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Introduction by M.E. Sarotte

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Contents

Introduction by M.E. Sarotte, University of Southern California	2
Review by Richard Caplan, University of Oxford	6
Review by Marko Attila Hoare, Kingston University.....	9
Review by Renéo Lukic, Laval University, Canada	16
Author's Response by Josip Glaurdić, Clare College, University of Cambridge.....	18

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Introduction by M.E. Sarotte, University of Southern California

Josip Glaurdić's book *The Hour of Europe* offers a detailed analysis of the response of Western elites to the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the eruption of widespread violence there. The work is based on archival sources in many countries as well as on documents that are publicly available. *The Hour of Europe* is, as a result, a kind of 'second generation' of scholarship on these events; Glaurdić provides a scholarly analysis that adds to the numerous works already published by participants in the events and journalistic commentators. As such, it is an addition greatly to be welcomed.

The reviewers agree that Glaurdić has put his research materials to good effect. They all find his basic argument convincing. What is that argument? As Glaurdić explains, "[w]ith the end of the Cold War, Yugoslavia lost all importance to the West as a bulwark against Soviet advances and as an example of socialism that was not sponsored by the Kremlin" (6). As a result, "the creators of Western policy were virtually unanimous...[in] their strong preference for Yugoslavia's continued existence and their backing for the foundational pillars of the central government in Belgrade" (6).

In other words, the author's focus is on the international leaders who "continuously tended to appease the strong and push the weak during various internationally sponsored peace conferences" (7). He is interested in the responses of political elites in the West – particularly in the U.S. and in Germany – and how they failed to end the violence. As he puts it, "our attention ought to be directed not at those who were urging the West to act, but at those who were stifling its involvement" (7).

Among his most interesting findings are the factors that shaped Washington's response to events in Yugoslavia. Glaurdić singles out the United States for particular criticism in this regard. He sees the administration of George H. W. Bush as attempting to defend the status quo, despite the upheavals of the late 1980s and early 1990s in Europe. Bush's refusal to understand the new realities, the author argues, had fateful consequences; Washington tried to maintain Yugoslavian unity with tragic results for the inhabitants of the region. In contrast to his handling of the policies and leaders of the United States, Glaurdić praises the "principled ideas of German foreign policy makers" (306) He finds that there was a German willingness to face realities and adjust policies accordingly.

In the interest of full disclosure, I should add that I have made similar arguments about the Bush Administration's response to the end of the division of Germany. I, too, saw a clear U.S. interest in perpetuating the status quo of Cold War structures into the post-Cold War era. Since I have never met the author of the present study, nor read anything written by him until now, I was interested to learn that his research reached the same conclusions as mine about U.S. foreign policy in this era.

The author concludes his study by arguing that the case of Yugoslavia reveals how "the foundations of post-Cold War Europe" rest firmly in realist soil (308). Yugoslavia ceased to be important in security terms to the U.S. after the end of the Cold War, so its internal

quarrels mattered little in the 1990s. The “West’s nearly desperate pursuit of stability through the support of Yugoslavia’s unity” was, in the view of the author, “mistaken and unrealistic,” an ultimately tragic policy (308).

All three of the reviewers find *The Hour of Europe* to be a valuable and worthwhile contribution, particularly given the extensive source base of the book. The amount of evidence provided is one of the points emphasized by Renéo Lukic. As Lukic points out, the author not only examined presidential library sources, he also used evidence from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) along with intercepted messages between Serbian leaders.

Similarly, Marko Hoare praises Glaurdić’s work overall. Hoare likes the fact that Glaurdić begins his study of the West’s involvement not in 1991, when full-scale war broke out in the former Yugoslavia, but in 1987, when Slobodan Milošević was assuming absolute power in Serbia. Hoare does criticize Glaurdić on a few accounts, however. For example, Hoare finds that Glaurdić does not properly stress the extent to which Croatian president Franjo Tudjman’s “repeated retreats in the face of Serbian aggression merely encouraged” violence, just as did the similar retreats of the Western leaders.

