

Book Reviews

Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 580 pp., 17.99 GBP/ 24.99 USD, ISBN 0521538548 (paperback), 45GBP/ 70US\$, ISBN 052183130X (hardcover).

What are the telltale signs of a prospective ethnic cleansing and can we know who would be its likely perpetrator? These are issues that would probably provoke more disagreement than the unease caused by demands for intervention once ethnic cleansing occurs. The controversy surrounding the prediction of such acts of mass murder stems from the preemptive nature of the inference. Therefore, it is to the credit of Michael Mann that he has not provided a definitive answer to this query; instead, he embarks on a "political explanation" of ethnic cleansing(6), by tracing the process of its dynamics in a number of cases. In this way, Mann has provided a nearly encyclopedic account of the patterns and contexts that suggest an escalation of a conflict into extreme ethnic intolerance.

As the title suggests, the volume interprets ethnic cleansing as the "dark side" of the process of democratization underwritten by the perversion of the idea of nationalism and its politicization into the nation-state. Mann's corollary is that it is the malfunctioning of states brought about by ethnic radicalization during

processes of democratization that are most likely to escalate into inter-ethnic conflicts. Nonetheless, he notes that although cleansing is a probable outcome in such circumstances, it is never the first objective, nor even a second one; yet, if none of the other measures seems to produce the desired effect, murderous outcomes are to be expected. Mann, therefore, suggests that ethnic cleansing is a particularly modern phenomenon whose scale is surpassed only by genocide. Consequently, he reserves the latter term for particularly egregious acts of "murderous ethnic cleansing"(17). Mann evidences that although instances of deportation, enslavement and the politicicide of elites were not uncommon in pre-modern times, their main intention was to eliminate "troublesome states, not peoples"(41). He insists that even the advent of monotheistic religions failed to initiate that degree of intolerance because "macro-ethnicity"(54) was largely nonexistent at the time, people therefore were valued as resources and not viewed as the embodiment of "otherness."

Therefore, like most commentators, Mann links the emergence of ethnic intolerance to the rise of nationalism. Concurring with most analysts, he points to a bifurcation in its conceptualization into a civic (West European) and an organic (Central and East European) form. His argument is that it is the former rather than the latter that has borne out more instances of ethnic cleansing. Mann's justification for such a development singles out the

persistence of multiethnic dynastic empires, which did not seek to legitimize themselves in national terms, but rather insisted on increasing the ethnic diversification of their territory. Furthermore, he argues that the situation was compounded by the late arrival of the idea of democracy, which was accompanied by the notion of the strong state (62). All these elements exacerbated inter-ethnic tension in Central and Eastern Europe and abetted the development of more intolerant policies. However, Mann is quick to point out that civic nationalism is not flawless either. This is best illustrated by the colonial “settler democracies” (71), whose indigenous populations were virtually annihilated because they were construed as an out-group (and often dehumanized). Mann, therefore, contends that “colonial cleansing represents the first dark side of emerging modern democracy” (107).

More contentiously, however, the volume’s account of ethnic cleansing is premised on the recovery of the concept of “class.” Mann insists ethnonationalism is strongest where it captures other senses of exploitation. Unlike other commentators, in this context, he reads the civic nationalism of the West as the “institutionalization of class conflict” (57), which is not settled by cleansing. On the other hand, the various forms of organic nationalism allow their proponents to advance discourses “dominated by ethnic strife while largely ignoring class struggles” (5), thus, making cleansing ideationally

possible. Although many would find problematic this Marxian methodology, Mann remains remarkably consistent in his approach. He validates such conceptualization of the thesis in a series of detailed and meticulous case studies.

