

The Scholars' Initiative: Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies

2001-2011

"You have your facts. We have our facts. You have a complete right to choose between the two versions." - Simo Drljača, ICTY indictee

I. SPONSORS

United States Institute of Peace (Washington, DC)
National Endowment for Democracy (Washington, DC)
German Marshall Fund - Balkan Trust (Belgrade, Yugoslav Successor States)
Purdue University - Peace Studies Program (West Lafayette, IN)
National Council for Eurasian & Central European Research (Seattle, Washington)
Institute for Historical Justice & Reconciliation – Salzburg Global Seminar (Austria)
Vojvodina Assembly

Hosting Institutions:

September 2001: University of Novi Sad
co-organizers: Ministry of Science, Republic of Serbia
Vojvodina Assembly
July 2002: United Nations Mission in Bosnia & Hercegovina (UNMiBH), Sarajevo, BiH
co-organizers: Citizens' Pact for Southeastern Europe (Novi Sad)
Open Society Institute (Belgrade & Priština, FRY)
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
September 2003: Canadian Centre for Austrian & Central European Studies (U. Alberta)
December 2004: Andrásy University (Budapest)
Center for Interethnic Tolerance & Refugees (Skopje)
co-organizers: U.S. Institute of Peace
Vojvodina Assembly
April 2005: U.S. Institute of Peace (Washington, DC)
co-organizer: National Endowment for Democracy
January 2006: American Historical Association (Philadelphia)
June 2007: Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation (Salzburg)

II. The PROBLEM:

Amid all the bitter debates about the Yugoslav conflicts, there has been one element of agreement by all sides, namely the pivotal role that history has played in shaping people's minds. Unfortunately, each national group employs a different array of facts, many of which are either distorted or blatantly untrue. The resulting, divergent recitations of history have divided nations

by sowing mistrust, resentment and hatred between people who coexisted with one another for long periods of time. The deepest divide of all separates the great majority of ethnic Serbs (in both Serbia and *Republika Srpska*) from virtually all other national groups in Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, and Slovenia. In the hands of nationalist politicians, journalists, and academics, the tragic events of the 1990s have been misrepresented in ways that have intensified mutual recrimination, further widening the cultural gap between the Serbs and their neighbors.

Since Dayton, the international community has worked to bridge the cognitive gap between the region's peoples. Western media platforms such as Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and BBC have disseminated news and information, while philanthropic NGOs like the Soros, Friedrich-Naumann, and Bertelsmann Foundations have sponsored numerous confidence-building, "people-to-people" programs. The Hague Tribunal has painstakingly investigated, then exposed criminal acts committed by all sides. Yet none of these vehicles has been able to overcome the proprietary representations of "patriotic" political leaders --- and the great majority of "mainstream" media platforms which articulate their views. This has been especially the case in Serbia, many of whose democratic leaders and free media continue to ignore or deny the criminal record of the Milošević regime. Moreover, so long as they retain a *de facto* monopoly over public memory, perception, and interpretation, they will continue to discredit and marginalize the few independent voices that challenge them. Indeed, there exist many among the region's political, academic and media elite who privately concede the corruption of their vocal majority's historical accounts, but who nonetheless lack the courage to take a public position.

III. PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

The Scholars' Initiative represents an attempt by scholars to bridge the gap that separates their knowledge of the tragic events of the period 1986-2000 from the proprietary interpretations that nationalist politicians and media have impressed on mass culture. Given gaps in the historical record and the existence of sometimes contradictory evidence, the Initiative will surely not be able to resolve all issues. In some instances, it will only be able to narrow the parameters within

which opposing sides can still engage in reasoned debate. It does, however, expect to narrow the cognitive gap between peoples by simultaneously validating evidence and discrediting unfounded, proprietary myths through a combination of sober scholarship and sustained interaction with media and public officials. Indeed, such an international consortium of eminent scholars can furnish a common, and ostensibly legitimate, alternative account on which moderate opinion leaders can lean for support. The credibility of the Scholars' Initiative is based not only on the indisputable scientific credentials of its participants, but on the transparent impartiality of its methodology as it solicits and examines evidence presented by all sides, then jointly evaluates and (in)validates the documentary material through the application of universal scientific methodologies.

