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Literature, Power, and Oppression in Stalinist Russia and Catholic Ireland:

Danilo Kiš's Use of Joyce in *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich*

By Dubravka Juraga and M. Keith Booker

Danilo Kiš belongs to a group of modern innovative writers who emerged in Yugoslavia during the sixties and seventies after a long period during which socialist realism had been the dominant mode of writing. His book *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich*, published in 1976, is a good example of the changes, both thematic and stylistic, produced by the new wave of literary experimentation in Yugoslavia at that time. *A Tomb* consists of seven stories so closely related that the book is rightly considered a novel - and indeed the Serbo-Croatian original bears a subtitle that translates as "Seven Chapters of the Same Narrative." These "chapters" feature a variety of characters, most of whom are linked by their involvement with the Russian Revolution and its Stalinist aftermath, an involvement which, for most of them, leads to dire consequences. Indeed, *A Tomb* is largely an attack on Stalinism. However, it is also a technically innovative work that explores a number of fundamental aesthetic issues. For example, the book is highly allusive, with frequent references to a variety of literary sources, including James Joyce, the brothers Medvedev, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, medieval French texts, and many others. Kiš's dialogue with Joyce is particularly crucial because the comparison with Joyce usefully illuminates Kiš's poetics and because Joyce's attacks on oppressive conditions in Catholic Ireland (though perhaps more subtle) parallel Kiš's attacks on Stalinism in ways that indicate the relevance of Kiš's book to a context far broader than Stalinist Russia.' Indeed, Kiš specifically emphasizes the link to Joyce not only by direct allusions to Joyce's work, but also by focusing one of his chapters on one "Gould Verschoyle" (a Dubliner who later becomes a victim of Stalinism) and by drawing overt parallels between Stalinism and Catholicism in his text.

A Tomb for Boris Davidovich provoked a violent and vitriolic reaction from certain elements of the Yugoslav literary community, especially when the book was nominated for a major literary award soon after its publication. In particular, the book was condemned for outright plagiarism of its various sources. When Kiš responded to his critics with equal acrimony he was sued for slander, though he was exonerated in the ensuing trial.[2] In retrospect, many of the charges against Kiš seem almost ludicrous, but it is worth keeping in mind that Kiš's book is highly political and that many of the attacks on it were politically motivated. As Joseph Brodsky points out in his introduction to the English translation of the book, the attacks on Kiš after the publication of *A Tomb* came primarily from "conservative 'Stalinist' elements at the top echelons of the Yugoslav literary hierarchy" (ix). Brodsky's short description of the book is a good example of how it was perceived by critics in the seventies and early eighties: "Basically, *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* is an abbreviated fictionalized account of the self-destruction of that berserk Trojan horse called Comintern" (xi).

Kiš's novel mounts a direct challenge to Stalinism, but the violence of the reaction to it in Yugoslavia clearly indicates that Kiš's critique of communism struck a chord in his homeland as well.[3] Kiš's specific engagement with the historical reality of Stalinism adds a great deal of substance to his text, but it seems safe to assume that *A Tomb* is not so much an historical analysis of Stalinism as a cautionary tale about the potential horrors of an ideology that still posed a threat to his own contemporary Yugoslavia. Moreover, Kiš's use of Joyce in his confrontation with Stalinism suggests a parallel between the

abuses of power in Stalinist Russia and Catholic Ireland that makes the attacks on oppression in *A Tomb* relevant far beyond the context of communism. Indeed, Kiš explicitly includes in his book a chapter on the Inquisition, comparing the practices of medieval Catholicism to Stalinism in ways which make clear the historical generality of his argument. Kiš's book thus serves as a powerful (and useful) reminder that the recently proclaimed death of communism hardly implies the death of oppression.

Kiš enacts his attacks on oppression in *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* both through the contents of the book and through his construction of the book largely as a collection of borrowings from other texts. Joyce is perhaps the author from whom Kiš borrows most. One of the stories in *A Tomb* is entitled "The Sow that Eats Her Farrow" in an obvious allusion to the phrase used by Joyce's Stephen Dedalus to describe Ireland in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* This story has served as a focal point for the charges of Kiš's critics that he inappropriately borrowed material from other sources. For example, in the first sentence of a section of the story called "The Eccentrics" Kiš describes Dublin as "a city that breeds a menagerie of eccentrics, the most notorious in the whole Western world: nobly disappointed, aggressive bohemians, professors in redingotes, superfluous prostitutes, infamous drunkards, tattered prophets, fanatical revolutionaries, sick nationalists, flaming anarchists, widows decked out in combs and jewelry, hooded priests" (18). Dragan M. Jeremić, one of Kiš's fiercest critics, has charged that Kiš lifted this catalog of Dublin eccentrics directly from a book on Joyce by Jean Paris published in translation in Belgrade in 1963, though Jeremić does acknowledge that Kiš's list includes several groups not mentioned by Paris ("Iznuđena" 159). Nikola Milosević responded to Jeremić by showing that in point of fact both Kiš and Paris borrowed their description from a book by Jean Bourniquel (166). Indeed, Kiš himself identifies Bourniquel as his source a few lines down in the story.[4]

In the story Kiš describes the attitude of his character Gould Verschoyle toward Ireland: "'The cracked looking glass of a servant, the sow that eats her farrow'--at nineteen Verschoyle wrote this cruel sentence, which referred more to Ireland than to his parents" (19). This "cruel sentence" is of course a combination of two of the better known phrases of Joyce's Stephen Dedalus, phrases quoted so often in Joyce criticism that they have achieved a sort of public domain status. But Jeremić responded to Milosević with the astonishing argument that Kiš must in fact have used Paris as a source because Paris also quotes these same lines from Joyce: "Thus Kiš has found even the title of his story in Paris's text, and in that borrowing we can note a typical characteristic of Kiš's method which consists of frequent skillful use of a series of various other texts" (Jeremić, "Književnost" 172).[5] Jeremić intends this remark as a scathing condemnation of Kiš's lack of originality. He goes on to cite instances where Kiš "copies" other texts and concludes: "When a book consists not only of the material from other books but of finished statements of others, then it surely cannot be considered an original work" (175).[6]

Jeremić's charge of Kiš's lack of originality in his borrowings from Joyce is highly ironic given that a "skillful use" of "other texts" is a hallmark of Joyce's own writing. Indeed, Kiš himself has suggested that in his writing he draws "certain technical innovations...from Joyce's hat" (*Čas* 192). If Jeremić's identification of Paris as Kiš's source is questionable, Jeremić's understanding of the significance of Kiš's borrowings from Joyce seems lacking as well. Kiš's parallel to Joyce is much more subtle and carries wider resonances than Jeremić and other critics have appreciated. In Kiš's story, Gould Verschoyle is an Irishman from Dublin who is kidnapped in Spain by the Russian secret police because he discovers a conspiracy of Russians to take control of the Republican forces in the Spanish Civil War. Kiš apparently adapted this story from *Seven Thousand Days in Siberia*, the memoirs of Karl Steiner's stay in a Stalinist prison camp; Steiner mentions a Gould Verschoyle who went through an ordeal similar to that undergone by Kiš's character (*Čas* 217). On the other hand, it is difficult to believe that it is only a serendipitous coincidence that a "Mr. Verschoyle" appears in Joyce's *Ulysses*.[7] In addition, Kiš's Verschoyle bears numerous resemblances to Joyce's Stephen Dedalus. For example, the fathers of both Stephen and Verschoyle are former Parnellites, and both Stephen and Verschoyle are voluntary exiles from an Ireland they despise.[8]

Kiš's critic Jeremić has also charged that the aim that Kiš had in mind - to depict the fate of the victims of the Stalinist terror - can be reached only by someone, like Solzhenitsyn, who has lived through such ordeals and experienced them in person. Kiš is unable to achieve that goal, according to Jeremić, because he is "geographically and temporally far removed" from this experience. "Due to the lack of a deep personal relationship with what he wanted to describe, Kiš too often used already finished literary material, appropriated in different stages of perfection, and skillfully glued it together. But, unfortunately, he did it too openly" ("Književnost" 176).

"Too openly," presumably, because Kiš's sources are easily identifiable, though Jeremić is unimpressed that one of those sources, Steiner, supplies some of the first-hand experience that Kiš lacks. In any case, Jeremić fails to acknowledge that some of the most powerful and trenchant literary critiques of Stalinism were written outside of Stalinist Russia. Stalin's regime figures as an important literary symbol of oppression in non-Russian novels like Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* and George Orwell's *1984* and in post-Stalinist Russian works like the Chonkin novels of Vladimir Voinovich or Abram Tertz's *Goodnight!*[9] Jeremić's romantic emphasis on immediacy and originality also runs directly contrary to the theory of authorship that Joyce himself held and that Kiš clearly endorses. Jeremić and Kiš's other critics completely misunderstood Kiš's method when they accused him of plagiarizing Joyce and others. It is, in fact, essential to Kiš's method (and to Joyce's) that we can identify his sources and thereby establish a dialogue between those sources and Kiš's own book. In "The Sow that Eats Her Farrow" Kiš *wants* us to be reminded of Joyce. Instead of hiding and disguising his appropriation of material from Joyce, Kiš gives this appropriation as much attention as possible.

Joyce's work, like the works of many modern writers, abounds in material appropriated from other (literary and non-literary) sources. A literary *bricoleur*, Joyce was aware that any use of language inevitably resonates with past uses, and that any text resonates with past texts. But, thoroughly unoppressed by the weight of the literary tradition, Joyce sought to generate new energies by drawing upon this tradition in assembling his own texts. As he himself said in a letter to George Antheil, he would be "quite content to go down to posterity as a scissors and paste man" (*Letters* XX). This "scissors and paste" approach allows Joyce to create stunningly new texts from the fragments of already existing ones, enriching his own texts by establishing polyphonic dialogues with their sources and the traditions to which they belong. This effect is a natural consequence of Joyce's method of textual construction:

> [T]he bricolage method of construction involves more than the formal device of paratactic structure. Remember that the bits and pieces of a bricolage construction come from somewhere. The power of bricolage construction derives largely from the way in which traces of these sources remain, initiating a dialogue between the appropriating text and the source being appropriated. (Booker, *Techniques* 92)

Joyce's bricolage texts frequently refer not only to a variety of literary texts, but also to real historical events and situations, giving his work what Jennifer Levine has called "the aura of the real" (113). Kiš achieves this "aura" in *A Tomb* as well. The text cites a variety of historical documents (such as newspaper articles), and many of its events and characters are historically authentic:

> By treating the literature of others as documents and by consulting history for specific temporal references, Kiš's fiction, exemplified by *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich*, assumes the quality of truthfulness, credibility and, above all, authenticity. The illusion of an accurate reality, convincing to the reader, is achieved through the author's intimate knowledge of the period in which his work is set. By presenting a collective response to one of the period's unique features-for example, to Stalinism, at the time of Stalin-Kiš's use of "documents" imparted to *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* the necessary tone of authoritative objectivity. (Gorjup 392)

The stories in *A Tomb* ostensibly provide extensive documentation of their sources. All appear to have the same narrator, who presents himself as a person who has only compiled facts and various witnesses' accounts about his characters: "The story that I am about to tell, a story born in doubt and perplexity, has only the misfortune (some call it the fortune) of being true: it was recorded by the hands of honorable people and reliable witnesses" (*Tomb* 3). In order to establish himself as a truthful and reliable archivist of past events, this narrator provides numerous footnotes throughout *A Tomb* that indicate the sources of his information. In many cases he provides only the initials of the names of sources who are still living (presumably for their own protection), thus making those sources seem all the more genuine. But the narrator frequently contradicts himself from one page to the next.[10] Further, he calls attention to the fictionality of his stories in a variety of ways, as when events involving different characters in different stories often seem suspiciously similar. In other cases, the narrator openly says that he is relieved that he is "only" writing fiction so that he is not obliged strictly to follow facts.