Mann, initially embarks on a two-chapter explanation of the Armenian genocide. His is perhaps the most comprehensive account of the events that led to it, its process and the main perpetrators. He defines the Armenian genocide as “the most successful murderous cleansing achieved in the 20th century”(140) and the product of a “perversion of a movement originally seeking government by the people as it moved towards exclusionary nation-statism”(176). Mann draws a similar conclusion about the extermination caused by Nazism in Europe. In the space of four chapters he meticulously depicts its project of “extreme nation-statism” (188). Interestingly, Mann disagrees with the suggestion of the sanitized “banality” of Nazi evil and contends that much of the actual killing “was not dispassionate, scientific, or bureaucratic” (241) because it mainly involved “the ideology rather than the technology of modernity”(242). Likewise, it is a particular understanding of modernization that underwrites the chapter on the “communist cleansings”(318) of Stalin, Mao and Pol Pot. Mann labels them “classicide” (320) because these murders were part of an ideological project to cleanse the proletariat of

its enemies in order to further social and economic development.

However, he returns to his focus on ethnicity in the cases from the post-Cold War period. For instance, he argues that it was the democratic transformations of post-communism that “killed off Yugoslav federalism” (367). In two chapters, Mann details the development of majoritarian ethnic democracies which underwrote the disintegration of the federal state and generated intense conflicts across border zones. He contends that it is the radical ethnicization of democracy that undermined the transition process. Mann also devotes two chapters to the Rwandan genocide—the other major instance of ethnic cleansing in the 1990s. He calls it “the most rapid and complete genocide the world has ever seen”(430). The book explains it as the outcome of a modern escalation over who controls the state. In this case, he explains the complex relations of ideological, economic, military, and political power in ethnic terms (not unlike the case of Yugoslavia). Finally, Mann looks at the cases of India and Indonesia. In both countries there are sporadic instances of inter-ethnic rioting which have not yet escalated into outright ethnic cleansing. His inference is that this is mainly due to the ability of state institutions to remain impervious to ethnic radicalization that prevents the intensification of the conflicts there.

Given these case studies, Mann concludes that ethnic cleansing in Europe is unlikely, not least because most political entities—with the

notable exception of Macedonia (508)—are already predominantly mono-ethnic. Therefore, he points towards the “global South” (529) as the future ground of large scale inter-ethnic conflicts in the process of modernization. Mann’s volume provides a valuable contribution to the study of murderous ethnic cleansing. The ability to gather such a wide range of perspectives and experience makes his effort both worthwhile and timely, and it will therefore be very useful for anyone working and dealing with ethnic conflicts. An additional merit is that Mann has written his book at a level that is going to satisfy the inquisitiveness of both his peers and students, which ensures (and inspires) additional enquiries into its topic.

Emilian Kavalski, Loughborough University

Paulin Kola, *The Search for Greater Albania*, London: Hurst & Co., 2003. 416 pp., 21 USD, ISBN 1-85065-596-0 (paperback).

Paulin Kola’s *The Search for Greater Albania* is a landmark book that any serious Balkans watcher should read. With the issue of Kosovo’s final status looming and threatening to destabilize the region again, it is far from merely an academic matter to ask whether Albanian nationalism could provide sufficient impetus for uniting

Albania with Kosovo and the surrounding Albanian-populated territories. Alarmists cite the Albanian drive to redeem territorial claims in Kosovo, Serbia proper, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Greece as evidence that the Balkans have not yet finished fragmenting. The force of this proposition derives in part from the supposedly long historical pedigree of the Greater Albania movement. *The Search for Greater Albania* is a sustained effort to determine whether there is any such movement. In it, Kola situates Albanian thought on territory and nationhood within the context of the history and politics of the southern Balkans.

Writing with the objectivity of a dispassionate scholar and the insight of a political insider, Kola deflates the hypothesis that there is a coherent, much less inveterate, Greater Albania concept at work in the policies of the Government of Albania or the Albanian communities in the contiguous territories. According to Kola, Albanian decision making bodies have always been too weak to consolidate a Greater Albania platform, and its leaders too beholden to foreign influences, too bent on self-preservation, or too battered by historical vicissitudes to contemplate seriously a united ethnic homeland.