Admittedly, no discussion of the Yugoslav tragedy can begin without the deeper historical context, especially the record of ethnic interaction and its representation by the agents of nationalism over the past two centuries. The Initiative has, however, focused its research, analysis and public interaction on eleven key controversies that inform virtually every debate among and between the peoples and politicians of the former Yugoslavia:

1. Kosovo under Autonomy (1974-1990): **Melissa Bokovoy / Momčilo Pavlović**

To what extent were Kosovo's Serbs subject to discrimination and intimidation by the then-dominant Albanian majority? What, if any, disparity was there between reality and perception by the Serb minority? What role did media and officials play in molding these perceptions? What mix of motives informed Serb emigration from Kosovo? To what extent were Kosovo's Albanians satisfied with autonomy? How much support was there for a change in status?

2. The Dissolution of Yugoslavia (1986-91) **Andrew Wachtel / Latinka Perović**

What role did intellectuals play and what were their agendas? What motivated the key Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian politicians? To what extent did each violate the SFRY constitution? Was the repeal of Vojvodina's and Kosovo's autonomy legal?...justified? Who drove SFRY to dissolution?

3. Independence and the Fate of Minorities (1991-92) **Drago Roksandić / Gale Stokes**

What was Franjo Tudjman's agenda in 1991? To what extent was the threat to Serb minorities in Croatia and Bosnia real or manufactured? What was the likely intent of Alija Izetbegović's "Islamic Declaration"? To what extent were Bosnia's Serbs and Croats motivated by fear or by the quest for a Greater Serbia/Croatia? Did the *Bosniak*-Croat coalition do enough to assuage the Serbs' concerns? Was the Badinter referendum and subsequent secession legitimate?

4. "Ethnic Cleansing" and War Crimes (1991-94) **Marie-Janine Čalić / Momčilo Mitrović**

What were each side's war aims? When and where did the first acts of ethnic violence occur, and who was behind them? To what extent did elites and media promote ethnic hatred and "ethnic cleansing"? What was the extent of the expulsions in Croatia? Bosnia? How extensive and organized were pillaging, rape, murder, incarceration and expulsion?

5. Int'l Community and the FRY/Belligerents (1989-95) **Dušan Janjić / Matjaž Klemenčič**

What role did the US and EC states play in Yugoslavia's demise? What were their motives? How realistic were the various peace plans for Croatia and Bosnia? Why did they fail?

6. The Safe Areas (1992-1995)

Darko Gavrilović / Charles Ingrao

To what extent did each side violate the terms governing the Safe Areas? What war crimes were committed by each side? To what extent were tactics employed in the siege and defense of Sarajevo militarily justified? What happened at Srebrenica and who was ultimately responsible?

7. The War in Croatia (1991-1995)

Mile Bjelajac / Ozren Žunec

What role did the international community play in arming, training and deploying the Croatian army? To what extent were the *Krajina* Serbs evacuated or expelled? How extensive were crimes committed against those who stayed behind and what role did the Croatian political and military leadership play in their commission?

8. Kosovo under the Milošević Regime (1990-99)

Valentina Duka / Dušan Janjić

To what extent was Belgrade's crackdown in Kosovo justified? legal? What was the shape of the Serbian regime in Kosovo?....of the Albanian reaction? When and why did Albanian militants resort to violence? Who comprised the KLA and what was its ultimate agenda? To what extent was Belgrade's response justified?

9. US/NATO Intervention (1998-99)

James Gow / Miroslav Hadžić

What motivated the US and its NATO allies? What happens in Kosovo without NATO intervention? Was the Rambouillet *diktat* justified? Did NATO violate international law? What was the extent of war crimes committed by the Yugoslav military?...Serbian (special) police?...paramilitaries? Did *anyone* flee NATO bombs?

10. The Hague Tribunal (ICTY)

Julie Mertus / Vojin Dimitrijević

To what extent is the ICTY a political body? To what extent is it impartial?...anti-Serb?

11. Living Together or Hating Each Other?

Marina Blagojević / David Bruce MacDonald

Building on the “positive history” concept developed by Marina Blagojević: To what extent were Yugoslavia’s peoples capable of living together?...willing to do so? How do we measure/weigh positive/negative attributes in such an analysis?...and how are they recorded in the collective memory?