Kiš's use of footnotes in *A Tomb* provides an especially useful key to the significance of his documentation technique. One naturally expects footnotes to provide clarification of or documentary support for material in the main text, but the footnotes in *A Tomb* frequently provide entirely new information which then itself needs further documentary support. For

example, the footnotes often include vague or questionable phrases such as "some sources," "it is a known fact," or "some investigators." By their very existence these footnotes suggest that the main text is incomplete and needs supplementation. Thus, the mock-scholarly footnotes add an air of authenticity while at the same time questioning the legitimacy of the entire text.

By blatantly calling attention to the fictionality of his book while simultaneously providing authentic-looking historical documentation, Kiš blurs the boundary between fiction and reality. In this he again resembles Joyce, who consistently undermines the "aura of the real" in his fact-filled texts with anachronisms, intentional inaccuracies, and blatantly artificial literary devices. As Brian McHale has pointed out, such challenges to traditional ontological boundaries are a central characteristic of postmodernist fiction in general.[11] In this sense, *A Tomb* recalls critiques of postmodernist culture by commentators like Gerald Graff, who suggests that "conventions of reflexivity and antirealism are themselves mimetic of the kind of unreal reality that modern reality has become. But 'unreality' in this sense is not a fiction but the element in which we live" (180). Thus, for Graff, literature that calls attention to its own fictionality and criticism that calls attention to the fictionality of literature may be largely in complicity with the kinds of confusions between fiction and reality that inform so much of modern society.

But Graff admits that "even radically anti-realistic methods are sometimes defensible as legitimate means of representing an unreal reality." He suggests that "[t]he critical problem-not always attended to by contemporary critics-is to discriminate between antirealistic works that provide some true understanding of nonreality and those which are merely symptoms of it" (12). *A Tomb* clearly falls among the works that attempt to provide some "understanding" of nonreality because it so strongly focuses its criticisms on Stalinism even while its confusions between fiction and reality directly echo one of the main strategies through which the Stalinist regime maintained its power in the Soviet Union. As Hannah Arendt suggests, "The ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi or the convinced Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction ... and the distinction between true and false ... no longer exist" (474). Utilizing this same insight, Stalin's government built its power on such an avalanche of false confessions, forged documents, and rewritten histories that eventually even they themselves lost all ability to tell the authentic from the counterfeit.

If a self-conscious work of fiction can successfully appropriate documentation and effectively use techniques usually reserved for nonfictional accounts of history, then the implication is that works of history, which pass themselves off as true, might also be fiction. Kiš's book asks us to treat historical accounts with some of the same reservations we maintain toward works of fiction, always keeping in mind that history is also partially a product of the imagination of its witnesses, writers, and readers. The unreliability of the narrator of *A Tomb* reminds us to question the reliability of historians and their narratives as well.

This notion of the potential unreliability of accounts of history is especially relevant in the context of Stalinism, where the official version of history was continually revised according to the whims or needs of the current political situation. Kiš explicitly engages the fictionalization of reality under Stalin in *A Tomb*. In the title story Boris Davidovich Novsky is incarcerated in a Stalinist prison camp. When he refuses to confess to a series of crimes that he did not commit, his torturer Fedukin punishes him for this refusal by murdering other young male prisoners until Novsky eventually capitulates. Both Fedukin and Novsky are aware that the confession is false: "Fedukin, the tall, pock-marked, and unbending interrogator, spent some five hours alone with Novsky ... trying to persuade him of the moral obligation of making a false confession" (90). The interrogators try to make a system out of falsified reality, to make falsification normal, so that the Party can maintain its power.

Kiš's text confuses the boundary between fiction and history, calling attention to the similar strategy of the Stalinist regime in Russia. The bricolage techniques and self-parodic devices that Joyce and Kiš use contribute to this strategy as well. Texts like *Ulysses* and *A Tomb* undermine the traditional notion of the author as ultimate omniscient authority while demanding a new, more active and more critical participation on the part of the reader. Even when "credible" documented sources are cited in such texts, the reader, out of precaution, cannot accept any fact as a stable and reliable unit. This instability invites the reader to engage in a dialogue with the text, actively engaging in the generation of meaning. In such a text the author as a godlike figure disappears he has lost his position as the powerful omniscient being who creates reality.

Because of this loss of authority, the author's language also cannot dominate the reader. According to Roland Barthes, "the existence of writing" is found not in the author and his tyrannical proclamations but in the reader who "is the space on which all the quotations that make

up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination" (148). In a literary text "it is language which speaks, not the author; to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality (not at all to be confused with the castrating objectivity of the realist novelist), to reach that point where only language acts, 'performs,' and not 'me'" (143). Such a decentered conception of authorship is inherently antiauthoritarian, and it comes as no surprise that postrevolutionary Russian writers who employed bricolage techniques of composition almost invariably ran afoul of the Stalinist system.[12] Kiš was writing *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* at the time when the attacks of Barthes, Foucault, and others on traditional notions of authorship were highly influential and widely discussed and accepted.[13] However, as the attacks on Kiš in Yugoslav literary circles show, the concept of the omnipotent author still seems appealing to some critics - even in societies that supposedly oppose the bourgeois ideology that Barthes so frequently derides. The human urge to dominate nature, literature, or language is a fact we still have to deal with, remembering its deeply embedded roots. Barthes's "death of the author" is a long and lingering one.

Joyce critics in recent years have come more and more to recognize the subversive political potential in Joyce's attempts to eschew authorial control over his own texts. For example, Vicki Mahaffey suggests that Joyce teaches us that "a reading guided solely by the desire to uncover the author's meaning relies upon the same assumptions about authority - here authorship - that support monotheistic religions and centralized governments, those licensed by representation as well as those established by fiat" (1). In borrowing Joyce's phrases, Kiš uses Joyce's own technique to attack Stalinism, and the choice is an appropriate one - Joyce himself was considered a writer whose works were dangerous to Stalinism. After the vicious attack on Joyce delivered by Karl Radek at the 1934 Soviet Writers' Congress, not only was Joyce's work banned in Soviet Russia, but it also became politically impossible to praise Joyce in print in the Soviet Union for at least the next three decades.

What Kiš wants to say about Stalinist Russia parallels closely what Joyce said about Ireland. Granted, Stalin's overt totalitarian domination of the Russian people appears far different from the "voluntary" submission of the Irish to Catholic domination. But Kiš's use of Joyce suggests that the difference is one of style more than of substance. When Stephen Dedalus calls Ireland the "sow that eats her farrow" he is alluding to the continual cycle of betrayal in which the Irish undermine their own leaders and thus invite their oppression by outside forces. Dominated by English imperialism and by the Catholic church, the Irish are unable to overcome this domination by collective action, opting instead to fight amongst themselves. For Joyce (and for Stephen) the central example of this Irish tendency toward self-destruction is Charles Stewart Parnell, the charismatic nineteenth-century Irish political leader who seemed to be making great headway toward gaining home rule for Ireland until he was denounced from the pulpit for supposedly immoral behavior, then repudiated by the Irish people. For Joyce, the vicious attack of the church on Parnell shows the real standpoint of the church in regard to the well-being of the Irish. The church works against the independence and liberation of the Irish from British rule because if the Irish once tasted freedom they might decide to free themselves of other oppressive elements in their lives as well. Joyce consistently points toward the fact that the Irish are their own worst enemies and that the main oppressive forces in Ireland, the Catholic church and the British, are very skillful in using this Irish characteristic to eliminate those who could, because of their intellect and independence, potentially subvert British and Catholic domination. The Irish submission to Catholicism may not be as voluntary as it appears.

Meanwhile, Mother Russia devoured her farrow in much the same manner as the Irish sow. A similar motif of betrayal thus informs Kiš's title story, which presents the "biography" of Boris Davidovich Novsky, a Communist and a revolutionary who has devoted his whole life to the Party and to the Revolution. At a certain point in his life and career, in 1930, when Stalin has already been firmly entrenched in his power, Novsky is arrested and accused of being a spy and a traitor. He spends the rest of his life in prison camps, suffering extreme hardships and torture. Formerly a brilliant revolutionary leader, Novsky is betrayed by the Party, sacrificed on the altar of Stalin's personal ambition. Like the Irishman Parnell who played such an important symbolic role for Joyce, Novsky is brought down by his own supposed comrades. He resembles other historical figures as well. Boris Davidovich Novsky clearly parallels Lev Davidovich Bronstein (better known as Leon Trotsky), and not only in name. Trotsky, like Novsky, was eliminated by the same Party he helped come to power. The Party, like the church in Ireland, successfully manages to eliminate those who can pose a potential threat to its power-even when those people belong to the faithful flock.

Almost all the characters in Kiš's book eventually come to the same end: they become

political prisoners serving their sentences in the prison camps in Siberia and the Far East. Most of them have been sincere Communists; thus, the regime, in order to get rid of them, has to use lies and fabricated stories supported by torture, both physical and psychological. As a result, all Soviet citizens, even the most loyal members of the Party, lived in constant terror and were thus far easier to manipulate and control. Obviously, the terroristic techniques employed in this effort were far more drastic than those employed by the Catholic church to control its "believers" in Ireland. But it is this very difference that makes the link between Joyce and Kiš valuable because it emphasizes that Kiš's critique of Stalinism is relevant to other, more subtle forms of domination as well.

In addition to their common use of the bricolage technique to construct their texts, it is clearly appropriate that Kiš invokes Joyce's criticisms of Catholicism in Ireland as one of the weapons with which he launches his assault on Stalinism. For example, the emphasis on confession in *A Tomb* (and in Stalinist Russia) is reminiscent of a similar emphasis in the Christian tradition, especially of the Russian Orthodox tradition of public confession. But the confession motif also provides a link between the Stalinism criticized by Kiš and the Catholicism so frequently attacked by Joyce. Indeed, the Stalinist terror echoes in an obvious way the medieval inquisitions of Catholicism.[14] This connection has perhaps been made most vividly in recent years by Mikhail Bakhtin, whose *Rabelais and His World* depicts an oppressive medieval society thoroughly dominated by the monological authority of Catholicism. But, as Michael Holquist points out in his prologue to the English translation of the book, a careful reading makes clear the "obvious parallels between Bakhtin's scathing references to the Catholic church in the sixteenth century and Stalinism in the twentieth" (xv).

