate in such acts themselves, thereby coercing Bosnia’s Serbs into a complicity with Belgrade that lessened both the ability of the different groups to live together in the future and the likelihood that any Bosnian Serb observers would ever report the war crimes they may have witnessed being committed. Rape became, in essence, a particularly effective tool for perpetrating the kind of trauma that Kai Erikson defines as collective in its ability to inflict “a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality” (1995, 103).

Yet while this explanation of mass rape and the other atrocities of the Yugoslav wars is critical for recognizing the planned brutality of those conflicts, it seems nonetheless too rational and arid to fully account for the enormity of what happened in Bosnia. And although increasing the numbers of a putatively threatened Serb population (or at least motivating Serb men to see their actions as procreatively beneficial to the Serb nation) may likewise have played some role in the mass rape of Bosniak women, there were far too many women killed immediately after being raped or killed after becoming too debilitated to serve their purpose in a rape camp for the production of Serb babies to work as a likely rationale. In the Bosnian war, mass killing was up close, savagely personal, and typically conducted in a hands-on orgy of bloodletting. Muslims were butchered by their former Serb friends and neighbors, and murder was randomly committed by almost anyone designated “Serb”—the remnant Yugoslav army, controlled by Slobodan Milosevic out of Belgrade and now in effect the Serbian army; the Bosnian Serb army controlled by Radovan Karadzic out of Bosnia; paramilitary volunteers from Serbia or Bosnia; local police; and longtime neighbors. Against the organized, dispassionate, bureaucratized logic that is the horrific signifier of Nazi-orchestrated genocide, the savagery perpetrated in places like Foca, Manjaca, or Camp Omarska reeks of another kind of brutality: uncontrolled, spontaneous, blood-fixated, and so remarkably adolescent as to suggest the existence of some unconscious script being played out alongside the canonical one of genocide as a strategy for territorial acquisition. In an orgy of nationalism bathed in alcohol, athletic contests, and Serbian songs, Serb soldiers threw Muslims off of cliffs and from hotel roofs into rivers, carved Orthodox crosses into their

chest, hacked off the arms or legs of their victims, made women clean up the mess from such amputations, and then raped the women on top of the blood-soaked rags.⁷ Even the sheer expenditure of energy required by all this butchery overwhelms the antiseptic rationality of “ethnic cleansing.” Suddenly, Dr. Strangelove’s arm jerks up. And suddenly, the psychic space from which this violence emanates becomes recognizable as the space of Serbian epic culture, the dark storehouse of Serbian cultural memory that, in the wake of Tito’s death, became a source for cynical politicians looking for alternative populist myths to displace the “Brotherhood of Yugoslavs” ideal through which Tito had reigned supreme for forty-five years.

Serbian nationalist mythology

Everything about the Yugoslav golgotha suggests that it was written out of a revived and newly politicized lethal combination of nationalist myth, Christoslavic typology, and, to a far lesser extent, documentable history. The scripts that Serb soldiers typically enacted in rape camps are instructive. According to frequently echoed testimony from female survivors, as the usually drunken, enraged soldiers raped and beat them, the rapists screamed either “Turkish whore” or “Ustashe whore” at their victims, triumphantly jeering after reaching orgasm that the woman was now carrying “Serb seed” and would produce a “Serb baby.” In these assertions, what floods in is not some credible explanation for the prevalence of rape but the fundamental irrationality that defines the chief cultural fiction of the Balkans: the fiction of difference.

What made the Bosnian war incomprehensible to most Americans was that, while it was clear that ethnic difference—or at least the perception of it—was a crucial issue, the obvious lack of a parallel basis of comparison among “Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims” and what to do with “Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Croats, Croatian Serbs, Croatian Muslims, Serbian Croats, Serbian Muslims” made the war impossible to sort out. Moreover, the only explanation possible is one that begs its own question, and that is that in the Balkans—and especially in Serbia—a type of racial ethnicity is largely assumed to be synonymous with religious difference, and ethnic identity synonymous with national boundaries. Thus *Serbs* denotes all

⁷ This experience is depicted in Mandy Jacobson and Karmen Jelencic’s searing documentary film, *Calling the Ghosts* (1996), which follows the experience of two women held in Camp Omarska.

those who belong to the Orthodox faith, regardless of whether or not they or their ancestors ever set foot inside Serbia proper.⁸ But, because ethnic identity is assumed to be synonymous with national boundaries and those calling themselves Serbs presume hereditary connections to Serbia just as Croats (Roman Catholics) do to Croatia, when Bosnia declared its independence from the Yugoslav federation, those “Serbs” living in Bosnia—working fist in mail with the Belgrade government—began loudly to claim discrimination and demand that the areas they lived in be united with Serbia. And since “Serbs” were scattered all over Bosnia and living cheek by jowl with or indeed married to Muslims or Croats, Serbia began laying claim, village by village, to most of Bosnia. Underlying all this confusion is the monumental tragic irony of the Balkans: in reality, all three of these peoples actually belong to exactly the same racial and linguistic group, southern Slavs. Logically speaking, the only difference among them is a strictly religious one, and a “Serb baby” would be indistinguishable from a “Bosnian Muslim” one.

But Serbian epic culture depends on the radical denial of precisely that connection. When taken to the extremes of collective cultural denial, the vision of the nation/self as involved in an ongoing epic struggle to retain its heroic uniqueness—inevitably constructed around fantasies of racial purity—is what allows a people to reach such euphoric heights of nationalist paranoia that it can imagine it necessary to “ethnically cleanse” a land of its “others” when the others are, in reality, ancestrally identical to the cleansers.