To answer these questions project organizers brought together over three hundred scholars from thirty countries, with most coming from those core areas of the former Yugoslavia which have pitted Serbs against neighboring national and ethnic groups in Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo and, to some extent, Slovenia, Vojvodina, and Sandžak. From the beginning participants worked together in examining dispassionately key documentary evidence that informs public perceptions of the underlying causes and tragic course of the Yugoslav catastrophe. By employing shared scholarly methodologies, the ensuing dialogue reached a reasoned consensus on many of these contentious issues, particularly those controversies for which easily exposed myths or abject ignorance of verifiable facts have erected insurmountable barriers to direct and productive communication. By achieving at least some common ground we hope to interdict the cycle distortion and outright myth making with mutual understanding that can help heal the wounds and bridge the cultural divisions of the past decade.

Although the Scholars’ Initiative has focused on the major controversies of the 15-year period 1986-2000, its successful application could lay the groundwork for a subsequent re-examination of key historic developments both before the rise of Slobodan Milošević and

beyond the frontiers of the former Yugoslavia to other central European nation-states whose own cache of historical myths informs the entire region's troubled transition from multiethnic coexistence to ethnic conflict. Hence the hope that this initiative is merely a first step in a much broader process that can be applied throughout central Europe against proprietary versions of history -- and the demagogic politicians who employ them.

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

Project activities featured (1) coordinated, multilateral research by qualified scholars, both in published and unpublished sources, including oral interviews, punctuated at regular intervals by (2) regular meetings of research teams in four general sessions (September 2001, July 2002, September 2003, December 2004), (3) sustained, programatized interaction both with mass media via TV, radio, and newspaper interviews, and (4) with political leaders, initially as subjects for gathering information, but also for garnering support for the consortium's ultimate findings, followed by (5) the publication of four authoritative studies: a collection of originally researched articles on specific case studies published as a special issue of the prominent journal *Nationalities Papers* (2006), an issue of *Südosteuropa* previewing several team reports (2007), a collection devoted solely to the dissolution of Yugoslavia (2008), and the project's flagship volume presenting the findings of the eleven aforementioned controversies in both English (2009) and Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian (2010).

As the project's composite project bibliography demonstrates, the Scholars' Initiative has enlisted many of the most eminent scholars in the field. At the same time, we have always been committed to integrating as many younger scholars as possible as a necessary investment in the region's future by helping establish the reputation of a new generation that can break with the national chauvinism of so many of the academic profession's senior figures. The following lists enumerate those scholars who joined the project (with the names of research team leaders underlined) and the annual conferences/presentations:

Albania

Elez Biberaj
 Ferit Duka
Valentina Duka
 Piro Misha
 Ana Lalaj
 Remzi Lani

Australia

Aleksandar Pavković

Austria

Tomislav Borić
 Raphael Drashtak
 Horst Haselsteiner
 Georg Kastner
 Paul Leifer
 Rüdiger Malli
 Josef Marko
 Wolfgang Petritsch
 Ernest Plivac
 Iwan Sokolowsky
 Branislava Stankov†
 Arnold Suppan

Bosnia

Neven Andjeli□
 Vlado Azinović
 Edina Bećirevi□
 Boro Bronza
 Nejra Čengić
 Ismet Dizdarević
 Vjekoslav Domljan
 Sead Fetahagi□
 Sačir Filandra
Darko Gavrilović
 Ilijaš Hadžibegović
 Olja Hočevar
 Dževad Juzbašić
 Husnija Kamberović
 Suada Kapić
 Dubravko Lovrenović
 Rusmir Mahmutćehajić
 Davor Marko
 Asim Mujkić
 Marko Oršoli□
 Sabina Pstrocki
 Edin Radušić
 Ermin Sarajlija
 Džemal Sokolović
 Mirsad Tokača

Bisera Turković
 Edin Veladžić
 Ugo Vlasisavljević
 □eljko Vukadinović□
 Miodrag □ivanović□

Bulgaria

Rumen Stefanov

Canada

Mark Biondich
 Dejan Guzina
 Renéo Lukić
 Stan Markotich
 Dalibor Mišina
 Wayne Nelles
 Nancy Partner

Croatia

Albert Bing
 Dunja Bonacci
 Mirjana Domini
 Hrvoje Glavač
 Ivo Goldstein
 Igor Graovac
 Vesna Ivanović
 Tvrtko Jakovina
 Vjeran Katunarić
 Davorka Matić
 Maja Miljković
 Zoran Oklopčić
 Ivan Padjen
Drago Rokсандić
 Tonči Šitin
 Dubravka Ugrešić
 Radovan Vukadinović□
Ozren Žunec