Kiš himself explicitly links Stalinism to medieval Catholicism in *A Tomb*. The penultimate story, "Dogs and Books," is set in 1330 in France, where the Catholic church uses torture and intimidation to force Jews to convert to Christianity. These tactics closely parallel the ones described in Kiš's other stories in connection with Stalinist prison camps. In "Dogs and Books" a Christian mob kills young Jews one after another until the reluctant Baruch David Neumann (an obvious double of Boris Davidovich Novsky) finally agrees to convert. Kiš explicitly calls attention to the Novsky-Neumann connection by reminding us near the story's end that both men have parallel names and that both were arrested on the same date exactly six hundred years apart. The narrator then suggests this coincidence as support for a Nietzschean-Borgesian theory of cyclic history (124-25), thereby again recalling Joyce and the Viconian model of cyclic history that informs *Finnegans Wake* and the motif of "history repeating itself with a difference" that is so central to *Ulysses* (*Ulysses* 16.1525-26).

Kiš thus suggests that, like the Catholics of the fourteenth century, the Communists of the twentieth are willing to go to any extreme to achieve their goals. This motif introduces a larger context for his book, one which extends far beyond the Russian borders of the thirties. However, because this problem was aggravated to such extremes in the Russian Stalinist period, the atrocities committed during that time can serve well to illustrate the extent to which this kind of abuse of power can go. By insisting upon and openly pointing toward the "coincidences" between the names of Boris Davidovich Novsky and Baruch David Neumann and the similarity of the events of their lives Kiš explicitly warns his readers that similar abuses of power can be repeated in ostensibly very different historical circumstances. Medieval Catholicism had long been dead and gone, but Stalinism repeated many of its abuses. The Stalinist period of history has now passed as well, but - as Santayana would remind us - it remains possible that the terror of that time will return in new forms.

Joyce frequently calls attention to the ways the Catholic church uses terror to hold the Irish in its iron grip. When Stephen Dedalus attends a religious retreat in *Portrait* he hears a sermon that makes a grave impression on his young soul. The sermon (an authentic replica of the pulpit rhetoric of the time) is full of threats and graphic descriptions of the tortures that wait in hell for the sinners who dare oppose the Catholic church.[15] The sermon serves as an example of some of the mechanisms the church uses to maintain its power over its believers. One of the most striking features of the sermon is the vividness of the tortures the priest envisions. The explicit cruelty and sadism that inform the sermon (combined with numerous other images of Catholic cruelty like the unfair pandying of young Stephen by a priest in *Portrait*) point toward the conclusion that cruelty and sadism are also characteristics of Catholic power in Ireland.

It is particularly ironic that one of the first projects of the Communists in postrevolutionary Russia was to extirpate the "opiate of the masses" – religion - only to replace it by a new religion – communism - which people were ruthlessly made to follow. The church was banned and any association with it severely punished. But the Communists preserved many of the methods used

by the church in order to keep people submissive, effectively converting communism itself into a new religion. As Daniel Smiricky, the narrator of Josef Skvorecky's *The Engineer of Human Souls*, puts it, "Marx subjected the problem of society to scientific investigation: his science is not without error in all its details, but no science is... After him, Lenin and Stalin transformed his science into an ideology, that is into false consciousness, that is into a faith" (481).

As long ago as 1871 Gustave Flaubert remarked that "[t]he internationals are the Jesuits of the future." And any number of modern authors (for instance, Koestler, Voinovich, and Orwell, in addition to Zamyatin and Skvorecky) have suggested strong parallels between communist (especially Stalinist) oppression and traditional religion. Contemporary critics of bolshevism in postrevolutionary Russia also warned of the increasingly religious intonations taken on by communism in the new regime. Viktor Chernov, a leader of the rival Socialist Revolutionary Party, noted striking similarities between the developing Russian communism and Christianity, arguing that "in both cases, a group of ascetic zealots had turned into a corrupt hierarchy 'drunk' on power and privilege and their faith had become a symbol of oppression" (Burbank 79).

It comes as no surprise, then, that Kiš's attacks on the mind-numbing effects of Stalinism recall many of Joyce's criticisms of Catholicism. For example, both Kiš and Joyce use alcohol as a central image. Excessive drinking was a widespread vice in czarist Russia; it was a subtle force undermining the energies of the people and making them more susceptible to oppression and domination. In the story "Mechanical Lions," Kiš shows that the postrevolutionary government did little to curb this vice. A church, in earlier times used mentally to numb the czar's subjects, has now been transformed into a brewery, ironically still serving as the production site of an "opiate of the masses." When a French visitor comes to town, the church is swiftly restored to its previous function in order to deceive the Frenchman into believing in the existence of religious freedom in Russia. The quickness and ease with which the church can be transformed from a religious institution to a brewery and back points toward the connection that Kiš wants to make between various possible "opiates" - alcohol, religion, communism - that are being used to achieve and maintain domination over people.[16]

Joyce similarly suggests that religion and alcohol often function as such opiates in Ireland. Both are also at times explicitly related to motifs of cruelty and domination. This sadistic component is especially striking in the *Dubliners* story "An Encounter," where the boy narrator and his friend meet an old man who is somewhat reminiscent of Father Flynn, the priest from the previous story "The Sisters." This old man evidently takes extreme pleasure in imagining the whipping of boys, describing that pleasure in language with a decidedly religious intonation: "He said that there was nothing in this world he would like so well as that. He described to me how he would whip such a boy as if he were unfolding some elaborate mystery. He would love that, he said, better than anything in this world" (27). In the story "Counterparts" Joyce turns his focus on the British imperial domination of Ireland. This story portrays a series of humiliations suffered by the copyist Farrington who undergoes repeated indignity at the hands of almost everybody he encounters the day we witness. His boss Mr. Alleyne, with his "piercing North of Ireland accent" (thus associated with protestants and Britain), does his best to make Farrington's life miserable. A woman Farrington admires in a pub does not return his gaze; on her way out Farrington hears her speak with a London accent. Farrington is then asked to save the national honor in an arm wrestling match with the Britisher Weathers, an acrobat and artiste. Farrington sees the match as his revenge against the British in general and Weathers in particular. But he ends up infamously defeated, a fool in his friends' and his own eyes. At the end of the day we see him going home "full of smoldering anger and revengefulness" - not to mention alcohol. His wife escapes his wrath because she is not at home, but Farrington beats his little son viciously, making the boy pay for all the frustrations and humiliations of his father's day. The dynamic of domination continues: there is little doubt that Farrington's father treated him the same way and that his son will probably repeat the same pattern of abuse with his children. Meanwhile, the domination of Ireland by foreign forces continues at the Irish, in thrall to religion and alcohol, fight amongst themselves rather than unite to oppose their foreign oppressors.

Kiš similarly focuses on motifs of cruelty in his depiction of the Stalinist regime in Russia. In the first story of *A Tomb*, "The Knife with the Rosewood Handle," he addresses this issue with his depiction of the main character, Miksha, a future revolutionary, as ruthless and sadistic. Miksha gains a reputation for cruelty and ruthlessness when he flays a live skunk and then later gets a job on a farm where Astrakhan lambs are skinned. In order to prove his abilities, Miksha says to his boss, "Anyone who can flay a live skunk knows how to turn an Astrakhan's skin inside out without making a slit for the thumbs" (8). But Miksha's brutality extends beyond the

skinning of animals. Later he becomes a member of the underground Communist party in Czechoslovakia, and as a "service" to the Party he brutally murders fellow Party-member Hanna Krzyzewska, suspected of being a police informer. But within the dynamic of serial cruelty that informs Kiš's book what goes around comes around, and the loyal Communist Miksha later undergoes torture and imprisonment in Stalinist Russia for this very "service." This little story can serve as an allegory of the Russian Revolution: like the animal in this story, the Communists, during the thirties, had their skins (and souls) turned inside out. They were never safe, and the people they had to fear most were their own comrades. Hanna is murdered by a member of the very revolutionary group to which she belongs. Miksha, her murderer, is then punished by that same group. As soon as the Party has been established, it starts devouring its farrow.

This same motif continues in the story "The Magic Card Dealing," set in a nickel mine that serves as a Stalinist prison camp. There are two kinds of prisoners in the camp: political and criminal. Many of the political prisoners are former Communists, people who have been "in charge" in ordinary life but who now find themselves on the lowest rung of the prison-society ladder. These political prisoners are ruled by the criminals, formerly the lowest echelon of the society at large: "The boldest and most fantastic dreams of a thief were fulfilled in the labor camps: the former masters, around whose dachas great and petty burglars had circled, now became servants, 'adjutants,' and slaves of the former exiles from paradise" (54). This prison milieu mirrors the society on the outside: everybody works against everybody else. Just as Stalinist oppression in Russia is a more intense form of the kind of oppression that occurs in Ireland, so too is life in the Stalinist prison camp merely an intensified version of life in Stalinist Russia as a whole.[17]

In a regime based on terror and oppression, the sequence of betrayal can never come to an end, and those who are today's ravenous sows will inevitably be tomorrow's persecuted farrow. This continual dynamic represents a particularly strong condemnation of Stalinism and its complete reversal of the idea of collective cooperation upon which communism is presumably based. Meanwhile, the society in Dublin operates according to an ideology implying that fellow citizens interact not as comrades but as competitors. This ideology of continual domination informs standard Marxist criticisms of bourgeois society, and the Russian socialist society was supposedly designed to overcome such failings. And yet Stalinist Russia, for Kiš, operates precisely according to this very principle of competition. The reason for the preservation of this principle becomes clear when seen within the context of maintaining political power. It is much easier to dominate people when they are separate individuals fearing and fighting everybody else than when they are organized together to protect their interests.

Joyce's depiction of the dynamic of domination and submission that informs intersubjective relations in Dublin clearly resonates with Marxist critiques of bourgeois individualism. And his identification of religion as a major culprit in this dynamic also accords with communism's traditional animosity toward Christianity. Yet the parallels between Joyce's critique of Irish Catholicism and Kiš's critique of Stalinism suggest that the obvious differences between the two ideologies may simply be superficial disguises for the similar thirst for power that underlies the activities of both the Catholic church in Ireland and the Communist party in Stalinist Russia. The link between Kiš and Joyce suggests that many of the characteristics of Stalinist power in Russia operate in more subtle ways in Catholic Ireland. But this link works both ways, also indicating that many of the negative features of the bourgeois society of Ireland still inform the socialist regime of Stalinism.