Richard Caplan finds that “Glaurdić has written a very important book that deserves a place on any shelf of essential books about the breakup of Yugoslavia.” Caplan praises Glaurdić’s focus on Serbian expansionism and the failure of the West to respond effectively. Caplan also likes the fact that Glaurdić makes clear that information about what was happening in Yugoslavia was available at the time, had Western leaders cared to look for it. Glaurdić also cites U.S. and other intelligence materials that more or less predicted the course of events and yet failed to move elites to action. Caplan agrees with Glaurdić’s argument that the Western elites prioritized stability and continuity at the end of the Cold War and the start of the post-Cold war period, largely out of fear that Yugoslavia might serve as an example for Soviet dissolution.

Finally, in his author’s response, Glaurdić thanks the reviewers for their comments. He reiterates his basic argument once again. As he puts it: “My argument is that it was exactly the status quo bias of the Western powers...so clearly visible at the time, that had such a profoundly negative influence on the calculations of Yugoslavia’s principal actors – particularly those in Belgrade.”

In short, the publication of *The Hour of Europe* shows that it is now possible to conduct scholarly research on this important but tragic era in recent history.

Participants:

Josip Glaurdić is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the Department of Politics and International Studies and a fellow of Clare College, University of Cambridge. He earned his PhD in political science in 2009 from Yale University, and is currently engaged in two larger research projects funded by the Leverhulme Trust and the Isaac Newton Trust – “The

Politics of EU (Dis)integration” and “Tito’s Heirs: Yugoslav Communists between Democracy and Nationalism, 1980-1990”.

M.E. Sarotte is the author, most recently, of *1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe*. The *Financial Times* selected *1989* as one of its books of the year and Foreign Affairs called it a new “classic.” *1989* won the DAAD Prize for Distinguished Scholarship on German and European Studies from the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies (AICGS), the Ferrell Prize from the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR), and the Shulman Prize from the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS, renamed ASEEES, co-winner). Sarotte, who received her AB from Harvard University and her Ph.D. in History from Yale University, holds a joint appointment as Professor of History and Professor of International Relations at the University of Southern California. She will be a visiting professor at Harvard University in 2013-2014.

Marko Attila Hoare is a Reader at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Kingston University, London. He was born in London and received his BA from the University of Cambridge in 1994 and his Ph.D. from Yale University in 2000. He has been studying the history and politics of the former Yugoslavia since the early nineties and has lived and worked in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. He is the author of four books: *The Bosnian Muslims in the Second World War: A History* (Hurst, London, 2012); *The History of Bosnia: From the Middle Ages to the Present Day* (Saqi, London, 2007); *Genocide and Resistance in Hitler’s Bosnia: The Partisans and the Chetniks, 1941-1943* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006), which won the British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow Monograph Competition in 2004; and *How Bosnia Armed* (Saqi, London, 2004). He is currently working on a history of modern Serbia.

Richard Caplan is Professor of International Relations at the University of Oxford. He is the author of *Europe and the Recognition of New States in Yugoslavia* (Cambridge University Press, 2005) and *International Governance of War-Torn Territories: Rule and Reconstruction* (Oxford University Press, 2005). His other books include, as editor, *Exit Strategies and State Building* (Oxford University Press, 2012) and, as co-editor, *Europe’s New Nationalism: States and Minorities in Conflict* (Oxford University Press, 1996). He holds degrees in Political Theory and International Relations from the University of London (Ph.D.), the University of Cambridge (MPhil), and McGill University (BA Hons).

Renéo Lukic is Professor of International History in the Department of History at the Laval University in Canada. Born in Croatia, he was educated at the Zagreb University (Croatia) and at the University of Geneva (Switzerland). He received his Ph.D. from the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva in 1988. He is author, coauthor and editor of eight books. He has written more than 50 journal articles. His work has also appeared in English, Croatian, German, French and Japanese. He has a broad interest in the international politics of the twentieth century, particularly in comparative history and international relations of Europe. His research work has been focused primarily on Soviet-East European relations and ethnic conflicts in South-Eastern Europe. His published work includes a comparative study of the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the

Soviet Union as multinational, federal communist states and the reaction to these parallel collapses of European and US Foreign Policy.