Denmark

Ana Dević

Egypt

Ivan Iveković

France

Catherine Horel
 Rada Iveković
 Jacques Semelin

Germany

Wolf Behschnitt
 Mark Beller
 Thomas Bremer
Marie-Janine Čalić
 Dunja Melčić
 Tatjana Meijvogel-Volk
 Falk Pingel
 Günter Schödl
 S. Schwander-Sievers
 Ludwig Steindorff
 Stefan Troebst
 Tobias Vogel

Greece

Fotini Bellou

Hungary

Gábor Hamza
 Martha Fazekas
 Georg Schöpflin

Israel

Orli Fridman

Italy

Stefano Bianchini
 Egidio Ivetić
 Mariella Pandolfi
 Francesco Privitera
 Helena Zdravković

Kosovo

Ylber Bajraktari
 Ylli Bajraktari
 Anton Berisha
 Isuf Berisha
 Bejtullah Destani
 Enver Hasani
 Ylber Hysa
 Leon Malazogu
 Shkëlzen Maliqi
 Luigj Ndou
 Besnik Pula
 Blerim Reka

Luxembourg

Florian Bieber

Macedonia

Dalibor Jovanovski
 Dimitar Mir□ev
 Aurora Ndrio
 Vladimir Ortakovski
 Boban Petrovski

Montenegro

Srdja Pavlović
 Šerbo Rastoder
 Srdjan Vukadinović

Netherlands

Robert De Graaff
 Ernst Jan Hogendoorn
 Jan Willem Honig
 Selma Leydesdorff
 Cees Wiebes

New Zealand

Joe Burton
David B. MacDonald

Norway

Mats Berdal
 Tone Bringa
 Gorana Ognjenovik
 Sabrina Ramet

Romania

Constantin Iordachi

Serbia

Igor Bandović□
Mile Bjelajac
 Mikloš Biro
Marina Blagojevi□
 Silvano Bolčić
 Judit Deli
 Ljubića Despotović□
 Ljubodrag Dimić
Vojin Dimitrijević
 S. Djurdjević-Lukić
 Aleksandar Fira
 Ranka Gasić
 Dinko Gruhonji□
Vidan Hadži-Vidanović□
Miroslav Hadžić
Dušan Janjić

Djokica Jovanović
 Emil Kerenji
 Ranko Končar
 Boško Kovačević
 Miloš Ković
 Todor Kuljić
 Milenko Marković
 Predrag Marković
 Vladimir Mati□
 J. Milojković-Djuri□
 Gojko Mišković
Momčilo Mitrović
Momčilo Pavlović
 Tatjana Perić
Latinka Perović
 Toni Petković
 Aleksandra Petrović
 Vladimir Petrović
 Milan Podunavac
 Dragan Popadić
 Milenko Popović
 Nenad Popović
 O.Popović-Obradović†
 Branka Prpa
 Milan Ristović
 Petar Rokai
 Nikola Samardžić
 Obrad Savić
 Bogoljub Savin
 Milan Simi□
 Predrag Simić
 Djordje Stanković
 Ana Trbovich
 Ljubinka Trgovčević
 Tanja Tubić
 Vatroslav Vekarić
 Lazar Vrkatić †
 Radina Vučetić
 Sretan Vujović
 Ivan Zverzhanovski

Slovenia

Anton Bebler

Danica Fink-Hafner
Matjaž Klemenčič
 Vladimir Klemenčič
 Miran Komac
 Kristof Kozac
 Oto Luthar
 Tomaz Mastnak
 Mitja Žagar
 Jernej Zupančič

Sweden

Tomislav Dulić

Switzerland

Urs Altermatt
 Goran Jovanović

Ukraine

Victor Bezrouchenko
 Valentin Yakushik

United Kingdom

Kathleen Adams
 John Allcock
 Christopher Bennett
 Sumantra Bose
 Wendy Bracewell
 Cathie Carmichael
 Gemma Colantes Celador
 David Chandler
 Daniele Conversi
 Dejan Djokić
 Mark Etherington
James Gow
 Marko Attila Hoare
 Dejan Jović
 Michael Palairt
 Vanessa Pupavac
 Anna Sheftel
 Brenden Simms