There are, of course, major differences between Catholic Ireland and Stalinist Russia. In addition, the Irishman Joyce bears a different relationship to Ireland than does the Yugoslav Kiš to the Soviet Union. [18] The treatment of power and oppression in both Kiš and Joyce is informed by distinctive engagements with very particular systems of oppression in specific historical circumstances. But it is the very difference between the historical and political situations of Joyce and Kiš that energizes the relationship between their relative texts, bringing about a surprising confluence of voices that addresses numerous exciting and fundamental questions about literature and politics. Despite their differences, Kiš in *A Tomb* openly invites comparison to Joyce, suggesting that we should look for parallels between his perspective and Joyce's. And such parallels can easily be found. For Kiš, Stalinism functions as an emblem of ominous foreign ideologies that potentially threaten Yugoslavia; for Joyce, *Roman* Catholicism is a foreign ideology that has already dominated his native Ireland for centuries. Kiš and Joyce describe societies in which life is similarly restricted and bound, whether by barbed wire (invented, according to Joyce's Bloom in *Ulysses*, by a nun) or by Catholic visions of hell. Both authors show a deep understanding that the people they describe are the victims of societies

ruled by powerful and unmerciful forces whose basic motive is a drive for domination. Although Stalin's Russia and turn-of-the-century British-colonial Ireland no longer exist, both writers suggest that the problem of domination and oppression is not confined to these two particular societies.

Joyce and Kiš both depict characters who are marginal to the societies in which they live, people who are victims of the deplorable cruelty that informs the Stalinist regime in Russia and the Catholic rule in Ireland. Life for individuals in those two countries has been characterized by unrealized potentials destroyed because of the limitations and restrictions that the societies imposed on them. In the story "A Tomb for Boris Davidovich" Kiš indicates an important meaning of the whole book and its title:

> The ancient Greeks had an admirable custom: for anyone who perished by fire, was swallowed by a volcano, buried by lava, torn to pieces by beasts, devoured by sharks, or whose corpse was scattered by vultures in the desert, they built so-called cenotaphs, or empty tombs, in their homelands; for the body is only fire, water, or earth, whereas the soul is the Alpha and the Omega, to which a shrine should be erected. (74)

The works of Kiš and Joyce can stand as cenotaphs for those marginalized people whose lives have been devoured by ruthless structures of power in Stalinist Russia and Catholic Ireland, so that those people might not have lived and died in vain. Both authors create monuments to victims of historical abuses of power we would do well never to forget. If the abuses of Stalinism were more overtly horrific than those of Irish Catholicism, above all else the parallels between Kiš and Joyce caution us against an overly complacent belief that the excesses of Stalinism belong to a monstrous society of the past that has no relevance to us, whether we are citizens of Western democracies or of postcommunist Eastern Europe.

University of Arkansas

Notes

[1]In earlier works like *Peščanik* [The hourglass] fascism serves as the main focus of Kiš's critique of oppression. In *Č*as anatomije [The anatomy lesson] Kiš suggests that his decision to treat Stalinism in *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* came about because of his desire to show a concern with oppression in general and not one particular system (67-68).

[2]Kiš's principal response to his critics appears in the book *Čas anatomije*, where he also explains and defends his allusive practice in the composition of *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich.*

[3]During Kiš's trial the plaintiff Dragoljub Golubović demanded that a just punishment for Kiš "can be accomplished only by his removal from society for a certain period of time" (Krivokapić 434; translation ours).

[4]Kiš identifies Bourniquel as the source of this passage in *Čas anatomije* as well, noting that Paris himself cites Bourniquel (215).

[5]All citations from Jeremić are our translations from the Serbo-Croatian.

[6]Predrag Matvejević notes that the complaints of critics like Jeremić that Kiš does not sufficiently identify his sources correspond to a "citation mania (a slave-like use of authorized citations, one of the characteristics of Stalinists)" (96; translation ours).

[7]Included in a sentimental list of love stories in the "Cyclops" chapter is the notation that "Old Mr. Verschoyle with the ear trumpet loves old Mrs. Verschoyle with the turnedin eye" (12.496-97). Gifford suggests that the Verschoyle in question may be one "G. Verschoyle" (364).

[8]In fact, Kiš himself might almost have been a Joyce character. Like Leopold Bloom, he is the son of a Hungarian Jewish father and a Christian mother, and like Joyce he spent much of his life in voluntary exile in France.

[9]Voinovich's Chonkin novels are set in Stalinist Russia during World War II and suggest, among other things, strong parallels between Stalinism and fascism. Voinovich's later *Moscow 2042* also suggests strong parallels between communism and Christianity.

[10]For example, the narrator says that Boris Davidovich was arrested in 1937, and that the next year "we uncover his tracks in distant Insulma." However, on the very next page the narrator solemnly and authoritatively ends the story: "This brave man died on November 21, 1937, at four o'clock in the afternoon. He left a few cigarettes and a toothbrush" (107-8). Booker notes that Joyce frequently employs a similar technique of contradictory "palinodic narration" ("History" 227-31).

[11]Though Joyce is conventionally considered a modernist, recent critical trends argue for postmodernist interpretations. McHale himself employs Finnegans Wake as one of his central examples of postmodernist fiction. Even Fredric Jameson, for whom Joyce has long been a central modernist figure, has recently acknowledged that in many ways "Joyce leaps over the stage of the modern into full postmodernism" (62).

[12]Victor Peppard notes that writers like Olesha, Shklovsky, Pilnyak, and Zamyatin assembled their texts from a variety of materials, including nonliterary ones such as letters and documents (35). All of these writers were either arrested, exiled, or severely censored under Stalin. Pilnyak was probably executed in 1937.

[13]Kiš himself was clearly aware of such developments in contemporary critical theory. In *Čas anatomije* he explains his own writing techniques by referring to Foucault's discussion of the bricolage technique sometimes used by Flaubert (204-07).

[14]Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* depicts a sterile totalitarian society that strikingly anticipates the degeneration of the Russian revolution into the conservatism and conformity of Stalinism. And the Benefactor, ruler of this regime, specifically compares his methods to those of medieval Catholicism (213).

[15]Cheryl Herr discusses the authenticity of the sermon in Portrait, noting that Joyce's sermon resembled standard nineteenth-century Catholic descriptions of hell so closely that his appropriations of that material have even been described as plagiarism. But Herr suggests that the issue of plagiarism in this context is "ludicrous," since Joyce's point was largely to show just how conventional such sermons came to be: "[Q]uotation and allusion are for Joyce always the way toward dissection of culture and exposure of institutional control of the individual" (250). The relevance of Herr's comments to the controversy over Kiš's "plagiarism" in *A Tomb* should be obvious.

[16]The nineteenth-century Russian anarchist leader Mikhail Bakunin suggests a similar relationship between religion and alcohol, noting that all too often oppressed citizens opt not for revolution, but for two less positive routes, "the dram-shop and the church, debauchery of the body or debauchery of the mind" (16).

[17]A similar suggestion occurs in Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich.* Near the book's end, the title character meditates on his life in a Stalinist prison camp and wonders if conditions on the outside are really that much better: "And he didn't really know where he'd be better off. At home or in here" (199).

[18]Yugoslav communism, under the leadership of Marshal Tito, was unusually independent of Stalinist domination, pursuing policies much more in accord with the NEP (New Economic Program) of Lenin. On the other hand, Stalinism still exerted a powerful ideological pull in Yugoslavia - a phenomenon not entirely different from the influence of Roman Catholicism in an Ireland politically dominated by Protestant England.

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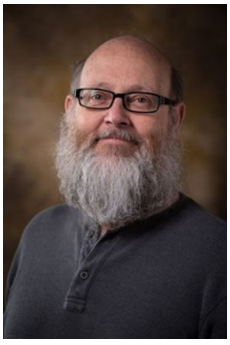
About the Authors



DUBRAVKA JURAGA is an independent scholar who has published essays on postcolonial (Rushdie, Farah, *Ngũgĩ wa* Thiong'o), Russian, and East European literature. She is the coauthor of *Bakhtin, Stalin, and Modern Russian Fiction: Carnival, Dialogism, and History* (Greenwood, 1995), and of *The Caribbean Novel in English: An Introduction* (Heinemann, 2000). She co-edited *Rereading Global Socialist cultures After the Cold War: The Reassessment of a Tradition* and *Socialist Cultures East and West: A Post-Cold War Reassessment.* (Praeger, 2002). She is a contributor to "*The Routledge Who's Who in Twentieth–Century Verse*" (Routledge, 2000) and to the "*The Encyclopedia of Literature and Politics.*" (Greenwood, 2005).
M. KEITH BOOKER is Professor of English at the University of Arkansas. He is the author of numerous articles and books on modern literature and literary theory.

The True Lesson of Afghanistan

If you will learn it, you will have hope!

By Gerald Flurry

Afghan people climb atop a plane as they wait at the Kabul airport in Kabul on August 16.
WAKIL KOHSAR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The Afghanistan catastrophe is an abject, shameful dishonor for America. The United States lost 2,448 soldiers and spent $273 million per day every day for 20 years on that war—a total of over $2 trillion. Yet American soldiers were evacuated in the darkness of night to leave this nation to barbarians.
The Taliban are gathering up girls age 15 and even younger and giving them to their fighters as "wives."
After we hastily pulled out, it took the Islamist terrorists a matter of *mere days* to conquer the nation. Now America is being overrun in Kabul even before we can finish retreating from it. We are scrambling to try to get even the last of our own people out of there—a replay of the humiliation we suffered when we pulled out of Saigon, Vietnam. Now, as then, millions of people are going to be greatly persecuted and killed. Children and women are going to be abused, raped and murdered.
And America will leave behind one of the biggest terrorist nations in the world. Especially because of the air base, jets, armored vehicles, ammunition and other weapons and equipment America just abandoned—not to mention all the Afghan soldiers we trained who proved that they have no loyalty to anyone but themselves.
What a miserable deed by the American "superpower"! This is as shameful as anything America has ever done.
America is not just declining, it is dying. Other powers around the world see this clearly. They are taking advantage of this and **preparing** to replace American dominance with their own

dominance. America is being destroyed before our eyes. Many are now in a state of open despair.

There is a sore lesson staring us in the face here. It points to prophecies in the Bible that we have been proclaiming—not just since the Afghanistan war started 20 years ago—but even back to Vietnam, and Korea and even World War II before that!

The Bible actually tells us what to expect in Afghanistan and around the world. Its prophecies reveal that the United States, as well as Britain, the Jewish nation and other related nations, are about to be trampled down by their enemies!

God prophesied that He would raise up "a nation and a company of nations" from the descendants of Abraham and grant them the "gates of their enemies." He fulfilled that promise—in America and the British Empire. You can read all about this in our free booklet **The United States and Britain in Prophecy.**

God also prophesied that, if our nations turned away from Him, He would strip us of our power. We would become a byword and a spectacle among our enemies.

Bible prophecy was right about the rise of Britain and America, and it is right about the fall of Britain and America. And it is right about what will come next.

The Bible says that the Americans, the British and the other modern descendants of ancient Israel are about to be "tread underfoot" during the "times of the Gentiles." We are in the outer edges of that horrifying storm! The scenes of hopelessness, barbarity and carnage coming out of Afghanistan will be replicated many times over—not only in distant lands, but even *within* these affluent, First World countries!

America's humiliation in Afghanistan at the hands of Taliban fighters should alarm us all—and wake us up to a terrifying truth. Why is this happening? Because, as Leviticus 26:19 warns, *God has broken the pride of our power*. Yes, God is punishing us for our sins! That is why we can have such overwhelming military power, yet be so pathetically weak.