In ways that laid the groundwork for the blood orgies of the 1990s, Serb national mythology has always constructed the Slavic conversion to Christianity that occurred sometime after their sixth-century arrival in the Balkans as unimpeachably valid. But the conversion of Slavs to Islam that occurred after the late fourteenth-century Ottoman invasion is conversely construed as a “race betrayal” that had the effect of literally transforming those Slavs who converted to Islam into “Turks.” In Kosovo, the Kosovar Albanians are apparently descended (inconveniently) from the first people to move into the Balkans, the Illyrians, who arrived in the area in about 8 B.C.E. Because such a history works out badly in terms of primary claims, however, an entire scientific/academic/political enterprise is hard at work in Serbia trying to establish that Albanians are not the descendants of Illyrians but come from a mixture of various remnant groups whose

⁸ Orthodoxy is defined in this area of the Balkans by the Serbian Orthodox Church, just as it is defined farther south by the Greek Orthodox and farther east by the Russian Orthodox authority.

arrival dates to the seventeenth century, well after that of the Serbs (Vickers 1998, 1–3). Yet while it seems clear that the Albanian Kosovars are neither Turks nor Slavic converts guilty of race betrayal, within the Serb vocabulary the mostly Muslim Albanian majority in Kosovo (or *Kosovars*) can become “Turks” almost as readily as can the Bosnian Muslims.⁹ As Kosovo with its 90 percent Albanian majority became an increasingly political issue in the late 1980s, “I’ll be first, who’ll be second to drink some Turkish blood?” became a common slogan in Serbia (Cigar 1996, 57).

The sense of the irrational clings as well to the geography of the war and the disproportionate fury that the breakup of the former Yugoslavia unleashed against the Muslims. When the republics of Slovenia, Croatia, and then Bosnia—already concerned by the mid-1980s about rising Serb nationalism—withdrew from the federation they saw as devolving into “Serboslovakia,” the logic of pre-Tito history should have made Croatia the more likely target of Serb rage. In the Croatian Ustashe death camps of World War II, between sixty thousand and eight hundred thousand Serbs were massacred in a systematic, clear attempt at genocide. The Serbs thus had real, tangible, and unassuaged grievances against Croatia that had been rigorously suppressed under Tito but had remained vivid within collective memory.

Yet it was Bosnia, not Croatia, that bore the brunt of Serbian rage, and the pattern of the war maps out that displacement. Serb fury initially erupted in July of 1991 with an invasion of Croatia, where, in a display of awesome violence, Serb troops relentlessly leveled the defenseless city of Vukovar.¹⁰ But although the Croats could at that point offer no serious resistance, the Serb army, after a rather desultory shelling of Zagreb, made a sudden, unexpected U-turn, crossed back over the river, and for nearly four years vented its fury on the hapless Bosnians. It was not that memories of the Ustashe were dead or that the Serbs felt avenged for the very real victimization they had suffered at Croatian hands: the widespread use of *Ustashe* as the most pejorative term possible reflects this still-potent anger. But in ways disjunct enough to suggest once again a dangerous displacement at work, the epithet *Ustashe* was used as often against Bosnian Muslims as against Croats, and the illogical reference to

⁹ Because the use of the name *Kosovo* (used by Serbians) or *Kosova* (used by Albanians) can be read as a political statement, I need to clarify that my choice of the “o” spelling is based entirely on its greater recognizability to English-speaking readers.

¹⁰ Although the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) was what this army still called itself, Yugoslavia by now consisted of only Serbia and a co-opted Montenegro, and thus referring to it as a Serb army seems justified, as it was now working at Slobodan Milosevic’s behest to carve out a greater Serbia.

Jasenovac, the most notorious of the Croatian Ustashe death camps, came up frequently as a justifying rationale for concentration camps holding Muslims and for the Serb massacre of Muslims at Srebrenica (Vulliamy 1996).¹¹

The vignette that *New York Times* European Editor Roger Cohen offers of a bus ride across the River Drina during the Bosnian war provides a snapshot of how the past was playing out in Serb popular memory. At each stop from Belgrade into Bosnia, a handful of Serb males boarded the bus, grenades and Kalashnikov rifles in hand, some of them sporting bits of their grandfathers' World War II Chetnik uniforms and others in getups that signified the rival Partisans, and all resembling, says Cohen, something more like a historical dress-up party than any kind of disciplined army. Singing Serb nationalist songs and drinking slivovitz in bleary toasts, this ragtag bunch of weekend killers raucously crossed the Drina, to debark in some Bosnian town and spend the day killing "Turks" (Cohen 1998, 125–27).¹²

What surfaces in this picture and elsewhere is the figure of the Turk at the center of Serb cultural memory, where, infuriatingly, he threatens to conquer, victimize, feminize, and humiliate Serb national selfhood (always a masculine construct) and infantilize all Serbia's attempts to achieve independent adulthood. Given Serbia's history of five hundred years of Ottoman domination, the entrenchment of this figure should not be surprising, especially since the Turk also haunts the earlier literature of many European countries that never experienced Turkish occupation. For Serbia—which has never forgotten and thus has never gotten over the Turk—he remains an ever-internalized figure of occupation that must

¹¹ Ed Vulliamy, the British journalist who was responsible for locating and uncovering Camp Omarska in 1992, went back to Bosnia in 1996 and again interviewed Milan Kovacevic, the man who in 1992 had been the camp administrator. In a remarkably revealing interview, Kovacevic begins his rationalization of Omarska by talking about his own childhood spent in Jasenovac. When Vulliamy interjects, "But Jasenovac was run by Croats; why did the Serbs turn on the Muslims?" Kovacevic mutters, "There is a direct connection between what happened to the Muslims in our camps and the fact that there had been some Muslim soldiers in the [pro-Nazi] Greater Croatia" (Vulliamy 1996, 13). In Vulliamy's analysis, "What the Serbs have done is to project their own obsessive 'racial memory' onto their perceived enemies. The Serbs' inimitable cult of the victim demanded that they create victims. Their experience of concentration camps demanded that they create concentration camps" (14). In terms of the argument of this article, I would add that their (perceived) experience of rape likewise demanded that they rape.