Nebojša Vladislavljević

United States

Milan Andrejevich
 Robert Austin
 Karl Bahm
 Elazar Barkan
 Doris Bergen
 Mietek Boduszynski
Melissa Bokovoy
 Keith Brown
 Audrey Budding
 Janusz Bugajski
 John Capello
 John Cerone
 Rory Conces
 John Cox
 Istvan Deak
 Dusan Djordjevich
 Robert Donia
 Keith Doubt
 Thomas Emmert
 Theodore Fiedler
 Jozef Figa
 John Fine
 Bernd Fischer
 Jennifer Foray
 Francine Friedman
 Chip Gagnon
 Eric Gordy
 Michael Haltzel
 James Hasik
 Kimberley Harris
 Elissa Helms
 Brian Hodson †
Charles Ingraio
 A. Ross Johnson
 Sally Kent
 Tijana Krstić
 Alan Kuperman
 James Lyon
 Vladimir Mati□

Julie Mertus

Sasha Miličević
 Nicholas Miller
 Alexander Mirescu
 Julie Mostov
 Ines Murzaku
 Norman Naimark
 Lara Nettelfield
 Lana Obradović□
 Richard Oloffson
 Steven Oluic
 Diane Orentlicher
 David Ost
 Nicholas Pano
 Nancy Partner
 Vjeran Pavlaković
 Lisa Penn
 Trudy Peterson
 Paula Pickering
 Michael Rip
 Karl Roeder
 Benjamin Rusek
Dennison Rusinow †
 Mary Rusinow
 Louis Sell
 Paul Shoup
 Cynthia Simmons
 Margaret Smith
 Tammy Ann Smith
Gale Stokes
 John Treadway
 Frances Trix
 Milan Vego
 Jason Vuić
 Andrew Wachtel
 Ruth Wedgwood
 Mark Wheeler
 Paul Williams
 Nancy Wingfield
 Maryanne Yerkes
 Kathleen Young

Morović Conference (24-29 September 2001): *initial, organizational meetings* held at Marshal Tito's estate at Morović (Srem) was jointly sponsored by Serbia's Ministry for Education and Culture, the provincial government of Vojvodina, the university and municipality of Novi Sad, and several national and regional NGOs. These meetings helped to:

1. *determine the breadth of the project investigation*, identifying those controversies and other substantive issues that merit special attention
2. *identify parallel investigations* with which the Scholars' Initiative can coordinate activities.
3. *adopt procedures* for expanding the number of investigators and selecting team leaders
4. *reaffirm or revise the project schedule* through 2003
5. *delineate methodological standards* of research and interpretation

Aside from these issues, the September meetings were also successful in laying the groundwork for a spirit of collaboration, based on mutual respect, confidence and camaraderie between western and Serbian scholars. A key element in achieving this goal was the stress that was placed on the dualism of the Initiative's activities. For example, each research theme was designated to have two team leaders, one of whom would have some Serbian-Montenegrin background.

Project investigators had already achieved a very high degree of visibility through their extensive publications (scholarly monographs and journal articles; trade books, magazine articles and newspaper op-eds), as well as through television, radio and print media interviews. Nevertheless, the September meetings demonstrated that the Initiative's overall impact on the public sphere would be greater than the sum of its participant(s). The week-long meetings attracted the interest of top political leaders in the Serbian and Yugoslav governments and also drew extensive media coverage in the print and electronic media, including a live, 90-minute interview and call-in show that reached most Serbian households. As the Initiative expanded beyond Serbia, it committed itself to engaging media, politicians, and other opinion leaders in the other Yugoslav successor states.

Sarajevo Conference (6-9 July 2002), held at United Nations headquarters and funded by USIP and several regional donors, was attended by 63 scholars from 16 countries, including all eight entities of the former Yugoslavia. Its principal objectives were to (1) *integrate Bosnian, Croatian, Kosovan, and Slovenian scholars* with their Serbian counterparts, who met for the first time and successfully interacted, a process much assisted by the agency of North American and western European attendees; (2) *present, critique and refine the ten research team agendas; discuss publication platforms*, which will include not only a composite volume devoted to each of controversies, but several collections featuring individually researched articles, (3) *establish an Advisory Board*, and (4) *expand media contacts*, which was effected in large part by (a) previous contacts with Voice of America, and Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, which dispatched a team from Prague to cover the proceedings, (b) the UNMiBH public affairs staff, which led to extensive coverage by Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian media, (c) Joint-President Beriz Belkić of Bosnia-Herzegovina, who issued a public statement endorsing the Scholars' Initiative.