Then in verse 20, God warns, "[Y]our strength shall be spent in vain." Does anything more graphically illustrate this than America waging an impotent war for two full decades at such high cost and evacuating in such disgrace?

These events should cause us to acknowledge that God is cursing America! This is plainly stated in the Bible. Yet very few are willing to admit this. The radical left want to blame all our troubles on things like climate change. But that is just a diabolical distraction from the lesson God is showing us so clearly: We as a people are disobeying God and facing the dire consequences.

And because we refuse to acknowledge this, these wretched events are going to get far worse before this is over.

Americans are *willfully* ignorant of the facts. It is God who gave Britain and then America their power in the first place. It is God whom the British and the Americans have turned their backs on. And it is God who is allowing Britain and America to decline and who is actively punishing us in order to *show us our sins*.

There is hope, if we will learn this bitter lesson, repent from our sins, and turn to God.

So much Bible prophecy is being fulfilled in so many ways around this world. It is racing along like never before.

One of the most revealing prophecies is in Daniel 2, where God foretold the existence of four main world empires in history: the Babylonian, then Medo-Persian, then Greco-Macedonian, then Roman empires. He did this centuries and centuries beforehand. And those empires came into being, rose and fell, just as God said. God also prophesied the rise of America and Britain. He prophesied that we would turn to sin and decline. He prophesied that we would have more and more defeats like Afghanistan. He prophesied that we would be in danger of being blotted out! And He prophesied in detail a specific empire that is rising now to take advantage of America's abject weakness and ultimately destroy this nation. (Interestingly, that nation is now considering going *into* Afghanistan as we have pulled out.)

But look at what else He prophesied. Whether we will repent or not, a *fifth* world-ruling empire is coming. Daniel 2:33-35 show the end game. God Himself is going to *break* that final empire—as well as all other human world governments. He is going to break them into pieces! He will force us to learn the lesson that should be so obvious: Human beings are unfit and incapable of properly ruling over human beings. Only God can rule over men! And that is exactly what will happen: The Messiah is going to return and take over the literal government of all peoples and all nations. God's other prophecies have happened: This prophecy will too.

This is the one and only true message of hope. There is a lesson—and hope—in the Afghanistan catastrophe, if only we will learn it.

August 16, 2021

watchJerusalem
ANALYZING THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The Taliban win forces the question: What's next for the US?

Will America bounce back from this debacle by reclaiming its role of peacemaker or will it continue isolationist policies, and pave a path for Iranian hegemony?

By Michael Oren

The loss of Afghanistan has dealt an historic blow to America's prestige. The damage is especially acute in the Middle East, where the majority of states — Israel among them — depend on the perception of American power. The victory of the Taliban, moreover, will encourage the Islamic radicals who seek to destroy Israel and overthrow moderate Arab governments. Captured American weaponry will likely find its way into the hands of Hamas and other terrorist groups, further threatening regional security.

Understandably, commentators have drawn the parallel between this week's fall of Kabul and that of Saigon in 1975. Then, too, America's global status appeared irreparably diminished. But rather than surrender to its Vietnam defeat, the United States launched a series of bold diplomatic moves that positively impacted the Middle East and laid the groundwork for peace. The Biden administration could do the same, greatly benefiting Israel and the region, while helping to restore America's international standing — provided it chooses the right initiatives.

America in 1975 was a broken country, riven by dissention over the war and shattered by Watergate. Yet the nation was far from debilitated internationally. It mitigated the Cold War though the SALT anti-nuclear ballistic treaties and the Helsinki Accords, stabilizing relations between Eastern and Western Europe. At the same time, the US backed anti-Soviet forces in the Iraqi and Angolan civil wars. Less honorably, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger supported dictator Augusto Pinochet in his murderous takeover of Chile.

But the main focus of America's post-Vietnam diplomacy was the Middle East. Israel was also reeling from war-trauma — the surprise Egyptian and Syrian attacks on Yom Kippur two years earlier — and the deaths of 2,600 Israelis. The country was psychologically and economically depressed, and highly vulnerable to pressure. Kissinger exploited that weakness and pressured Israel to cede parts of the Sinai Peninsula, captured by Israel in the 1967 Six Day War and bitterly fought over in 1973, to Egypt. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin did his best to resist this browbeating, but following a White House threat to "reassess" the US-Israel relations and delay arms deliveries, he relented. Kissinger also courted Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, who restored his own country's pride after the 1967 defeat and was eager to solidify his alliance with America. The result was the Sinai Interim Agreement, which led to the signing of the Camp David Peace Accords between Egypt and Israel four years later.

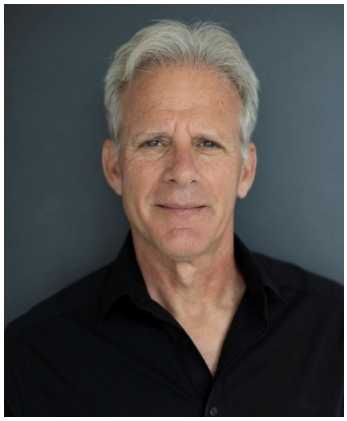
Kissinger's shuttles between Cairo and Jerusalem had nothing to do with the Cold War — both countries were well within America's sphere — and everything to do with image. "Yes," his diplomacy seemed to say, "the United States was humbled in Vietnam, but it is still the world's premier superpower and willing to bring that power to bear." The result was the establishment of a Pax Americana throughout much of the Middle East that would last for the next 40 years.

A similar sentiment could be expressed by American leaders post-Afghanistan. They could announce efforts to reanimate the peace process by encouraging Israelis and Palestinians to return to the negotiating table and could redouble efforts to renew the Iran nuclear deal. Doing so, however, could further tarnish, rather than repair, America's image. The Palestinian Security Forces, US-trained and equipped, could prove no more capable of defending a future Palestinian state than the South Vietnamese and Afghan armies were of preserving theirs. And the Iranian regime, much like the North Vietnamese and Taliban, would likely view its agreement with the United States as a greenlight to aggression. Arab capitals from Baghdad to Sanaa could fall.

No, the only way for American policymakers to achieve the necessary breakthrough in the Middle East is to recognize the ways it has changed since 1975, and even over the last few years. Israel is far stronger and more affluent than it was 50 years ago, no longer threatened by Arab armies and the Soviet bloc, and thus less vulnerable to American pressure. Most Middle Eastern leaders, meanwhile, do not have to be prodded toward peace. The region today has many potential Sadats — not in Ramallah and Tehran, but in Riyadh, Oman, and Kuwait City — and the United States has only to embrace and strengthen them. The US could convene a regional peace conference designed to expand the Abraham Accords and provide a workable framework for an Israeli-Palestinian agreement. The pictures of Afghanistan, though always painful, would be at

least partially obscured by those of historic signing ceremonies on the White House lawn. The question remains, however, whether the United States still has the will and resilience it displayed in 1975. Will it bounce back from the Afghanistan debacle by reclaiming its traditional role of peacemaker or will it continue to retreat from Middle East and the world, pursuing the isolationist policies of Presidents Obama and Trump? Will other powers — the Russians, the Chinese — fill the vacuum left by America's withdrawal, dooming all chances for a breakthrough, and will Iran press its campaign for regional hegemony?

Every crisis may indeed be an opportunity and every tragedy the possibility of triumph. In the aftermath of Afghanistan, as in that of Vietnam, there exists the chance for initiatives that can bring far-reaching change to the Middle East, benefitting all the region's peoples America's self-confidence, and perhaps even its honor, can be restored.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Oren was formerly Israel's ambassador to the United States, a Member of Knesset, a deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Office. His latest book is, To All Who Call in Truth (Wicked Son, 2021).

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"Occupation"

The Search for an Alternative Term

Dore Gold

Condemning Israel for having installed an "occupation" in the territories it captured in 1967, has become a mantra for many discussions about the Middle East. But is this characterization true? How should fair-minded people approach this question?

Israel captured the territory of Judea and Samaria, which is also called the West Bank, as a result of the 1967 Six-Day War, when it battled a coalition of five Arab armies in a war of self-defense.

There was considerable debate among Israelis over how to label these territories. Were they:

- **liberated** territories,
- **administered** territories,
- or **occupied** territories?

In Israel itself, there was strong opposition to the term "occupation." It had direct associations with the Second World War when much of Europe was vanquished by the German Army, which committed the most heinous atrocities, particularly against the Jewish people.

Are there international criteria for determining whether a given territory should be designated as "occupied"?

The most important legal treaty in this regard is the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention. Since the Six-Day War, there has been a debate over its applicability to the situation in the West Bank. Former Chief Justice of the Israeli Supreme Court, Meir Shamgar, wrote in the 1970s that "territory conquered does not always become occupied territory to which the rule of the Fourth Convention applies." He further explained that the convention "is based on the assumption that there had been a sovereign, who was ousted, and that he had been a legitimate sovereign."

But that was not the case with the previous Jordanian presence in the territories, which was the result of its illegal invasion of the West Bank in 1948 in defiance of the UN Security Council. Jordan's 1950 annexation of the West Bank was only recognized by Britain, Pakistan, and Iraq, but not by the rest of the international community, including the Arab states.

To look at different cases where the control of territory has been questioned, Kashmir is a contested territory, but the U.S. State Department refers to Kashmir as a "disputed area" – not "occupied." Similarly, it labels the patch of

Azerbaijan claimed as an independent republic by indigenous Armenian separatists as "the disputed area of Nagorno-Karabach." After the Soviets seized the Kurile Islands, even the Japanese were reluctant to call them "occupied." Thus, the term "occupied territories" was rarely used in other instances.
For many, "occupation" was a loaded term. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which has special responsibility for the Fourth Geneva Convention's implementation, decided to hold an expert meeting on the subject in 2008. One of its conclusions was that a majority of the experts, who were consulted, noted the "pejorative connotation of 'occupation'." They, too, thought an alternative language was needed.
In the territories Israel captured back in 1967, a new reality has emerged in any case. Israel unilaterally withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005. And it agreed to the establishment of a self-governing Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, in line with the Oslo Accords, first signed in 1993. Was this a Palestinian state? No. But it wasn't an occupation either, making the term completely irrelevant for describing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
Unfortunately talking about the "occupation" has become a means of branding Israel unfairly and is often used to wage political warfare against the Jewish state.
In light of this background, it would be far more accurate to adopt the neutral language and call the territories in question "disputed territories," as many territories are labeled in other cases whose status evolved in similar circumstances.

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Dore Gold (Hebrew: דורי גולד, born 1953) is an American-Israeli political scientist and diplomat who served as Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations from 1997 to 1999. He is currently the President of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. He was also an advisor to the former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during his first term in office. In May 2015, Netanyahu named him Director-General of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From June 2015 until October 2016 he served as Director-General of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ex-Mossad chief Efraim Halevy on Iran, Hamas and Israel's political crisis

Halevy should know something about difficult situations. Since arriving as a teenager to Israel in the year of its birth, 1948, he's been involved in some of the country's most earthshaking events.