Greater Albania rhetoric has appeared regularly since Ottoman rule, but its propagators have typically envisioned lesser goals than independence, or they have enjoyed limited viability. In 1444 Skenderbeg, a local administrator in

what is now northern Albania, gained lasting fame as a pan-Albanian freedom fighter resisting Ottoman rule. However, contrary to his now-mythic stature, Skenderbeg was no patriotic liberator. His struggle was merely to unify the four Albanian-speaking Ottoman vilayets into a single administrative unit with wider autonomy. He neither fought for, nor achieved, independence; that legacy is a *post hoc* nationalist construction. The participants in the celebrated 1878 League of Prizren likewise had limited political ambitions, seeking only autonomy under the Ottomans, not independence. The Kosovo-based Kacak movement of 1918 to 1922 aimed nominally at unifying all “Albanian lands” but fell prey to internal Albanian politics. Ahmet Zogu, whose rise in the Albanian government at the time depended on sponsorship from Belgrade, brutally repressed the Kacaks. Zogu would later pretend to lead a nationalist cause himself, but only briefly. When he became King Zog in 1928 he claimed in a moment of expansive oration to rule all the Albanian people, but it was an episode of empty self-aggrandizement, which he never backed up with policies.

World War II brought new opportunities for ventilating the Greater Albania concept, but none of them caught hold. Germany and Italy colluded in 1941 to promise a greater homeland to the Albanians in exchange for military loyalty, but infighting and Partisan intrigues had already driven the Albanians too severely to back the Axis. Tito

offered the Albanians the slightly less sweeping promise of “self-determination” if they would unite behind him, but the Albanians were, again, too divided to commit *en masse*, and the promise proved to be an empty one in any event.

In Albania proper the war years saw fierce competition for control of the country’s post-war agenda. The emerging leader of the Communist Party of Albania (CPA), Enver Hoxha, courted both the Albanian nationalist Balli Kombetare (BK) and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY). Hoxha’s most serious flirtation with nationalism came in 1943 when he agreed provisionally to let the BK form a “committee for the salvation of Albania,” which would first liberate Albania from the Axis, then deliver the right of self-determination to their co-nationals in adjacent lands. But Hoxha proved fickle and the plan was short lived. Hoxha threw in his lot with Tito and suppressed the salvation committee as soon as he sensed the CPY’s imminent ascent to regional dominance. Albanian and Yugoslavia initially grew close through communism, and in the immediate aftermath of WWII Hoxha very nearly concluded a deal with Tito to have Albania annexed as Yugoslavia’s seventh republic.

The heart of *The search for Greater Albania* is a chronological survey of the interaction of three crucial variables: the political status of Kosovar Albanians, Tirana’s relations to sponsors in the wider world, and its official policy on neighboring co-nationals. When Hoxha broke with Tito in 1948,

Belgrade lost its principal motive for pacifying its own Albanians in Kosovo. It immediately suppressed Kosovar Albanian political life, inspired by the infamous 1937 Cubrilovic Memorandum and culminating in waves of deportations that sent tens of thousands of Kosovar Albanians to Turkey. Although Tito himself was later to admit the shamefulness of the Cubrilovic policies, Hoxha did not utter a peep of objection from Tirana during the two decades of repression they inspired. In fact, as Tito later recoiled from the deportation policies by raising Kosovo’s status to nearly republic level in 1974, Hoxha responded not with approval of his co-nationals’ enhanced status in Kosovo, but with alarm that such liberalizing measures might threaten his own rule at home. In 1981, when the Kosovo student protests erupted into province-wide demands for republic status, Hoxha extradited several of the Kosovo demonstrators who fled into Albania to escape the Yugoslav police.

The collapse of communism in Albania in 1990 swept the charismatic orator Sali Berisha to the political forefront in Tirana. Berisha celebrated his 1992 presidential election victory by effusing, *inter alia*, that he would unite the Albanian nation, but his advocacy of pan-Albanianism proved to be mercurial. Chastised by the electoral defeat of his Democratic Party in July 1992, he retreated on the Kosovo question in favor of the voters’ expressed priority, bringing Albania’s

shambolic economy to life. By 1995 Berisha had dropped Kosovo independence entirely from his agenda, instead setting out a Euro-flavored recipe for a “common democratic space” across the Balkans in which national frontiers would gradually lose relevance.