The collapse of Yugoslavia has spawned an enormous literature, scholarly and otherwise, offering various and varying accounts of this momentous development. Some authors place the emphasis on political factors—the declining legitimacy of the League of Communists (SKJ), the inflexibility of the Yugoslav political system, the crisis over Kosovo. Others stress economic factors—chronic unemployment, regional economic disparities. Still others underline the responsibility of the major domestic actors involved, in particular the Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević and, to a lesser extent, the Croatian leader Franjo Tuđman, while others put the emphasis on the international context—the role of international creditors, the failure of international diplomacy.² As Sabrina Ramet observes in her magisterial study of the scholarly debates about the fall of Yugoslavia, “The literature...has produced a dizzying array of competing interpretations and understandings.”³

Josip Glaurdić, in this major contribution to the literature, is concerned principally with the proximate causes of the breakup and the violence associated with it. He divides primary responsibility for these events between Milošević’s Serbian expansionist project and the failure of the West (Europe in particular) to appreciate and respond effectively to the threat that Milošević posed. It is the latter view that is captured by the title of the book—*The Hour of Europe*—which invokes the now infamous claim by Luxembourg’s Foreign Minister Jacques Poos, on the eve of the war in Yugoslavia in June 1991, that “This is the hour of Europe—not the hour of the Americans. If one problem can be solved by the Europeans, it is the Yugoslav problem.”⁴

Glaurdić documents Milošević’s rise to power on the back of militant nationalism, his efforts to alter the balance of power within Yugoslavia in Serbia’s favour, and the campaign of violence he unleashed against Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina as part of his plan to

¹ A version of this review appeared previously in *Nationalities Papers* 41(1).

² See John B. Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia* (London: Hurst & Co., 2000); Lenard J. Cohen, *Broken Bonds: Yugoslavia’s Disintegration and Balkan Politics in Transition*, 2nd edn (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995); Branka Magaš, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia* (London: Verso, 1993); Susan L. Woodward, *Socialist Unemployment: The Political Economy of Yugoslavia, 1945-1990* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Dijana Pleština, *Regional Development in Communist Yugoslavia: Success, Failure and Consequences* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992); Louis Sell, *Slobodan Milosevic and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003); Warren Zimmermann, *Origins of a Catastrophe: Yugoslavia and its Destroyers* (New York: Time Books/Random House, 1996); Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1995); James Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (London: Hurst & Co., 1997).

³ Sabrina P. Ramet, *Thinking about Yugoslavia: Scholarly Debates about the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 3.

⁴ Quoted in Alan Riding, “Conflict in Yugoslavia: Europeans Send High-Level Team,” *New York Times*, 29 June 1991.

create a Greater Serbia from the federation that he helped to destroy. While the broad contours of this story may be well enough known, Glaurdić draws on a vast and wide array of source material, much of it new, in support of his analysis—including U.S. and British documents he obtained through Freedom of Information requests, witness testimonies at the Milošević trial in The Hague, intercepts of telephone conversations between Milošević and his associates, declassified official papers, and a large number of interviews that Glaurdić conducted, in addition to his impressive command of the existing scholarship.

The material is used to very good effect. For even if the broad contours of this story are well enough known, they are not necessarily in all respects widely accepted. Scholars and others, for instance, persist in their claims that Germany shattered a delicate consensus and leapt ahead of its European partners with its ‘unilateral’ recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, thus “torpedoing,” in Lord Carrington’s words,⁵ any possibility of a negotiated solution that would preserve the unity of Yugoslavia. With abundant evidence and persuasive argumentation, Glaurdić unpicks the fallacies behind this reasoning, thus demonstrating that Germany was acting—not at all alone—on the basis of an accurate understanding of Milošević and his strategic aims and with a determination to take decisive action by internationalizing the conflict so as to impede the Serbian leader, who only wished to preserve Yugoslavia long enough to carve off the Serb-majority territories within it.⁶