By David Brinn

Like the rest of Israel, Efraim Halevy has spent most of the last year with his wife Hadassah in their Tel Aviv home while sitting out the coronavirus pandemic.
"It's been a challenging year in many ways, but we seem to have come out of it quite well, in the final analysis," the 86-year-old former director of the Mossad told The Jerusalem Post in a pre-Independence Day interview on Zoom.
"We were isolated much of the time, since we're not as young as many others. But we've learned over the years to manage in situations that are even more difficult."
Halevy should know something about difficult situations. Since arriving as a teenager to Israel in the year of its birth, 1948, he's been involved in some of the country's most earthshaking events.
Joining the Mossad in 1961 after being recruited by then the agency's deputy head David Kimche, Halevy worked his way up the ranks in Tevel, the Mossad's foreign liaison unit. In 1970, he was posted to Washington as Tevel's representative, where he developed a lasting bond with Israel's then-ambassador to the United States Yitzhak Rabin.
Halevy served as the Mossad's deputy director from 1990 to 1995. During that time, Rabin, at that point prime minister, asked him to play a pivotal role in sensitive negotiations with King Hussein that eventually led to Israel's peace agreement with Jordan.
After leaving the agency and becoming the Israeli envoy to the EU in 1996, Halevy was brought back to help resolve the crisis with Jordan in 1997 after the botched assassination attempt of Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal. The next year, at age 63, after the resignation of Danny Yatom, he was appointed the director of the Mossad, where he served until his retirement in 2002.
Since then, Halevy has written books and remained active in many pursuits. He's also

become a vocal and eloquent commentator on the state of affairs in Israel and its future direction.
In our conversation, Halevy reflected on the US-Iran-Israel triangle conundrum, the gnarly question of Israeli-Hamas (non)contact, the political paralysis in the country and his vital contributions to Israel in his Mossad leadership roles.
"I've read the [John] Le Carre books and I've seen the James Bond movies and have enjoyed them," said Halevy. "Since much of my life has been lived in the atmosphere which that art supposedly reflects, I can tell you that life is much stranger than fiction. And that the Mossad is much better than James Bond."
The United States and Iran are dancing around the resumption of negotiations about a return to the 2015 nuclear deal. What should Israel be doing?
As we speak, there's news that the US has made another overture toward Iran and the initial response has been cool.
I imagine that both sides will look at this issue seriously and ultimately there will be a resumption of a dialogue between the two, unless the Iranians are setting up for a confrontation. However, I think they probably do not seek that at the moment, as it's also very dependent on the political conditions in Iran. There's an upcoming election for the presidency, and there was the recent announcement of an understanding between Iran and China [a 25-year economic and security agreement]. So the Iranians are involved in multi-national and multi-faceted discussions and decision-making. It's too early to say whether they are going to settle for the new proposal from the US or wait until after their presidential elections this summer.
Around all this, Israel should be very careful in how it conducts itself vis a vis the new administration in the United States. It's very clear that the policies on many issues that involve Israel are different than that of its predecessor. And the fact of the matter is that Israel's relationship with the previous administration was very close, and this isn't something that enamors the current leadership in Israel to the new leadership in the US.
Since this is an issue between the US and Iran, Israel would be well advised to watch the situation closely and to refrain from making a move like we did in the past, which was not successful. The lesson learned from what happened in 2015 [when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke before Congress in a head-to-head confrontation with president Obama over Iran] should be studied before rushing in and trying to repeat a performance like that.
Current Mossad chief Yossi Cohen believes Israel can prevent Iran from ever getting nuclear weapons with continuous cyber and covert operations like what occurred during the last year or so of his term. Do you agree with that?
There's been an ongoing conflict between Israel and Iran. Sometimes it bubbles up to the surface, but more often than not, it's subterranean.
I think that the subterranean conflict will continue as long as there is nothing to replace it. In recent weeks, there's a new aspect that's come to public knowledge, which is the transport of oil in Iranian tankers to Syria.
If one should believe The Wall Street Journal, then one should assume that Israel has been very active in this field. And the Iranians have begun to react gingerly, against two Israeli ships. Whether this will remain a viable policy is something that I cannot assess at the moment, but we need to take into account the announcement of the Iran-China agreement, which needs to be included in any future Israeli calculations.
What do you think Israel's strategy should be regarding the Hamas threat in the South? Is it a matter of time before rockets fall again on Sderot and closer to Tel Aviv, and is there anything now that Israel can do to prevent it, diplomatically or on an intelligence level?
I've been on record, since immediately after I left the Mossad in 2002, in an interview with Haaretz, of supporting the idea of opening direct negotiations with Hamas. And I haven't changed my views to this day.
I believe so because in principle, there is a benefit in having a dialogue – in order to influence, to better understand and to be better equipped with the necessary data required in order to confront them.
My view has been the minority view over the years, but several officials in the General Security Service (GSS) have adopted those views since then.
Hamas is still a big factor in the equation concerning the Palestinians, especially in the years since we carried out the withdrawal from Gaza [in 2005]. The word "withdrawal" is not very popular in certain quarters in Israel, but that is what we did. It was unconditional and was not the result of any negotiations with Hamas. We unilaterally left, and because of that, we had no reason to negotiate with them. On their end, they got something for nothing.
A former colleague – Jim Andelton, who as head of counterintelligence at the CIA was my counterpart when I was stationed in Washington – told me that American policy is you don't get something for nothing. I think giving Hamas something for nothing produced a result that they

didn't have to pay for their de facto recognition as rulers of the Gaza Strip.
Israel, over the years, has refrained from confronting Hamas and trying to destroy it and remove it from the face of the Earth. Because, if we were to bring it to its knees, we would become responsible for another 2.5 million Palestinians.
The issue with Hamas is – do we continue negotiating with them the way we do now, through third parties, or do we negotiate directly? If you have a third party, there is always a fee – political or security – that is extracted. You don't get something for nothing.
Direct contact has never even been sought by Israel. Hamas is therefore free from the dilemma of what to do if they were approached and asked to have a direct liaison with Israel.
Hamas's position is that they don't recognize Israel's right to exist. But in many discussions with third parties, they had stated they are willing to accept 1967 borders as a temporary Palestinian state. This means, practically speaking, they have accepted that the 1967 borders would also be the borders of Israel. That's a euphemism that they adopted because it's important for them politically.
By saying that Hamas is not acceptable as a partner to talk to, we are playing into their hands. They're getting what they need without having to pay too much. However, I think such a practical approach to Hamas isn't possible in the current ideological quandary Israel finds itself in.
The country was recently witness to an extraordinary public statement by Yossi Cohen saying that he wasn't a supporter or detractor of the Likud or the prime minister. Do you think there's been an attempt to politicize the Mossad?
The current prime minister has used the Mossad in ways that it has never been used before. It's a question of how the prime minister conceives the Mossad.
In this respect, there's been a deviation from the traditional approach of the political master maintaining a distance between himself and the Mossad. In that way, the Mossad is free to express opinions and give assessments, whether they are in line with the views of the PM or not. The political use that has been made of the Mossad has not served Israel well over the past couple of years.
You wrote in your book ['Man in the Shadows: Inside the Middle East Crisis with a Man who Led the Mossad'] that former Mossad director [1989-1996] Shabtai Shavit once told you that you would never become Mossad chief. Did he ever tell you later that he had been wrong to say that or acknowledge that you did a good job?
Once I became head of the Mossad, I never discussed that with him. I never aspired to be head of the Mossad. I was deputy head for five years and I left the agency, because my name had become public, therefore my freedom of action became constrained as a result.
I went into a different field and became Israel's ambassador to the European Union.
What brought me back was the crisis in the Mossad, a severe crisis because of the Mashaal Affair. [On September 25, 1997, Mossad agents, under instruction from Prime Minister Netanyahu, unsuccessfully attempted to assassinate Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal by poisoning him on a street in Amman, Jordan.]
It wasn't just a crisis between Israel and Jordan, there was also a crisis inside the Mossad. This had been a failure, a botched assignment that had many ramifications inside the Mossad. It damaged the morale – for months on end after the event, the Israeli press attacked and maligned the agency. I was chosen to take over because, under the circumstances, the prime minister felt it was necessary to pick someone who would be universally acceptable to all the political leadership in Israel.
I had multiple crises to deal with when I became the head and I had no occasion to discuss with Shabtai Shavit why he thought this way or that way. It was no longer important. But I know that he supported my appointment under the circumstances that developed after the Mashaal affair and the resignation of [Mossad head] Danny Yatom.
Do you think that the Abraham Accords with the Gulf states have really changed the diplomatic landscape for Israel?
For reasons that are common knowledge, these accords have been portrayed in terms which are bordering on peace treaties.
They are not peace treaties. There was never a war between Israel and the Gulf states. I was in all the Gulf states, either in a senior position in the Mossad or as director of the Mossad, and was a figure in dealing with the developing relations with those countries. What ultimately took place was the normalization of relations that have existed over the years and have flourished.
What happened is an achievement in itself, but for reasons well known, the timing of the accords were related to domestic politics. I think it was Henry Kissinger who once said that Israel doesn't have foreign affairs, only domestic affairs. He was probably right.
Israel has been through a year of pandemic, which we seem to have overcome. At the same time, we've been mired in four elections in two years. What's your assessment of the country as we celebrate Independence Day?
I'm very deeply concerned about the state of affairs in Israel, not because of the fourth election

or this or that result. There is a deep divide in Israel that is reflected by the political results of these elections. We have a hung parliament, and this is a failure – not of the people but of the leadership.
A failure of leadership is something Israel has suffered from ever since the murder of Yitzhak Rabin [in 1995].
What should have been sought is a coalition that gives the opportunity for a cross-party national government charged with bringing about a different domestic agenda. As we speak, we don't know what will happen, but if the government continues to be a continuation of Likud supremacy or not, my guess is that the internal strife will continue and the damage will only become more serious. We need someone at the head of the government to bring about reconciliation on a national level. I'm very worried that if the current prime minister continues, he won't bring national conciliation. He won't bring about conciliation with the Arab population, but that is not the problem. He also won't bring about conciliation with the Jewish majority.
I'm less concerned about whether we look weak to our enemies or how the world looks at us. I'm more concerned with how we look to each other. The current divide is a dangerous one. We have a ruler supreme and it's dangerous. I think that a person who has been in office for several years should step down for the benefit of the country. But this is not what we are going to see. If he steps down, it will be against his will. And if he carries on, he will probably magnify the aspects of being a supreme and sole ruler of the country. If you have a sole person who makes life-and-death decisions for citizens of the country, it presents a very dangerous situation.
When you look back on the history of the country and the role you played in developing and safeguarding it, what are your strongest memories?
I've had several areas in which I was able to play a role. My part in achieving the peace treaty with Jordan is well known. Commanding the Ethiopian rescue from Sudan and other missions that are not very well known were also important moments to me.
I was the first person to have a meaningful relationship with the late ruler of Oman, whom I met in 1975. That's an example of the kind of activity I was involved in over the years of which I'm proud. I have no reason to believe that I'm bereft of any shares in developing the State of Israel.

Yonah Jeremy Bob contributed to this report.
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Answering Bible Critics

Just what is Bible criticism? How does it affect you?