In 1995, a group of 76 Albanian intellectuals tried to steer Berisha toward a firm stance on the national question, in a memorandum advocating “self-determination” for Kosovo, greater constitutional rights for Albanians in Macedonia, more autonomy for Albanians in Montenegro and southern Serbia, and the right of return for Albanian refugees from northern Greece. This tract, tucked away in a tangential discussion of Berisha’s personal foibles, deserves closer analysis than Kola gives it. Nationalist memos penned by self-proclaimed intellectuals in the Balkans tend to be marvelously unhinged from political reality, but the notably pragmatic 1995 memo advanced politically sensitive compromises, many of which have since been implemented by international agreement. The suggested compromises, moreover, are fitted to local complexities, rather than daubed bluntly with a nationalist brush. All of which points to perhaps the most remarkable fact about the memo: As Yugoslavia was fragmenting under the weight of predacious Serbian nationalism, and as that force was drastically, violently narrowing the parameters of Albanian political life in Kosovo, a group of frankly nationalist Albanian thinkers sketched a sane

alternative to war. Rather than giving into the temptation to balance Belgrade’s greater Serbia plan with their own vision of greater Albania, the memo’s authors showed extraordinary vision and political maturity, rare currencies at a dark moment in Balkans history.

Some critics will be presumptively suspicious of Kola’s scholarship. He is, after all, an Albanian national who has advocated his government’s interests in several international fora. However, he is also demonstrably balanced and cosmopolitan in his treatment of divisive political issues, at times taking pains to put his objectivity on display. Swimming against a strong current of Albanian mythology, Kola is agnostic on the issue of Albanian aboriginality in the Balkans. He cuts the Skenderbeg cult down to size and punctures the myth of Albanian indifference to religion. Kola also levels criticism at more concrete issues, questioning the Albanian exaggeration of human rights abuse figures in Kosovo and airing at length a Human Rights Watch report condemning Tirana’s treatment of Albania’s Greek minority. Ultimately, Kola’s objectivity is borne out less by these flashes of critical spirit than by mundane matters of public record. Kola’s major conclusion—that Albanian nationalism is stunted, fractious, and haphazard—is drawn from very public accounts of the Albanians’ experience with Great Power interventionism, Communist internationalism, and regional ethnic meltdown. Equally transparent to

public review, the policies of neighbors and international overseers have done more to expand Albanian nationalist vistas than any domestic impetus.

Mathew Herbert, KFOR

Peter Siani-Davies (ed.), *International Interventions in the Balkans since 1995*, Routledge. 2003. 224 pp., ISBN 0-415-29834-2 (hardcover).

This book comprises a collection of eleven articles with an introduction by the editor. The idea for the book is the result of a conference organized by Center for South-East European Studies at University College London in 2000. While the book deals with interventions in the Balkans, the focus is mainly, and naturally, on Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia. The book moves from the general to the specific.

Peter Siani-Davis provides a historical overview of international intervention and non-intervention in the Balkans. He points out the use (and abuse) of the term Balkans and its mercurial meanings in justifying both intervention and its absence.

The first three chapters deal with post-1995 interventions in general. Mary Kaldor differentiates between a geo-political security approach (security in terms of territory) and a cosmopolitan approach (security in terms of defense of human rights). Vesselin Popovski examines the legal aspect

of humanitarian intervention and the significant shift from the “right to intervene” to the “responsibility to protect”. Miroslav Hadzic criticizes the inconsistencies of Euro-Atlantic interventions but also offers principles which can be drawn from the interventions. The next four chapters offer an analysis of specific interventions in the region. Sumantra Bose’s article on interventions in the Bosnian city of Mostar takes a look at the issue by focusing on events at a micro-level. Emmanuela C. del Re provides an account of the post-war international administration of Kosovo in the area while Alice Ackerman’s account of the only preventive diplomacy mission of the United Nations offers a model for other crisis-prone regions nothing that the failure to follow up this strategy with long-term conflict prevention measures and policies illustrates how a volatile region can flare up. Jasna Dragovic-Soso examined the effects of international interventions on domestic politics in Yugoslavia, especially in terms of the sovereignty of the Milosevic regime, concluding that the overthrow of Milosevic was “despite Western intervention, and not because of it.” Steven Sampson offers an insightful assessment of civil society development projects in the ex-Yugoslavia. Drawing on his personal experience in the field, the author describes succinctly the new “project societies” and relations between international and local personnel and future consequences of imported models of civil society. Vanessa Pupavac describes the