Glaurdić also challenges the view that not enough was known or could be foreseen by Western leaders to warrant more decisive action and that it was reasonable, therefore, for them to persist in their efforts to maintain the unity of Yugoslavia. He cites numerous (mostly U.S.) intelligence documents that anticipated early and correctly the tragic course of events. If sound analysis and counsel fell on deaf ears, it was often for political rather than intelligence reasons that Western policy makers chose to ignore it. The key external actors sought to maintain the status quo largely out of concern about the knock-on effects that the dissolution of Yugoslavia would have for the Soviet Union. “Tomorrow what we have done for Yugoslavia would be applied to other cases,” Roland Dumas, the French Foreign Minister, cautioned in early July 1991.⁷

Of course by December 1991 it was apparent that the Soviet Union was no more, and so the concern about knock-on effects was baseless. What is clear from Glaurdić’s account is that Western policy makers still clung to the idea of a reconstructed Yugoslavia and were therefore inclined to put pressure on the weakest parties to the conflict, often without regard for any sense of equity, in a determined effort to achieve a negotiated settlement

⁵ Carrington interview for the “The Death of Yugoslavia” television series, Brian Lapping Associates, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King’s College London, 4 April 1995, Box 18, File 1, p. 2.

⁶ For my own account of Germany’s engagement in the crisis, see Richard Caplan, *Europe and the Recognition of New States in Yugoslavia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), Ch. 1.

⁷ Dumas cited in “European Community Freezes Arms Sales and Aid,” *New York Times*, 6 July 1991.

that did not alienate Milošević. “From the very beginning of Milošević’s ascent to the very end of Yugoslavia’s existence and the collapse of Bosnia-Herzegovina into bloody mayhem,” Glaurdić concludes, “the predominant signals of the crucial exponents of Western policy were those of approval, lenience, and understanding for the powerful” (303). It would be many years—not until the 1999 war over Kosovo—before Western diplomats would appreciate sufficiently that Milošević was an obstacle to peace rather than the key to it.

With so much emphasis on Milošević, Glaurdić is vulnerable to the criticism that his account is an oversimplified one.⁸ However, Glaurdić’s explanation is not mono- or dual causal. He discusses the political and economic crises that facilitated the growth of fissiparous tendencies in the decade preceding the breakup of Yugoslavia. He makes clear that Milošević depended on an intellectual climate to redefine Yugoslavia that predated his rise to power. And he acknowledges the contributing role of other political elites, Croatian president Franjo Tuđman in particular, to the story. But Milošević and his Serbian project were so central to the crisis and the manner in which it unfolded that he deserves the attention that Glaurdić devotes to him, particularly in view of the new source material and detail that he brings to light. My only quibble is that the book lacks a bibliography and one is forced, therefore, to trawl the extensive footnotes for the source material. This is a minor weakness, however, that does not detract from the fact that Glaurdić has written a very important book that deserves a place on any shelf of essential books about the breakup of Yugoslavia.

⁸ See, for instance, Paul Shoup’s review of this book in *Slavic Review*, vol. 71, no. 2 (Fall 2012), 687-88.

The break-up of Yugoslavia generated an enormous literature – much of it poor, some of it acceptable and some of it excellent. There are several decent introductory accounts of the break-up that competently summarise familiar information. There are some very good studies of former Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic and his regime that do justice to the break-up as well. There are some excellent studies of sub-topics or related topics. But there have been few truly groundbreaking studies of the process as a whole. Too many of the older generation of pre-1991 Yugoslav experts had too many of their assumptions shattered by the break-up; too many journalists and casual scholars flooded the market in the 1990s with too many under-researched, third-rate works; too many younger scholars were handicapped by political prejudices that prevented them from addressing the truth squarely. Furthermore, the body of relevant primary sources has been vast and growing exponentially while the body of good supporting secondary literature has only slowly grown to a respectable size. In these circumstances, writing a groundbreaking general study of the break-up of Yugoslavia is a difficult task that requires both a lot of talent and a lot of patient hard work.