Edmonton Conference (12-15 September 2003), sponsored by the University of Alberta's Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies, at which each research team delivered an initial narrative for evaluation. Immediately thereafter, the teams began posting revised and expanded versions of the Edmonton drafts for comment and criticism by the full project membership.

Budapest & Skopje Conferences (12-17 December 2004), hosted by Andrassy University (Budapest) and the Center for Interethnic Tolerance & Refugees (Skopje) featured three final and three interim reports, together with the presentation of a preliminary research agenda by a new, eleventh team, *Living Together or Hating Each Other?*

Washington Conference (19 April 2005), jointly hosted by USIP and NED, featuring the presentation of an additional four final and three interim reports, and followed by meetings at the U.S. Congress, State Department and a televised broadcast by the Voice of America.

Philadelphia Convention (6-7 January 2006) of the American Historical Association, featuring three sessions, with presentations by a dozen SI participants, and additional media coverage, most notably by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Salzburg Conference (28-30 July 2007) devoted to formulating a comprehensive plan for the dissemination of the completed team reports throughout the successor states.

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Given the number and wide range of scholars employed in the project, the task of identifying a wide range of readily accessible secondary and published primary sources was easily attainable, although it had not been done before by individual authors who lacked either the language skills, resources, or inclination to do so. Had the teams halted their research at this point, a composite, readily accessible narration and analysis of these key controversies would have constituted a major achievement. Indeed, the distillation of readily available documentary evidence would, by itself, have exposed many of the most fantastic myths that have long been accepted as “truth” by the public imagination.

The project did, however, receive a grant from the National Endowment for Democracy that permitted it to take the process one step further, by commissioning original research that could fill in key gaps in the historical ledger, thereby providing a fuller, more compelling account of the Yugoslav tragedy for scholars and laypeople alike. It was with this objective in mind that project participants were encouraged to submit (1) requests for modest research stipends to defray the costs of new research, and (2) proposals for article-length manuscripts for inclusion in the special issue of *Nationalities Papers*. In the end, roughly forty stipends and thirteen articles were commissioned.

Of course, project participants had no illusions about the challenges they faced in accessing relevant government documents from all sides (including the United States). Nonetheless, the expectation was that fresh sources could be unearthed elsewhere through (1) interviews with

high- and mid-level civil and military officials, (2) quantitative data gathered from surveys of individuals who were affected by the cycle of discrimination, fear, expulsion and crimes committed during the Yugoslav conflicts, (3) media material (periodicals, radio and television broadcasts, etc.), and (4) IGO and NGO documents, especially those generated by UNPROFOR and the ICTY, most of which have still not been systematically studied.

V. METHODOLOGY

It is one thing to create a list of controversies that need to be investigated, but quite another to arrive at a credible, scholarly consensus that can earn broad acceptance across national and cultural fault lines. The success of this project rested squarely on the ability to assemble a team of scholars committed to establishing:

Scholarly integrity capable of uncovering and weighing evidence with a single set of scales. Meeting this challenge has been foremost in my mind from the moment that SI Director Charles Ingrao first proposed an “Historians’ Dialogue” to a closed-door meeting of the Historical Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences & Arts in December 1997. Hence, a painstaking process of selecting researchers not only for their scholarly credentials, but for their ability to assess evidence with an open mind -- and in a collegial manner -- whatever their political, national or other orientations. For this reason, individual team leaders and Advisory Board members recommended on a couple of occasions against inviting some scholars, while still others had to be recused after accepting governmental/political leadership positions that posed a potential conflict of interest. On the other hand, no qualified scholar was ever excluded simply for having been deemed “nationalistic” or having exhibited the kind of chauvinism that typified the rhetoric of writers on all sides during the opening stages of the Yugoslav conflicts. Nor was any successor state scholar ever denied admission or removed from the project. Indeed, the Initiative strove to earn the broadest appeal and credibility through its recognition as a diverse, inclusive consortium of scholars.

Clear objectives that de-emphasize the importance of subjective differences in emphasis or interpretation in favor of making objective judgments about the admissibility and validity of evidence that can establish a single, incontrovertible factual matrix. There was simply no need to devote the Initiative's resources to any exposition based on well-known facts on which everyone already agrees.

Common procedures for the acquisition, identification and validation of evidence.

Transparent organization, built around research teams that readily welcome the broadest possible spectrum of qualified historians and social scientists who had *not* been discredited as partisan, led by two (Serb and non-Serb) team leaders who could work together in an atmosphere built on trust and equity.