trauma relief and problems related with to it. David Phinnemore and Peter Siani-Davis examine the integration and regional cooperation in the region noting that the granting of “potential candidate” status to countries of the Western Balkans is a significant step toward integration with the European Union as well as a confidence-boosting measure for local reformers. The last chapter, as Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers aptly names it, is an “inconclusive conclusion”. She points out the “gaps of concern” between the internationals and the locals, as well as their not-always-identical interests and ideas. The need for such a gap to be bridged is noted, while the bridging itself is mostly left for the sequel of the book.

But, the book is mainly about interventions in former Yugoslavia, and more specifically in Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia. This focus is justified because interventions have been mostly in these three polities. The polities, which are perceived as international protectorates, are a litmus test of international commitment in the region. Two themes can be observed in the book. There is criticism leveled at international institutions (UNMIK, and by extension the Office of the High Representative in Bosnia) for increasingly centralizing power. It is argued that this centralization is taking place to the detriment of local democratic institution-building where development has been slowed. A second and related criticism of international institutions is that they foster over-dependence on

international actors and factors. These two criticisms are part of a larger paradox because the situation in these three polities is not clear-cut. Although international interventions arrived belatedly, their consequences and the continuing international presence and commitment has been reassuring for those in the region. International institutions in the region have been the *spiritus movens* of reform, and centralization was necessary to push the reform agenda. Hence, so long as the objective is the transition of societies, as well as institution-building aimed at fostering democracy, the centralization of international institutions on the ground is justified. In general, the book provides a critical but useful evaluation of international intervention in the region. Books and articles on interventions during the Kosovo war have and continue to appear but the analysis of interventions in the lands of ex-Yugoslavia have not been many. Hence, the book fills the gap and is a useful reference for events in these areas during the last decade.

Hamza Karcic, Sarajevo

Miroslav Hadzic, *The Yugoslav People's Agony. The Role of the Yugoslav People's Army*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002. 293 pp., 49 GBP, ISBN 0-7546-1642-8 (hardcover).

The Yugoslav People's Agony is the first book on the role of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) in

the dissolution of Yugoslavia since James Gow's *Legitimacy and the Military. The Yugoslav Crisis*, published in 1992, which did not discuss the war itself in much detail. Other books on the topic have been mostly memoirs by key actors, such as Veljko Kadijević (last minister of defense of Yugoslavia) or Branko Mamula (his predecessor). While an intriguing primary source, they mostly serve as self-justification for their role in the war: Kadijević blames a global conspiracy for the dissolution of Yugoslavia, while Mamula distances himself from Milošević, whose responsibility he recognizes.

Hadžić is well placed to write such a study. He was a career officer in the JNA, who conducted research inside the army during the crucial last years of Yugoslavia. After leaving the army, he founded the Centre for Civic-Military Relations, a leading think tank in Serbia on civilian control of the armed forces. The book is thus both an insider account and the work of a researcher with a critical distance towards the army.

The study covers the period from the late 1980s and the beginning of the Yugoslavia crisis to the end of the Milošević era in 2000. Although it discusses the transformations (and lack thereof) of the army over more than a decade, the book focuses on the years preceding the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Only in two shorter chapters does Hadžić discuss the “changing without change” of the JNA into the Army of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The author dismisses ethnic affinity as a reason for the army's alignment with the Milošević regime, which he attributes to ideological proximity and an unwillingness to reform or to mediate between alternative visions of a future Yugoslavia. Hadžić effectively traces the ambivalence of the Serbian regime towards both Yugoslavia and the army and the process in which the army, and in particular its leadership at the time, chose to associate itself with Milošević. The alliance which emerged only gradually resulted in the Army's abandonment of Yugoslavia (p. 110).