By Dennis Leap

The Great Isaiah Scroll, one of the 2,000-year-old scrolls found at the northern edge of the Dead Sea. Public Domain

The Bible—more than any other religious writings of similar age—has drawn intense examination. What is the common conclusion? Bible critics *write off* the Bible as the *not-divinely-inspired* writings of an unlearned people. Many claim the Bible is full of contradiction and historical inaccuracies. Some go so far as to say that the Bible is a carefully contrived sham to keep tight-fisted control over mindless people. Others say the Bible is a work of fiction. What is truly appalling is that many *theologians* agree. Understand that there is nothing new here. The Bible has been under violent attack for centuries—by scholars, philosophers, cynics and *the religious*.
Why this book and not others? Many theologians hold great reverence for the writings of men like Buddha and Confucius. Many Protestant ministers even call the writings of these men *sacred*. But are they? According to the *Encarta Dictionary,* the first definition of the word *sacred* is, "dedicated to a deity or religious purpose." If you know the beliefs of Buddha, he would never have considered his own writings sacred, because he did not believe in a deity. Confucius was an atheist. Although today many see him as *godlike,* he would have claimed his own writings to be merely practical or ethical.

Think on this too. No one questions that the writings of Buddha are Buddha's or that the writings of Confucius are Confuscius's. Yet, Bible critics say—without a doubt—Moses did not write the books attributed to his name. Critics have determined **five men other than Isaiah wrote Isaiah**. Critics claim that a fake Ezekiel wrote Ezekiel. Critics maintain—without question—an **imposter wrote Daniel** centuries after his death. Is there an *answer* for the critics?

The Unique Book

You must recognize this fact. The Bible is radically different than all other *so-called* sacred literature. This *book of books* asserts that it is the divinely inspired writings of a *supreme Deity*. The Bible is a book full of personal quotes from a very active, living God. Here is an example: "Remember the former things of old: That I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me; Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done; Saying: 'My counsel shall stand, And all My pleasure will I do'" (Isaiah 46:9-10). The God of the Bible declares the supremacy of His own power. There is none like Him. He is capable of initiating and carrying out a purpose on Earth. A real understanding of God's purpose shows that there are stupendous and wonderful things ahead for *all* mankind.

The Bible asserts that it alone contains the *divine revelation* of that plan—that the Almighty God directed all the writing. Here are some examples: "And the LORD said unto Moses: 'Write thou these words, for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel'" (Exodus 34:27). God told Isaiah, "Now go, write it before them on a tablet, And inscribe it in a book, That it may be for the time to come for ever and ever" (Isaiah 30:8). The expression "time to come for ever and ever" is best translated *latter days*—or our time right now! Isaiah is not an outdated book. It bears a vital message for us today. In fact, the entire Bible carries essential knowledge that only God can make known to mankind. It is one of His many remarkable gifts to all men. This *sole* piece of sacred literature contains the historical record and *prophecies* about how God is working out His plans. This makes the Bible a great treasure. Yet, few truly value the Bible.

Defining Bible Criticism

So, why is there so much hostility toward the Bible? There is a *cause*. It begins with modern Bible criticism. What is Bible criticism? Most of the people involved in such effort like to refer to their activities as *biblical scholarship*. This sounds harmless enough. It makes their occupation appear more acceptable. What could be wrong with these types of biblical studies? When we understand the *effect*—everything! Let's look at some excerpts from a current article on biblical scholarship to show you what we mean. The *Encarta Encyclopedia* states: "Biblical scholarship … attempts a critical assessment of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures in the light of all contemporary resources of knowledge." Sound good? It is not. Essentially, Bible scholars want to take the Bible and measure it using all the up-to-date knowledge society has accumulated. But let's not forget that *contemporary* knowledge has been strained through the filter of evolution, which is an *atheistic* theory—the explanation of a creation without a creator! Ask yourself, how can scholars educated with an anti-God bias objectively study the Bible? It is impossible.

Continuing its defense of Bible scholarship, *Encarta* casually states: "Unlike the literature of various other religions, the Bible has always been subject to some measure of scholarly criticism and correction." Simply making that statement doesn't make it true. Logic tells us we should seriously think about a statement with the word *always* in it. Has the Bible *always* been subject to scholarly criticism and correction? Also, note in the above quote that *Encarta* admits that the literature of other religions is not subject to scholarly scrutiny. Now why would that be? The answer is simple. The Bible uniquely claims to be the express Word of God. The Bible speaks out with God's *authority.* If one could prove that it is not the Word of God, then there would be no need to read or follow it. This is the real reason Bible scholars have worked so hard at examining the Bible. Uncovering any flaw would be proof that it is not the literal *Word* of God, and need not be followed. Critics may deny this fact, but it is the truth.

Justifying the work of critics, *Encarta* continues: "This criticism undoubtedly developed because Jews and Christians conceive of religion as historical, as the product of definite historical events. Even though the great majority of the Old and New Testament writings are, in fact, anonymous, they have always been ascribed to particular human authors. It has therefore been considered legitimate for other human beings to evaluate them. They have never been regarded simply as literature transmitted directly from heaven or as so remote from the contemporary human condition as to render them immune to critical study." This sweeping statement is incredible. It is a cleverly planned concealment of true motive. Here's what *Encarta*'s writers are really saying. *The Bible's religion is a human invention—the result of historical events, or*

legend. God is not in it. The Bible was not written by men like Moses, Joshua, Samuel and Isaiah; we don't know who wrote it. Since the book never came directly from God and is from the distant past, we have the right to dissect, ridicule and reject it. Are we just a little too hard on Bible scholars? If they are hard on the Bible, can't we be a little hard on them?

The point is, *true* Bible scholars understand that comprehending that the Bible is the literal Word of God is an *eternal-life-or-death matter* for all human beings. Someone must stand up and defend the Bible.

A Short History of Criticism

Knowing the historical roots of modern Bible criticism greatly helps us understand why this field of study can never produce any good results. Let's briefly discuss several key points of history. Although historians consider the writings of the Hellenistic Jewish philosopher Philo Judaeus as the beginning of the history of Bible criticism, modern criticism as we know it was born at the time of the Reformation. The *Oxford Companion to the Bible* states, "The religious conflicts that most stimulated the rise of biblical criticism were, however, the Catholic-Protestant conflict within Christianity and, later, the disputes among the many different directions within Protestantism, for these particularly emphasized the unique role of Scripture and the implications of reading it for and from itself." In essence, the Bible became the battleground in the war between Catholics and Protestants—then, again, among disagreeing Protestant groups.

"Rebels against the authority of the Roman Catholic Church … had traditionally appealed to Scripture in justifying their defiance of the pope and the institutional church" (ibid.). Reacting to the domination and religious hypocrisy of the papacy, reformers explained and published views on the Scriptures as a means to weaken the abusive power that the Roman Church wielded over the spiritual lives of men and women.

The Catholic Church did not take such attacks lying down. Besides the bloodshed of the infamous Inquisition, Catholic theologians responded with their own commentaries related to the Bible. The war was on. The *Oxford Companion* continues, "Roman Catholic theologians, of course, did not view scriptural authority as a substitute for papal primacy, but during the 16th century they too turned their attention to the Bible with special urgency." Protestants and Catholics used the Bible to club each other. Nothing good came out of such conflict. Both interpreted the Bible to shore up their positions. Whose doctrine was truly correct?

The leading figure in the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther, had his own Bible criticism—for example, he carried great scorn for the New Testament book of James, referring to it as a "right strawy epistle." And on the Catholic side at this time, authorities continually asserted their exclusive right to control and interpret the Scriptures—a right never given to them by God. Considering the Roman Catholic Church's view of the Bible as being secondary to papal authority, could we expect from that church a solid defense in favor of the Bible?

The Renaissance

Consider also the Renaissance's effect on Bible criticism. This movement was the spark for the Reformation and, like its subsequent sister movement, above all else was a reaction to the subjugation of the Roman church. Freed from religious oppression, intellectually minded people pursued vigorous investigation into the fields of science, classical Greek literature, philosophy and art. Our modern knowledge explosion began at that time. With new discoveries in science and astronomy, questioning minds uncovered serious error in Roman Catholic teaching about scientific matters concerning Earth and the universe. Betrayed by religion, men began to rely on self-expression, experimentation, observation and human reason to come to knowledge. There was a drive to throw off all religious authority. To do this, they focused their attack on the Bible.

Coming now from two different directions—the Renaissance and the Reformation—a heated debate on the nature of *biblical inspiration* raged. With intellectuals now involved, the war of the religious denominations became simply a war against the Bible. Theologians, philosophers and scientists attempted to answer the question, *how did God inspire men to write the Bible?* It was essentially a debate of human reason. The answer depended upon a person's religious or educational persuasion. Scientists at the time rejected the Bible because of the Roman church's false teachings. Yet, the church of Rome has survived well during all the attacks. What ultimately suffered the most damage was people's confidence in the veracity of the Bible.

As men increased their scientific knowledge of the world around them, significantly less importance was attached to the Bible as a guide and authority in human affairs. Science became the new guide—even for the so-called religious. By the time of the Enlightenment, "theologians … focused on issues of biblical authority; for example, whether the Bible, the product of ancient cultures, has any claim on modern humanity. Supernatural revelation was often

denied in whole or in part, with such views gaining further support from the rise of modern biblical criticism in the 19th century" (ibid.). Historians of Bible criticism want all of us to think well of the so-called developments in biblical studies. Reality tells us there is no advancement at all, but rather a process of continual degeneration. As Bible criticism developed, humans strayed further from God.

German Rationalism

Most scholars uphold and praise the development of Bible criticism in the 19th century—the so-called *higher* criticism. Some think of it as the *golden age* of Bible criticism. In reality, it has done the most damage to people's faith in the Bible. Higher criticism has been heavily influenced by German rationalism, which is the philosophy that regards human reason as the chief source and test of knowledge—even spiritual knowledge. German rationalism denies the need for *divine* revelation. Higher criticism has reduced the Bible to a merely *human* book.

Julius Wellhausen, 1844-1918
Public Domain

German Bible critics such as Julius Wellhausen focused their attention on Moses's authorship of the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Bible. To a German rationalist, there can be no such thing as divine revelation. Since the first five books of the Bible make the claim that God directed Moses to write them down, there had to be an alternative, rational explanation. What Wellhausen and others supposedly uncovered was a Jewish sham. Their attack states that *anonymous* individuals *later* than Moses wrote the books. Why? They say that a man who lived that long ago would not have had the education to draft such writings. The "documentary hypothesis" was formulated, which assigns capital letters such as J, E, P and D to sections of the books supposedly written by the anonymous authors.

The *Encarta Encyclopedia* admits, "By the end of the 19th century higher criticism had aroused tremendous opposition from those who considered it an attack on the reliability of Scripture. To some degree this opposition has not yet been overcome, although the great majority of biblical scholars regard higher criticism as an indispensable tool of biblical interpretation." A few recognize what higher criticism is all about and are opposed to it, but the majority of Bible scholars have been swept right along with it. Recent archaeological discoveries have placed major cracks in the documentary theory, but scholars refuse to depart from it. Read any article about the Old Testament in current literature and you will see continual references to the anonymous authors of the ancient Scriptures. Don't be deceived. The documentary hypothesis is a theory and a sham just as evolution is a theory and a sham. Unfortunately, Bible scholars cannot come around to admitting that fact.