¹² Cohen, too, notes the peculiarly adolescent, recreational aspects to the atrocities committed by the Serb militia. One paramilitary unit, active in the Brcko area, was called the "Weekenders"; another, active in Prijedor, called itself the "Rambos."

always be reconfronted, despite the fact of Turkish withdrawal from the Balkans nearly a century ago. The consequences of this Turkish occupation of the Serb imaginary are evident in the statement that General Ratko Mladic made over Serb television from the conquered town of Srebrenica, the supposed "UN safe haven," which UN troop withdrawal essentially abandoned to the Serb army. In the background, as the camera picks up a column of captive Muslim men being led, as we now know, off to their mass execution, Mladic memorializes the day to his Belgrade audience by saying, "Here we are in Srebrenica on July 11, 1995. On the eve of yet another great Serb holiday. We present this city to the Serbian people as a gift. Finally, the time has come to take revenge on the Turks" (Stover 1998, 88–89).¹³

The internal entrenchment of this fantasized, ever-present Turkish conqueror began, ironically enough, simultaneously with the production of a Serb epic culture dedicated to the construction of a glorious Serbian past that itself began almost immediately after the defeat of the Serbs at the Battle of Kosovo Polje on June 28, 1389, a day that the Orthodox calendar now commemoratively marks as St. Vitus's Day. Among the states that once formed Yugoslavia, Serbia is the one that can boast of a literary tradition that is both truly epic and so genuinely alive on the popular level that its songs and legends are not just known by everyone in Serbia but sung, as well, all over the former Yugoslavia. In the midst of it all is the central narrative of Serbian national selfhood: defeat by the Turk at the Battle of Kosovo and a heroic masculinity kept alive by Serbia's implacable determination to avenge its captivity. In 1989, with Tito eight years dead, the Soviet Union breaking up, the ideology of communism that had governed for the past half century faltering, and nationalism on the rise, a calamitous trick of history brought around the six-hundred-year anniversary of the Kosovo defeat, and that coincidence provided Slobodan Milosevic and other ethnofascist politicians the fortuitous opportunity to convert this Kosovo baggage into an unimpeachable rallying site for putative Serb victimization. The commemorative ceremonies that Milosevic orchestrated for media broadcast have been described as having "all the trappings of a coronation staged as a Hollywood extravaganza" (Milan Milosevic 2000, 109). Apparently taking a note from Hitler's famous descent into Nuremberg (and Leni Riefenstahl's infamous recording of that event in *Triumph of the Will* [1935]), Milosevic "descended by helicopter from the heavens into the cheering crowd, the masses were the

¹³ Mladic's words are quoted in English translation alongside stills from this television broadcast in Stover 1998.

extras. The cameras focused on his arrival. In some vague way, the commentator placed Milosevic at the center of the Serbian ancestral myth of Prince Lazar, the hero and martyr of the Kosovo battle" (Milan Milosevic 2000, 130). On this date, within a carefully staged television spectacular and standing on the sanctified locus of a Serb nationalism being vividly constructed, Milosevic "for the first time explicitly mentioned the possibility of war" (Milan Milosevic 2000, 121). A month or so prior to the broadcast from Kosovo, to revivify the aggressions built into the cultural memory of the Kosovo defeat and imbue them with an immediacy, Milosevic and associates carted the six-hundred-year-old body of Prince Lazar, the Serb leader defeated at Kosovo Polje, through every Serb village and town, where crowds of villagers, dressed in black, turned out to mourn him. It was a stunningly effective tactic. For, as Vamik Volkan notes, "Serbs began to feel as if the defeat at Kosovo Polje had occurred only recently, a development made possible by the fact that the chosen trauma had been kept effectively alive—although sometimes dormant—for centuries" ([1997] 1998, 67). It was, says Volkan, as if "the psychological DNA of Kosovo continued to be passed down from one generation to the next, . . . [and] Milosevic's focus on Kosovo reactivated this DNA" ([1997] 1998, 67–68).

Not many nations celebrate a defeat as the cradle of their nationhood, but by doing so Serbs seal their history within a mythic imaginary in which the Serbs are forever victims, situated for perpetuity in the place of resentment and unassuaged revenge within a story that promises to confer heroism in the present only through return, repetition, and revenge. Yet, in terms of historical reality, the Battle of Kosovo became the Serbs' defining myth only during the nineteenth century, when, in the midst of one of the more successful Serb rebellions, the oral poetic tradition was reshaped with a vastly enhanced, quasi-religious script and finally written down by Vuk Karadzich, who is credited with preservation of this oral tradition. While Karadzich's role as a committed participant in the Serb cause undoubtedly influenced the transmission, the transcribed Kosovo legends that collectively make up the "Kosovo Cycle" include, in a way characteristic of epic literature, a number of historical contradictions that offer a repressed counternarrative to the story they are intended to tell. And such contradictions create at least the possibility of telling the story another way. The binary of Serb versus Turk that is traditionally understood as the ideological grand narrative of the Kosovo Cycle, for instance, suppresses a number of qualifying or even contradictory details that the stories themselves contain—details such as the fact that in 1389 there were a number of Serbs fighting on

the side of the Turks; that the Albanians were allies who fought with the Serbs in this battle; that Turks and Serbs frequently changed sides and frequently intermarried; and that the "blood" defining the ethnic selfhood of most modern Serbs is almost certainly itself the product of such Serb/Turk unions.

In the official reading of the meaning of the Battle of Kosovo that forms the core of nationalist memory, the Serb leader Prince Lazar becomes a type of Christ whose people fall into servitude for the five hundred years after he is killed by the Muslim Turks. Needing a Judas figure to go with Lazar's Last Supper as well as to account for Lazar's defeat, the story situates one of Lazar's commanders, Vuk Brankovic, in the role of traitor. And though historians unanimously argue that Brankovic has been unjustly maligned, he is far too useful to the narrative for his virtue to be reclaimed. As the traitor within, he becomes a figure for those Slavs who converted to Islam—Vuk Brankovic is, in other words, the Bosnian Muslims. Out of these various archetypal connections developed the convoluted logic that was repeatedly voiced as Serb soldiers murdered Muslims and plundered their way across Bosnia. In killing Muslims, even ones who are Slavic brethren, the Serb aggressor sees himself as defender of Christian Europe: he is cleansing Europe of the infidel Turks and, by doing so, avenging his savior's death. For through this conflation of myth and history within the cultural imaginary, not only do all Muslims become "Turks," but through a logic built on an otherwise incomprehensible anachronism, the Muslims (not the Jews) become those who, in killing Lazar, killed Christ. Thus, the Bosnian Muslims are not only "Turk race traitors" but "Muslim Christ-killers," despite the fact that neither Muhammad nor Islam came into being until seven hundred years after the death of Jesus.¹⁴ As stand-ins for the "Turk," the Bosnian Muslims became targets for a violence that played out the deep-seated fear of the Turk and the five-hundred-year subjugation of Serbian independence through which that figure is remembered.