Mechanisms for resolving differences and, if necessary, marginalizing or removing outright individual investigators who violates these methodologies through a four-person Advisory Board. This never proved necessary over the project's 9-year career.

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Notwithstanding the Initiative's indispensable scholarly format, the greatest immediate impact will hopefully accrue from the attention it attracts from (1) media throughout the region through news releases and interviews, and (2) those political and other opinion leaders (including textbook authors) willing to stand on a platform wide enough to accommodate other national and ethnic groups. Nor should we ignore the project's potential for providing a model for interethnic conciliation throughout central Europe. After a century of statebuilding that sponsored proprietary, exclusionist interpretations of each new nation's history, the region's people would be well served by an ethnically diverse community of scholars, speaking with one voice.

VI. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The success of the Scholars' Initiative will be measured by its ability to:

1. forge lasting professional ties and dialogue among scholars across the former Yugoslavia, western Europe and North America
2. provide the first platform for assembling and analyzing primary and secondary sources from all sides of the Yugoslav conflicts in a single, balanced and readily accessible account
3. publish new, original research that exposes at least some of the myths and resolves at least some of those controversies that have foreclosed meaningful transnational communication between scholars and mutual understanding among peoples of the former Yugoslavia
4. impact the public consciousness of the ethnic and national groups of former Yugoslavia through public media
5. encourage political (and other opinion) leaders to adopt positions in public discourse that share or create common ground across the region's ethnic and national divides
6. create a model for transnational dialogue among scholars elsewhere in central Europe

VII. PROJECT ORGANIZATION

Project Director Charles Ingrao, Professor of History at Purdue University, Editor of *The Austrian History Yearbook* (1997-2006), and General Editor of the *Central European Studies* book series. Aside from publishing nine books of the history of early modern and modern central Europe, he has focused his research on the region's ethnic conflicts since 1995, making 44 research trips to the Yugoslav successor states and establishing a network of relationships with political and academic leaders. During that time he has authored two dozen articles and presented ninety public lectures and seminars to university, governmental and military audiences throughout North America and central Europe, and been a regular commentator for print, radio and television media, including *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer* (PBS).

Associate Director Tom Emmert, Professor Emeritus of History at Gustavus Adolphus College. Trained at St. Olaf College, Oxford and Stanford, he is author of *Serbian Golgotha: Kosovo, 1389*, and co-editor of *Kosovo: Legacy of a Medieval Battle*, the December 2004 special issue of

Nationalities Papers dedicated to the Scholars' Initiative, and the project's flagship volume, *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies*. He is presently completing a one-volume history of Serbia. He has been a frequent guest analyst on NPR, the Christian Science Broadcast Network and Minnesota Public Radio.

Research Teams. At the Scholars' Initiative's core have been its investigators, drawn from 26 countries and a wide variety of humanistic disciplines (including Anthropology, History, Law, Slavic Languages & Literature, Psychology, Political Science, and Sociology). The composite bibliography posted on the project website lists the relevant publications of the roughly half of SI participants who furnished a *curriculum vitae*.

Team Leaders. Given the overriding need to establish the project's credibility throughout the former Yugoslavia, each of the eleven research teams was jointly headed by a Serb and non-Serb scholar who worked together in establishing and executing a common research agenda. As a rule, practical considerations (such as language, health, or personal preference) mandated an asymmetrical division of responsibilities, with one team leader emerging as the "principal investigator". The two leaders' chief responsibilities were to direct their team's research activities and, eventually, draft the group's final report.

Levels of Participation. We recognized from the outset a wide variation in the level of participation in a project with so many scholars of widely divergent specializations, professional obligations and resources. All participants enjoyed ready access to successive electronic drafts of every team report, about which they were invited to post questions, comments, criticisms and recommendations. Similarly, members of research teams enjoyed considerable latitude in choosing a level of participation that corresponded to their own qualifications, time and interest:

1. evaluating source materials and drafts of team reports prepared by other team members
2. gathering, reading and evaluating published primary and secondary sources
3. engaging in original research -- including interviews with key actors -- on specific subjects for which there is presently insufficient documentation
4. writing a portion of the team report

Advisory Board to advise the project director and associate director on substantive issues, including academic and personnel disputes that might arise during the course of the project: Mile Bjelajac, Matjaž Klemenčič, Drago Roksandić, Gale Stokes.

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August 2011