If you desire to know more details about the history of Bible criticism, your public library should be able to provide you with reference books for further study.

Battlegrounds of Bible Criticism

The fruits of Bible criticism have been devastating for many. Yet it does not have to be that way for you. A dedicated, faith-filled study of the Bible will yield true understanding of it contents. Are you willing to take the plunge? The **five books of Moses** and the **book of Daniel** are the two most attacked sections of the Bible. This makes sense if one intends to attack the reliability of the Bible.

The Pentateuch lays the necessary foundation to understanding God's purpose for all mankind. Moses's books contain essential history now lost to mankind, as well as God's revealed civil and spiritual laws and prophecies about our time. A right understanding of these books is a faith-builder. These books motivate us to earnestly seek God. Ignorance of these books leads to spiritual error.

Why Daniel's book? Daniel's book contains a series of vivid and historically accurate visions, prophecies that could only be explained as the result of supernatural inspiration—and prophecies that provide a key to understanding specifically *end-time* world events.

Doesn't all of this show that there has been an invisible spirit *behind* the Bible criticism movement? Since the creation of Adam and Eve, God has been sending a message to mankind. A powerful, evil being has been working diligently to discredit that message. Genesis chapter 3

reveals the very beginning of his work. "Yea, *hath God said …?"* Satan's goal is to blind all men to the *words of God*—His incredible truth. He has been doing an effective job. Yet, you do not have to be one of his victims.

Moses—Fraud?

Robert Ingersoll, a famous 19th-century atheist and Bible critic, wrote this about the history of Moses and the Israelites in the Pentateuch:

"Everything that happened was attributed to the interference of this God. Moses declared that he met this God face to face; that on Sinai's top from the hands of this God he had received the tables of stone on which, by the finger of this God, the Ten Commandments had been written, and that, in addition to this, Jehovah had made known the sacrifices and ceremonies that were pleasing to him and the laws by which the people should be governed.

"In this way the Jewish religion and the Mosaic Code were established.

"It is now claimed that this religion and these laws were and are revealed and established for all mankind.

"At that time, these wanderers had no commerce with other nations, they had no written language, they could neither read nor write. They had no means by which they could make this revelation known to other nations, and so it remained buried in the jargon of a few ignorant, impoverished and unknown tribes for more than 2,000 years.

"Many centuries after Moses … many centuries after all of his followers had passed away—the Pentateuch was written, the work of many writers, and to give it force and authority it was claimed that Moses was the author.

"We now know that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses" (*About the Holy Bible,* 1894).

What about those statements? Do they rock your faith—or compel you to study? How would you answer Mr. Ingersoll?

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watchJerusalem
ANALYZING THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Serbian-Egyptian Intercultural Relations

By Nemanja Radonjić

Miloš Todorović's book *Serbian–Egyptian Intercultural Relations* answers a necessity that is present in the science, culture, and diplomacy of Serbia, but also of Egypt. It is a need to enlink all of the research papers, monographs, catalogues of exhibitions, travelogues, but also cultural diplomacy efforts, as well as efforts of cultural workers, scientists, diplomats and social activists, and for Serbian–Egyptian intercultural relations to be presented in one review work and in a timeline, but also to examine their continuities and discontinuities. Using the broadly defined concept of cultural relations, after carefully defining the terms "culture" and "public diplomacy", the author gives one synthesis by lining a wide array of research works from different disciplines (Egyptology, comparative literature, historiography, art history, museum studies, international relations) and gives an adequate review of these relations.

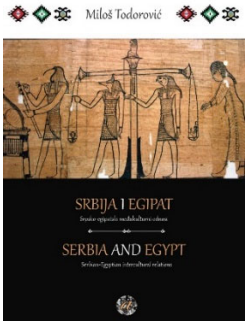
Todorović rightly identifies the actors who are not a part of official cultural diplomacy and represent "self-initiated forms of cultural exchange". Other actors are placed by the author into the proper historical context: European/Yugoslav/Serbian and colonial/anti-colonial, Non-Aligned, the context of the newly liberated Serbia and the independent, and then semi-colonial Egypt, the interwar Mediterranean and the world during the Cold War. Through the activities of individuals like Jovan Dučić, Huda Sha'arawi, Amr Aljowaily, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Josip Broz Tito, but also institutions such as the embassies in Cairo and Belgrade, the Museum of Yugoslav History or the Museum of African Art in Belgrade, Todorović successfully locates the rises and falls of these relations, their discontinuities, but also the paradox of them being maintained despite the often weak and irregular state support.

The book has a clear structure, where a brief review of Serbian/Yugoslav–Egyptian diplomatic relations is firstly being laid out in the chapters Yugoslavia and Egypt and Serbia and Egypt. The highlight is on the most intense period of the cooperation between Egypt and Serbia/Yugoslavia, which coincides with the golden period of the Non-Aligned Movement and the activities of the Yugoslav President Tito and the Egyptian President Nasser. This chapter is

followed by those about Mutual Heritage, which further encompasses this work; then Egypt and Serbian Culture, which deals with the culture of travel writing especially; a separate section about Egyptology in Serbia, and the particularly intriguing chapters Diplomacy and Museums and Other Institutions and Events which showcase how official, and especially unofficial contacts through NGOs or interested individuals can contribute to intercultural relations. In the Appendix there is an interview which the correspondent of "Borba", future historian, diplomat and founder of the Museum of African Art, and one of the most important actors in Afro–Yugoslav relations during the Cold War, Zdravko Pečar, conducted with general Mohamed Naguib, just a week after the Free Officers took power in Egypt; not to mention that it was the first interview that the nominal leader of the coup d'état gave to a foreign correspondent, which shows on a concrete example the continual recognition between Egypt and Yugoslavia/ Serbia as important and at times similar states and societies.

Miloš Todorović's book will be useful to everyone who is interested in Serbian–Egyptian communication; scholars who wish to get into this subject, but also future diplomats and cultural envoys who would like to further develop these contacts through official or unofficial channels.

Nemanja Radonjić, PhD is a Research Associate of The Institute for Recent History of Serbia



Serbia and Egypt

By Ana Stjelja

In front of the reader is a very interesting and important work on the historical, political, diplomatic and cultural relations between Serbia and Egypt, but also the only work on Serbian–Egyptian relations framed like this that was published in Serbia. These two countries are bound by a century old friendship which had its ups and downs, in accordance to historical circumstances, but the thread that ties the two cultures and peoples together was never broken. Miloš Todorović, a young researcher and the author of this book, strived to touch on those most important aspects of Serbian–Egyptian relations in his research, starting with the establishment of the diplomatic mission of Serbia to Egypt (in 1908, which was later raised to the level of an embassy) all the way to the present day when, it seems, Serbian–Egyptian relations reached their peak. This publication will without a doubt be of interest to those who are familiar with the topic of Serbian–Egyptian relations, be it their political, historical, diplomatic or cultural context. This book also highlights the most important events and actors that helped in the development of good intercultural relations between these two countries.

Certainly the central part of this book is devoted to the period when the relations of Serbia and Egypt were at the highest level, which was during the friendship between the presidents of SFRY Josip Broz Tito and of the United Arab Republic Gamal Abdel Nasser, which was also the period when the Non-Alignment Movement was formed; the movement which not only played an important role in the history of these two countries, but also in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres of the member states. Here we should also note the role which Zdravko Pečar, the founder of the Museum of African Art in Belgrade, played as he was residing in Egypt working as a journalist at that time, and so interviewed President Nasser, thanks to which we have a very important firsthand account about this country and the state of affairs in it. Thanks to Pečar we also have a rich photo documentation which is highlighted in this book, as well.

This publication, aside from the political and economic ties, also deals with the cultural and diplomatic relations between Serbia and Egypt. It is well known that cultural workers of a country might be its best representatives abroad. That was also the case with Serbian cultural workers, most notably authors and intellectuals, but also artists and adventurers who visited Egypt in the 19th century, starting with Pavle Riđički who brought a mummy to Serbia, now known as the "Belgrade mummy", but also those like Milorad Rajčević and Dr. Milan Jovanović Morski who brought home the descriptions of this mystical land that has always attracted the attention of world travelers, both around the world and in Serbia as well. Undoubtedly the Serbian author Jelena J. Dimitrijević, who recorded her travel in the rather short travelogue "Letters from Misir" (1919) and the more extensive travelogue "Seven Seas and Three Oceans. Trip Around the World" (1940), also left a mark on Serbian–Egyptian relations

and helped in the development of the friendship between them. Aside from her literary accounts of Egypt, Jelena also became friends with prominent Egyptian women, among whom the pioneer of Egypt's feminism Huda Sha'arawi certainly stands out. After Jelena J. Dimitrijević, the Serbian actress Desa Dugalić also visited Egypt and recorded her travel to Egypt and the Holy Land in her travelogue "Notes from a Trip through Palestine, Syria and Egypt in the Summer of 1931", which is illustrated by numerous photographs. Of course, Jovan Dučić's work in diplomacy is also important as he played a notable role in the development of the intercultural relations of the two countries working as a diplomatic representative. He also left behind a written account of his stay in Egypt, just like many others who visited this country which certainly inspires and invites people to discover it. It is interesting to see the presence of Serbian–Egyptian ties in the work of the Serbian painter Paja Jovanović, as a unique form of orientalism, as is the presence of Egyptian heritage in the works of contemporary Serbian poets and writers which the author of this book draws attention to.

The author also touches upon the Egyptian heritage in Serbia with a chapter on Egyptian artifacts that are exhibited in Serbian museums. He also draws the attention of the reader to the current activities that the Embassy of Egypt has been organizing in cooperation with Serbian cultural institutions and organizations. A special highlight is the role of the current ambassador of Egypt in Serbia, HE Amr Aljowaily, thanks to whose personal and professional efforts the cultural relations of Serbia and Egypt were raised to a whole new level.

This research aims to gather all of the important factors for the development of the intercultural relations between the two traditionally amicable countries, but also to showcase the activities that were recently undertaken in the field of strengthening those ties, as an example of a good practice for Serbia to develop or rebuild its intercultural relations with other traditionally amicable countries. Considering that the book was contrived as a bilingual (Serbian–English) publication, it will certainly be equally available to Serbian and Egyptian readers, interested students (of history, art history, archaeology, Arabic language and literature, political science…), researchers and interested professionals familiar with the subject.

Aside from the relevant historical data (which rely on academic literature and relevant sources), the book also offers a photo documentation that aims to illustrate all of the important actors and events that left a mark in the development of intercultural relations between Serbia and Egypt. This publication can certainly serve as a very useful starting point for some wider and more thorough research about this or similar subjects, as it concisely and chronologically shows how relations between Serbia and Egypt evolved to be as they are currently.

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