Impalement and crucifixion

There is, moreover, a particular reason why rape should have become unconsciously the most appropriate form for Serb revenge, and it coheres with yet another image that seems as deeply ingrained in the Serb imaginary as is the figure of the Turk: the image of the Turkish practice of impalement.

¹⁴ For elaboration, see especially Sells 1996b.

Within Serb cultural memory it is historical truth that the Turks impaled Serb vassals. So prevalent is the belief, in fact, that a number of well-reputed analysts of the Yugoslav wars assume that impalement happened frequently. Slaven Letica notes the “Ottoman Turkish practice of impaling Serbs and Christians on stakes” and says, without listing specific examples, that “entire portions of the mythical, cultural, and national traditions and of popular aesthetics (national ballads) involve the motif of ‘impalement on a stake’” (1996, 95). Julie Mertus, though more cautious in locating the impalement story as a part of nationalist literature rather than historical fact, likewise asserts that “every Serbian school child knows about the horror of impalement from national folk ballads, national novels, national plays and other national traditions” (1999, 109).¹⁵ Yet there is no mention of such a practice in any part of the Kosovo Cycle, and the single source actually cited by either author is the unforgettable image from Nobel Prize–winner Ivo Andrić’s 1945 novel, *The Bridge on the Drina* ([1945] 1959), a fictionalized narrative of the sixteenth-century construction of the Turkish bridge at Visegrad in which a Serb peasant hero manages temporarily to halt the building efforts before being caught and publicly impaled on the bridge to die an excruciating death. However, according to Nenad Filipović, the famous scene in Andrić not only is entirely fictional but is itself the only instance in Serbian literature where Turkish impalement of a Serb occurs. While impalement was indeed practiced by the Turks, its use was reserved exclusively for traitorous members of their own officer corps. For Filipović, *The Bridge on the Drina*—a required school text that was read by every child in the former Yugoslavia—is the source responsible for the belief now widely held across the Balkans in the actual historicity of such a practice.¹⁶

Despite the ahistoricity of the impalement story, it became unquestioned in Serb collective memory because cultural memory, as Raphael Samuel notes, “far from being merely a passive receptacle or storage system, an image bank of the past, is rather an active, shaping force . . . is dynamic” (1994, x). As such, it is frequently impervious to histori-

¹⁵ Mertus’s otherwise excellent study is, overall, a testimony of her knowledge of the Balkans and her skill in reading its cultural politics.

¹⁶ The information from Filipović, a Bosniak in Turkish Studies at Princeton University, is from private correspondence, 2001. Not only in the Balkans but in cultural imagination across Europe, impalement exists as a particular sign of Turkish depravity despite evidence that it was practiced in at least Austria and Hungary as well. Its most famous practitioner was a fifteenth-century Romanian prince from Wallachia called Vlad the Impaler, later rewritten in western European narrative as Dracula.

cal facticity. Pure fictions that merely *seem right* because they enhance the dynamics of a national myth may be readily appropriated into it and acquire a greater perceived historical truth than any factually historical events that would, conversely, seem to threaten it. In the Serb psyche, impalement thus remains so vivid an experience and one that so thoroughly justifies any act of revenge that, according to Michael Sells, impalement was explicitly invoked by Bosnian Serb leaders "to justify the attacks on Bosnian Muslims who are alleged to be Turks because of the conversion of their ancestors to Islam" (1996b, 39). The illogic of the connection is stunning. That Bosnian Muslims should be killed because their ancestors converted to Islam and because Turks who practiced Islam had, several centuries ago, supposedly impaled Serbs who may have been ancestors of Serbs now living in Bosnia—this requires such an enormous stretch of logic that the very fact of its invocation is telling. Yet despite the dubious historicity of the impalement story, Andric's appropriation of this particular form of violence so effectively guaranteed its continued life in Serb memory that John Matthias, translator of the *Kosovo Cycle*, comments that, for Serbs, Andric's scene became the "most resonant single image . . . of the suffering endured by the Christian Slavic population during the long night of Turkish rule in the Balkans" (1987, 14). During the Bosnian war, in a frenzy of violence seemingly designed to avenge the event to which Andric's scene had given reality, Serb units turned the bridge at Visegrad into a killing center from which they hurled Muslims to their deaths below. Moreover, although the Serbs thundered through Bosnia destroying every monument, mosque, gravestone, bridge, edifice, or sign of the Turkish occupation, in a gesture of appreciation for Andric's empathetic depiction of the Serb story, the one Turkish sign they left standing was the bridge over the Drina at Visegrad—thus ironically rememorizing the scene of Serb subjection to Turk impalement.

Andric's scene on the bridge contains, as Sells describes it, "a long, anatomically detailed account of the death of the heroic Serb, with explicit evocations of the crucifixion. The scene fits into that genre of Christian literature that details the suffering and torments of Jesus. It is a scene that is constantly evoked by readers of Andric as one of the most memorable . . . in all of Andric's writings" (1996a, 132). But while a crucifixion image does arise from what Sells chastely refers to as the "long, anatomically detailed account," the reader's experience of this scene greatly exceeds the terms of Sells's description. As Matthias says, "one feels the shaft in one's own entrails" (1987, 15).

In Andric's novel, the Turks first order the whole male population to witness the execution. As the men arrive, the first objects they see, lying ominously on the scaffold, are the instruments of impalement:

an oak stake about eight feet long, pointed . . . and tipped with iron and . . . well greased with lard [and the peasant, who lay] as . . . ordered, face downward. The gipsies [the designated impalers] approached and . . . bound his hands behind his back[,] then . . . attached a cord to each of his . . . ankles. . . . They pulled the cords outwards and to the side, stretching his legs wide apart. Meanwhile Merdjan [the senior gipsy] placed the stake on two small wooden chocks so that it pointed between the peasant's legs. Then he took from his belt a . . . knife, knelt beside the stretched-out man . . . to cut away his trousers and widen the opening through which the stake would enter his body. . . . As soon as he had finished, [Merdjan] leapt up, took the wooden mallet and with slow measured blows began to strike the lower blunt end of the stake. Between each two blows he would stop . . . and look first at the body that the stake was penetrating and then at the two gipsies, reminding them to pull slowly and evenly. The body of the peasant, spreadeagled, writhed convulsively; at each blow of the mallet his spine twisted and bent, but the cords pulled and kept it straight. . . . Those nearest could hear . . . [the] sound that the stretched and twisted body emitted[,], a sort of . . . cracking like a fence that is breaking down or a tree being felled. At every second blow the gipsy went over to the stretched-out body and leant over it to see whether the stake was going in the right direction and . . . that it had not touched any of the more important internal organs. . . . [Then,] for a moment the hammering ceased. Merdjan now saw that close to the right shoulder muscles the skin was stretched and swollen. He went forward quickly and cut the swollen place with two crossed cuts. . . . Two or three more blows, . . . and the iron-shod point of the stake began to break through at the place where he had cut. He struck a few more times until the point of the stake reached level with the right ear. The man was impaled on the stake as a lamb on the spit, only that the tip did not come through the mouth but in the back and had not seriously damaged the intestines, the heart or the lungs. Then Merdjan threw down the mallet and came nearer, . . . avoiding the blood which poured out . . . where the stake had entered and come out again. . . . The two gipsies turned the stiffened body on its back, . . . [bound] the legs to the

foot of the stake, . . . and began to lift him up like a sheep on a spit, [fixing and buttressing the stake] to a beam on the staging. . . . On that open space[,] raised a full eight feet upright, stiff and bare to the waist, the man on the stake remained alone. . . . [The crowd of watchers] looked dumbly at this human likeness, up there in space, unnaturally stiff and upright. Fear chilled their entrails and their legs threatened to give way beneath them. . . . [The peasant] was alive and conscious. His ribs rose and fell, the veins in his neck pulsed and his eyes kept turning slowly but unceasingly. Through the clenched teeth came a long drawn-out groaning in which a few words could be distinguished. "Turks, Turks . . ." moaned the man on the stake. "Turks on the bridge . . . may you die like dogs . . . like dogs." (Andric [1945] 1959, 46–51)

Within this agonizing description, there is, as Sells notes, a crucifixion image, but there is surely much more. For what the male population of Visegrad as well as Andric's readers have been compelled to witness is a four-hour rape scene in which the rebel against Turkish rule is literally skewered by the Turkish phallic emblem of power and then hoisted up in the feminized image of the penetrated body, the enormous Turkish phallus fixing in place the unforgettable picture of a grotesque and horrific sodomy.

That impalement is always refigured in Serb cultural memory as a rape by the Turk and the implications the issue has for the 1990s Balkan wars become even clearer through a 1985 incident in Kosovo, the so-called Martinovic case, which, except for the high seriousness with which it was invested in Serbia, might more aptly have been dismissed as low comedy. A Serb farmer named Djordje Martinovic was found in a Kosovo field with a bottle up his backside. Initially, when discovered in this indelicate situation, Martinovic claimed that he had been accosted by three masked men armed with a syringe of morphine who sedated him, placed the bottle on a stick, and sodomized him with it. When taken to the hospital, however, Martinovic admitted that there were no assailants and that he had been his own sodomizer. By then, however, the incident had been seized on by political nationalists, and Belgrade newspapers loudly accused the doctors of trying to deny the history of Serb suffering by repressing the real truth—that Martinovic had been attacked by Albanians who had then thrust the bottle up his anus. Croatian media, from the vantage of at least some cultural as well as geographical distance, treated the incident comically, speculating that Martinovic had been masturbating and the bottle had slipped, or had jumped off a tree and landed on the bottle, and so

forth (Ugresic 1998, 71). But in Serbia, the Martinovic case prompted sufficient outrage for Slobodan Milosevic to use it as the foundation on which to build a mountain of fictitious allegations about Kosovar Albanian acts of “genocide” against the Serbs. These allegations—made believable by the Martinovic incident—in turn led to a petition submitted by Belgrade intellectuals to the assemblies of Serbia and Yugoslavia in January 1986 calling for the revocation of Kosovo’s autonomy (“Documents, Petition to the Assembly” 1986). The petition, which asserted that “the case of Djordje Martinovic has come to symbolize the predicament of all Serbs in Kosovo,” ultimately gave Milosevic the green light for his crucial decision to terminate the autonomous status that Kosovo had enjoyed under the Yugoslav federation since 1974.¹⁷ In connecting the beginning of the Yugoslav wars with the Martinovic incident, Croatian writer Dubravka Ugresic points with dark humor to the absurdity of that connection: “The war on the territory of Yugoslavia began several years ago,” says Ugresic, “with the posterior of a completely innocent Serbian peasant” (1998, 71). But what could be treated with irony by a Slav living in Zagreb was, to Slavs in Belgrade, powerfully and collectively reminiscent of the most extreme form of humiliation. As Slaven Letica puts it, “Impalement by a beer bottle” became “a metaphor for five centuries . . . of Turkish acts of impalement [and the] mythology regarding the horrors of Turkish oppression” (1996, 95).

Important to my point is the language with which the Martinovic story was carried throughout Serbia and the way it took on a life of its own, continuing to appear in newspapers as much as six years later, repeatedly shifting the focus of conflict back five hundred years from the contemporary Serb-Albanian dispute in Kosovo to the still-remembered outrage of imagined impalement by the Turks. In the crucial document produced in 1986 by the leading Serbian intellectual institution, *The Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts*, the story of Martinovic and

¹⁷ The January 21, 1986, petition, which also charged the Yugoslav authorities with attempting to calm the public by covering up the incident, is reprinted in the *South Slav Journal* and quoted in Mertus 1999 (108–9). For a detailed presentation of the legal documents and wranglings that surrounded the case, the extensive public attention it received, and the way it became a turning point for the fate of the whole of former Yugoslavia, see the chapter that Mertus devotes to this case, “Impaled with a Bottle” (1999, 98–121). In addition to its primary function of illustrating the fiction that Serbs in Kosovo were living under Albanian victimization, “the Martinovic case was singled out because the incident propelled the nationalist agenda brewing in the mid-1980s. . . . The mere utterance of the name ‘Djordje Martinovic’ was enough to disprove the official notion [residual from the Tito days] of national harmony. . . . The press after Martinovic trumpeted national conflict” (107).