Despite being comprehensive and multi-faceted, this book leaves some gaps which make it less accessible for many readers. It does not, for example, contain a general introduction on the evolution of either the JNA or the previous armies in Yugoslavia. When discussing the key actors and events in the late 1980s, Hadžić often does not include the larger picture which would help readers to contextualize the role of the army. The book was obviously written primarily for a Serbian or an ex-Yugoslav audience, which might need less of a reminder of events. Surprisingly, the book also does not discuss the 'Mladina affair' of 1988 in great detail, even though the imprisonment of Janez Jansa (Slovenia's current PM) marked a watershed in the relations between Slovenia and the army, and foreshadowed the dissolution of the country in 1991. Finally, the structure of the book is often confusing. Thus, neither the first

part on the “Army's road to war” nor the second part on the “JNA's warfare balance” are organized clearly, either chronologically or thematically. This notwithstanding, the book provides valuable insight into the dissolution of Yugoslavia and fills a crucial gap in the English-language literature on the topic.

Florian Bieber, ECMI

Exchange

In its last issue, *SEEP Online* published a book review of the book *The New Balkans: Disintegration and Reconstruction* edited by George A. Kourvetaris, Victor Roudometof, Kleomenis Koutsoukis, and Andrew G. Kourvetaris. The review provoked an exchange between the author of the review and one of the contributors to the book. SEEP is publishing this exchange below with minor editorial change only. The original review by Biljana Radonjic is available at: <http://www.seep.ceu.hu/archives/issue52/>.

June 2005

Dear Biljana Radonjic,

I recently read your review of the volume *The New Balkans: Disintegration and Reconstruction* in the journal *Southeast European Politics*. I contributed a chapter to the volume and thought I might

respond to those aspects of your review that had reference to my piece.

I am glad that you agree that an indigenous form of civil society needs to develop in the region of Southeastern Europe. However, I was dismayed that you understood the description “some sort of” and “some form of” democracy and civil society as derogatory, as opposed to its intention which was simply to try to emphasize that there is no *one* correct form or shape to either civil society or democracy. These notions need to be culturally contoured in keeping with the indigenous societies described. I believe that there are many and varied definitions and explanations of both “civil society” and “democracy,” and my aim was to draw attention to this.

Further, I did not have the intention to be condescending or negative towards the societies that I described – in fact, just the opposite. Both democracy and an indigenous civil society are indeed forming in the societies of Southeastern Europe, and these multifaceted and complex processes need support and encouragement from the western world. However, no one version of either can be quickly adopted for all the countries in the region. The outline and character that both civil society and democracy will take is something for the societies themselves to decide. This will take time, and participation by all involved is needed for it to be successful.

I hope that this has clarified any misunderstanding.

Best Regards,

Tina Mavrikos-Adamou

July 2005

Dear Tina Adamou,

Thank you very much for your response.

First, I would like to say that I truly enjoyed reading your article and that I find your clarification very helpful. I believe we would both agree that the diversity of democracy and civil society around the world is precisely what makes them thriving and sustainable. I have also realized that my criticism of your use of language was mistaken due to the fact that I overlooked your theoretical approach. Nevertheless, I do have a more general criticism—shared by many IR practitioners—of the language used by some post-positivist scholars.

When it comes to the substance of the general argument you presented, I accept that "there is no one correct form or shape to either civil society or democracy," as you put it in your response. I also agree with the view that "[t]hese notions need to be culturally contoured in keeping with the indigenous societies described". However, I do not see the reason why such general positions of a writer could not be clearly stated somewhere at the beginning of an article. And if the position is developed sufficiently

well, there seems to be no need for using the 'some sort of' and 'some kind of' language throughout the entire article - or making inverted commas in the air when presenting. Dotting an article with these linguistic constructs does not actually help clarify the argument against dominant discourses. In fact, it only alienates many readers and listeners—particularly decision makers—by creating a discourse which is as exclusive as the dominant one it intends to criticize.

However, leaving aside general arguments, I also believe that when a term 'civil society' or 'democracy' is used in the specific context, such as SEE region for example, what would be really helpful is that a reader is told which particular form or shape of these phenomena a writer actually has in mind, given the socio-political and cultural background of the society/societies in question.

I hope this clarifies my position.

With Best Regards,

Biljana Radonjic