his beer bottle is inflated into a narrative “reminiscent of the darkest days of the Turkish practice of impalement.”¹⁸ Three years later the anxieties of the case had not diminished, and in a February 1989 edition of the popular weekly magazine *Nin*, Zivorad Mihajlovic (who proceeded to write a whole book on the case) once again found an immediate equation with Turkish impalement: “Here, we are dealing with the remains of the Ottoman Empire, in the use of a stake, but this time one wrapped in a bottle. In the time of the Turks, Serbs were also fixed to stakes, but even then the Turks used their servants—the Albanians” (quoted in Cohen 1998, 149; and Mertus 1999, 109, 119).¹⁹ And in January 1991, only a year before the Serb army would invade Bosnia and turn its weapons against the imagined “Turks” with a violence not seen in Europe in fifty years, the Martinovic case still captured such headlines as “Crime Like in the Time of Turks” in *Politika Ekspres* (see Mertus 1999, 109, 119). Roger Cohen comes close to recognizing what I see about this incident and its connection to a specific, historically remembered trauma: “Thus an incident in which nobody was killed was used by Milosevic’s media to awaken the darkest specters in the Serbian psyche . . . [and] this humiliation of a single Serb in a Kosovo field became synonymous with five centuries of Turkish oppression, impalement and genocide. . . . Listening to those gunners above Sarajevo, it was clear enough that the Martinovic model had been reapplied in Bosnia. All the specters of past Serb suffering had been deliberately raised and exaggerated here in Bosnia to justify a war in which the Serbs, consciously or unconsciously, used precisely the methods of their past torturers” (1998, 150).

If the Martinovic case needed further authority, it more than received it from the important Serb artist, Mica Popovic. Popovic’s painting (fig.

¹⁸ Kosta Mihailovic and Vasilije Krestic (1995) include a reprint of the entire 1986 memo, and this quotation from it falls on their page 129. See also Cohen 1998, 149; Mertus 1999, 109, 119.

¹⁹ It is worth noting the way that the *Nin* writer’s hatred of the Albanian Kosovars here seems to make him misremember the scene in Andric’s novel that he implicitly invokes. In Andric, the impaler—the “servant” to Turkish orders—is not an Albanian but a gypsy. In the Balkans’ standoff between Serb and Turk or Serb and Albanian, the gypsies (Roma) have always occupied an unenviable position in the middle. In Andric’s novel, they serve the Turks and help to torture the Serbs. During the 1999 expulsion of Albanians, the gypsies remained in Kosovo, where, again in compliance with the group in power, they aided the Serbs in the expulsion. Subsequently, however, NATO bombing changed the power equation. As Albanian Kosovars returned to their homes from exile and Serb civilians began fleeing north with the Roma close behind, the Roma found themselves turned back at the border to Serbia, denied entry as undesirable others, and forced to remain in Kosovo to face the wrath of the returnees.

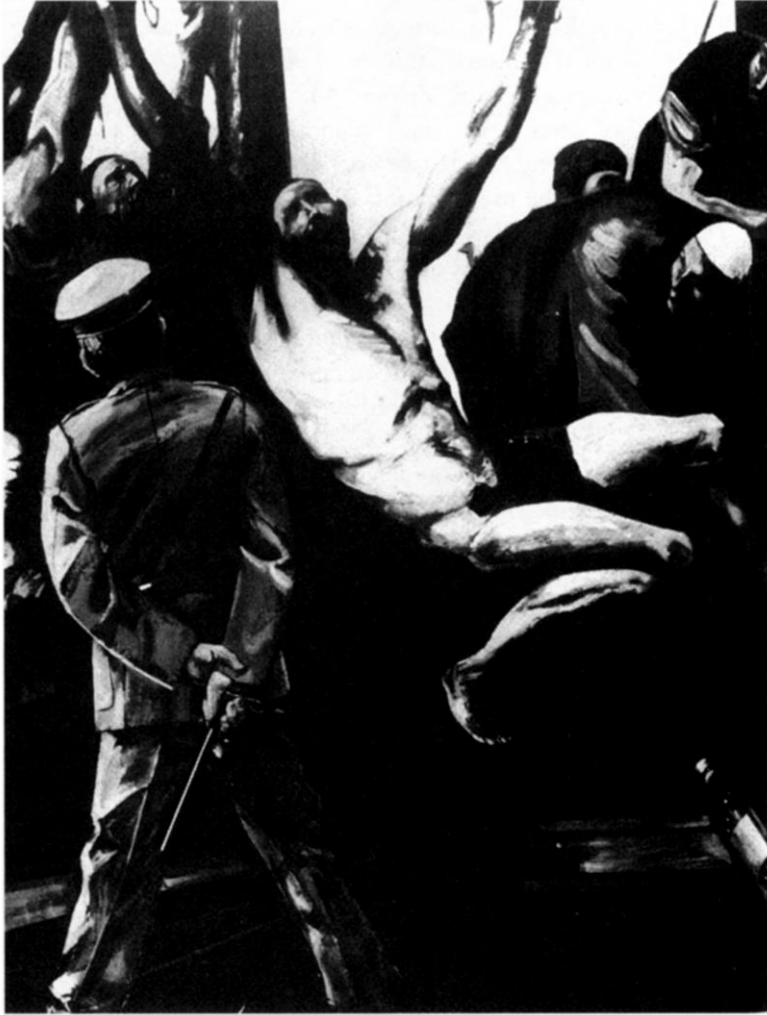


Figure 1 Mica Popovic, *May 1, 1985*

1), which purports by its title, *May 1, 1985*, to illustrate the *real* truth of what had happened in that Kosovo field, went on display in a prominent Belgrade gallery and was seen by well over a million people.²⁰ They came by busloads and stood in lines to be enraged by its spectacular fusion of Christ's suffering and Djordje Martinovic's mythologized impalement on a beer bottle. In the iconography of Popovic's painting, the beer bottle

²⁰ This reproduction of the Popovic painting appears in Samardzic et al. 1990, 319.

rests beneath the cross while malevolent figures wearing traditional Albanian headgear substitute for the Roman soldiers lowering Christ from the cross and a Yugoslav soldier in a uniform of the Tito era presides over the event, holding in his hands a nightstick that, given the particulars of the Martinovic story, suggestively implicates the communist regime in the crime of Serb victimization.

The image thus condemns not only the Albanians but a sitting Yugoslav government depicted as protecting its ethnic minorities at the expense of the victimized Serbs—a government that badly needs to be replaced with the kind of state that Milosevic implicitly promised in his infamous 1989 speech in Kosovo, where he stoked the growing anti-Albanian nationalism with his promise (and its implicit reference to the Martinovic incident) that Serbs “will never be beaten again.” Through Popovic’s painting, the Martinovic incident was framed within the same Christoslav model of religiously fervid suffering that underlies the Serbs’ core version of their history: Djordje Martinovic, whose trials add new material to the defining national narrative of Serb victimhood and reaffirm Serb claims to the highly contested territory of Kosovo, now apparently joins Prince Lazar as a type of Christ, the spear in the side replaced by the bottle up the backside, and Martinovic’s agony now justifying revenge and conferring mystical beatitude on the Serb atrocities of both the Bosnian and the Kosovar wars.

Rape as imagined reciprocity

The invocation by Bosnian Serb leaders of the historicity of impalement as rationale for the contemporary killing of Muslims and the way the Martinovic case recalled that same narrative offer strong hints of the dark specters of cultural memory lying behind some of the least explicable and most brutal aspects of Serb aggression in Bosnia. This narrative of reciprocal revenge for a mythologized impalement is likewise what explains the peculiar defacement in Ron Haviv’s striking photograph of a portrait of a Bosnian Muslim family. Having fled Sarajevo before the siege was fully in place, the family returned to their home in 1996 to find that occupying Serb militia had taken every stick of furniture, windowpane, baseboard, and piece of electrical wiring. Only one item remained, a defaced photograph. With a sharp instrument the Serbs had scraped away the faces of all four family members. Still not satisfied, they marked the photo with

yet another act of violence—four carefully placed slash marks that deftly impale each of the four figures (fig. 2).²¹

Within Serbian culture, the excessively invested image of male rape/impalement evokes an overdetermined memory of historical subjugation and an enraged sense of masculine humiliation that together suggest why the patterns of violence in this war were so especially those of rape and genital mutilation. In a particularly infamous incident from Omarska that came to trial at the Hague but ended in acquittal because the witness became too terrified to testify, Serb guards forced two Muslim prisoners to hold a third man upright in the position of the crucified Christ while a fourth prisoner was made to bite off his testicles (Vranic 1996, 292).²² Even the obsessive pursuit of a “greater Serbia” that has driven Serb national policy for centuries suggests phallic insecurities, and these same anxieties resonate in the words of the Serb national anthem and the peculiar way that song played its own part in the Serbian genocidal script. As Muslim men in captured villages were lined up with their hands over their heads, awaiting probable execution, they were made to sing the Serb anthem, which opens with the defiant assertion: “[He] lies who says that Serbia is small.” In a vivid acting out of the castration of Muslim culture, the Serb army rampaged through Bosnia, decapitating Muslim minarets and mosques, and, through such visual castrations, compelled the enemy Muslims psychologically to feel—and daily to observe signs of—their own impotence.²³

Given the determining power of the impalement myth and the way it encodes the Turkish conqueror’s rape of Serbian masculinity, it might seem that rape of the enemy male rather than female would more logically accomplish reciprocity. Indeed, testimonial evidence suggests that, in addition to genital mutilation, the rape of Muslim men may also have been frequent. In a relatively small sample of interviews conducted in refugee camps over a few months, Montenegrin journalist Seada Vranic found six men willing to admit that they had been raped, and she suspected that

²¹ This photograph of the portrait appears as the final picture in the main text of Haviv’s powerful collection of Bosnian and Kosovar war photographs (2000, 175).

²² According to Vranic, variously horrific forms of castration were a favorite form of camp torture, virtually all of them ending in death.

²³ In connection with the interethnic conflict on Cyprus during the 1960s, when Greek Cypriots exploded dynamite in the minarets of Turkish towns, Vamik Volkan notes that “the damage was inescapably suggestive of castration: with the top gone the minaret looked like a big phallus with the top removed. It made a symbolic focal point for the narcissistic hurts of the Turks, who had largely unconsciously felt that their phallic aggression and drive for success had been circumvented” (1988, 128).

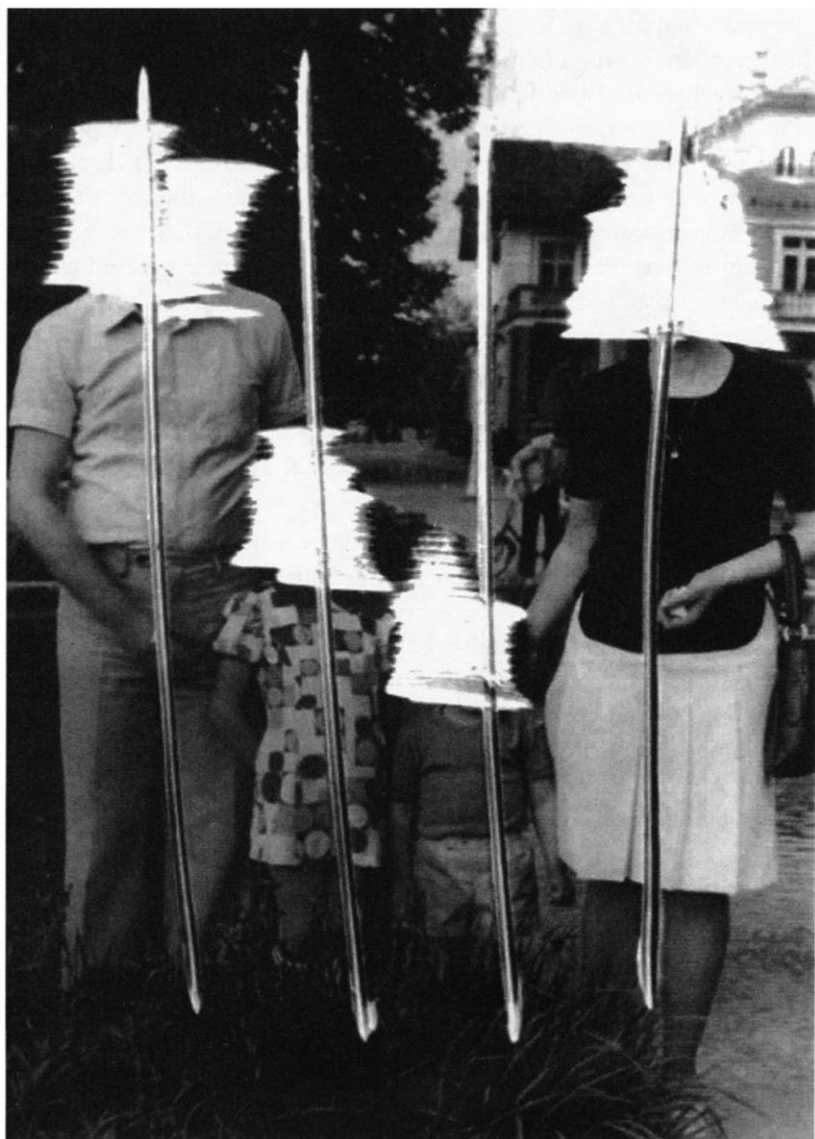


Figure 2 Ron Haviv, from *Blood and Honey: A Balkan War Journal* (Haviv 2000, 175). Reprinted by permission of VII Photo Limited, Paris.

the numbers were actually higher (1996, 292).²⁴ But even within the reports of male rape, there is a pattern that suggests that the more psychologically satisfying form of Serb revenge was not the direct, unmediated one but one that was buffered by symbolic structures and displaced into an elaborated triangulation. Vranic's transcription of the testimony of a man called Faruk is, in this regard, illuminating.

After a group of Serb irregulars arrived at Faruk's farm, the senior one sent the others off on a fictitious errand and then forced Faruk into the cowshed, where he raped him, mocking him as he did, "What happened Turk? You're deflowered?" Again, the Turk. Of the six male rapes that Vranic cites, this was one of five done in secret (1996, 292). Especially inside a world where brutality was strongly applauded, the fact that five of the six rapists wanted to keep their actions secret from their peers argues for a culture that reads homosexual penetration—even if enacted within the macho display of rape—as degradingly effeminizing for both participants, and the impetus for secretly raping other males within these norms would seem weighted toward guilty desire rather than cultural vengeance. For Faruk's rapist, the enactment of triumphal revenge and the violent display of cultural dominance came later that night within a collective performance of male bonding enacted through rape but reconstructed within a symbolic displacement.

Initially, the Serb soldiers tried to humiliate Faruk by forcing him to sexually penetrate a sheep. Beaten unconscious for refusing, Faruk was awakened later that night by the excruciating pain of an iron pole being pushed into his backside, again by the senior soldier. This time, the sexual violence was formulated as a group act involving all ten Serb soldiers' pinning him to the ground and collectively jeering, "Turk." In this re-enacted impalement/rape, not only was the category of private/collective reversed, but the underlying male-male dynamic, no longer unmediated, was, through the pole, displaced to the symbolic. Likewise in the detention

²⁴ While rape of male prisoners in war is something that we can assume occurs, it is a subject cloaked in a powerful silence. According to a footnote in Campbell 1998, "accounts can be found in 'Thousands of Men Raped in Bosnia: A Taboo on War Reporting,' abridged translation from *Le Nouveau Quotidien* 10–12 March 1995, in *BosNews* (Digest 211), 13 March 1995; and in a Reuters report in *Tribunal Watch*, 3 July 1996" (274, n. 116). Female rape, on the other hand, seems to be an issue of inexhaustible interest, especially to the military and the media. During the Gulf War, the American print media energetically engaged in salacious speculation over whether any of the American women pilots held as POWs by Iraqi troops had been raped. Yet while women POWs were decidedly fewer than their male counterparts, the possibility that any of America's fighting sons might have been similarly abused was never so much as hinted at.

camps, while some Muslim men were no doubt raped by their guards, the favored sexual performance of dominance and humiliation was one that again removed the Serb aggressor from the ambivalent site of homosexual desire. Instead of physically performing the role of rapist themselves, Serbs forced Muslim males to rape other Muslim men in shows in which "camp guards compel[led] inmates to engage in sexual acts with each other. It was the favourite form of entertainment of the camp staff in Manjaca and the commander of the camp, along with his staff, seldom failed to attend these performances" (Vranic 1996, 292). Not only was the rape victim's degradation enhanced by turning rape into a public performance where the victim was mocked by jeering spectators, but the camaraderie among the Serb spectators was enhanced by the power they enjoyed as collective voyeurs. For the Serbs, the strategy would yield two benefits: it would both strengthen their own bonds and vitiate the bonds among the Muslim men by forcing them to become not merely victims of the Serbs but also victims and victimizers of one another.

Since rape occurs in all wars, it is a universal and, by inference, must be viewed as such. Yet according to general consensus, rape during the Bosnian war exceeded any normalized model and thus cannot really be explained by it. What I have argued is that Serb rape of Bosniak women should be theorized within a culture-specific explanation and recognized as a projection that has its origins inside of the powerfully invested narratives of Serb cultural memory. And what I have also argued is that within that storehouse lies the humiliating memory of rape by the Turk. Like both of the collective and triangulated displacements above, the widespread rape of "Turk" women in this war should also be understood as a displacement of the unmediated vengeance of male-male rape. Translated by these terms, crossing the Drina to create rape camps and subject Bosnia's Muslim women en masse to the authority of the Serb phallus not only enacts a repetition and a return to subjugate the omnipresent Turk but tries to reciprocate the humiliating violation of male impalement/rape inside of a revised and improved script. Moreover, despite its substitution of the targeted victim, it works as commensurate reciprocation, and it works precisely because, in constructing women's bodies as property signifying the honor of the male community, patriarchal culture has produced the equation that makes this substitution possible. Through the tactical deployment of rape, Serb aggressions during the Yugoslav wars made visible a bitter irony inherent in the relationship among rape, patriarchy, and the vulnerability of a culture to the devastation of its identity: the more patriarchal the culture, the more vulnerable it becomes, because

all the more likely are the women within it to become targets for enemy rape.

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