Josip Glaurdic's *The Hour of Europe: Western Powers and the Breakup of Yugoslavia* is such a study. As far as general accounts of the break-up go, there are only two or three that rival this work; none that is better. A great strength of this work lies in Glaurdic's careful balance between the domestic and international dimensions of Yugoslavia's break-up; he gives equal space to each and shows carefully the interaction between them. As far as the domestic dimension is concerned, he has skillfully summarised and distilled the existing knowledge about the subject as well as anybody before him. But where this book is truly original and groundbreaking is in its analysis of the international dimension. For this is the best serious, comprehensive, scholarly analysis of the role of the West – specifically, of the U.S., the European Community, and the UN – in the break-up of Yugoslavia.

The mainstream literature has tended to present the West's involvement in the break-up in terms of a reaction after the fact: Yugoslavia collapsed and war broke out due to internal causes, and the West responded with a weak, ineffective and primarily diplomatic intervention. Some excellent studies of the responses of individual Western countries have appeared, most notably Michael Libal for Germany, Brendan Simms for Britain and Takis Michas for Greece.¹ Those unwilling to acknowledge the culpability of the former regime of Slobodan Milosevic or of the Great Serb nationalists have, for their part, churned out innumerable versions of the conspiracy theory whereby the break-up of Yugoslavia was actually caused or even engineered by the West; more precisely by Germany, the Vatican

¹ Michael Libal, *Limits of Persuasion: Germany and the Yugoslav Crisis*, Praeger, London and Westport, Connecticut, 1997; Brendan Simms, *Unfinest Hour: Britain and the Destruction of Bosnia*, Penguin, London, 2001; Takis Michas, *Unholy Alliance: Greece and Milosevic's Serbia*, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, Texas, 2002.

and/or the IMF.² But up till now, nobody has attempted to do what Glaurdic has done, let alone done it well.

Glaurdic's innovation is to begin his study of the West's involvement not in 1991, when full-scale war broke out in the former Yugoslavia, but in 1987, when Milosevic was assuming absolute power in Serbia. This enables him to interpret the West's reaction to the eventual outbreak of war not as a reflex to a sudden crisis, but as the result of a long-term policy. He places this long-term policy in the broader context of the evolution of the West's global considerations in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The most important of these considerations concerned a state incomparably more important than Yugoslavia: the Soviet Union.

Yugoslavia's principal significance for the Western alliance during the Cold War was as a buffer state vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and as a model of an independent, non-Soviet Communist state. These factors became less important in the second half of the 1980s, when Mikhail Gorbachev ruled the Soviet Union and the Cold War was winding down. Milosevic was initially identified by some influential Western observers as a possible 'Balkan Gorbachev'; a Communist reformer who might bring positive change to Yugoslavia. The most important such observer was the veteran U.S. policymaker Lawrence Eagleburger, who became Deputy Secretary of State in January 1989. In his confirmation hearings in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 15-16 March 1989, Eagleburger stated that "there is no question in my mind that Milosevic is in terms of economics a Western market-oriented fellow... [who] is playing on and using Serbian nationalism, which has been contained for so many years, in part I think as an effort to force the central government to come to grips with some very tough economic problems." (40).

This initial U.S. appreciation for Milosevic dovetailed with a more important consideration: the fear that a collapse of Yugoslavia would create a precedent for the Soviet Union, weakening the position of Gorbachev himself. Of decisive importance was not merely that Western and in particular U.S. leaders viewed Gorbachev as a valued friend, but the extreme conservatism of their ideology as regards foreign policy. Simply put, the U.S. administration of George H.W. Bush valued stability above all else, including democratic reform, and actually preferred Communist strongmen, not only in the USSR but also in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, to the democratic opposition to them. Bush and his team feared the collapse of the Soviet Union and the destabilisation that this threatened – given, among other things, the latter's nuclear arsenal. This led them to acquiesce readily in Soviet repression in Lithuania, Latvia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Their acquiescence in Milosevic's repressive policies was a natural corollary.

² For example Diana Johnstone, *Fool's Crusade: Yugoslavia, NATO and Western Delusions*, Pluto Press, London, 2002; Michael Parenti, *To Kill a Nation: The Attack on Yugoslavia*, Verso, London, 2002; Kate Hudson, *Breaking the South Slav Dream: The Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia*, Pluto, London, 2003; David N. Gibbs, *First do no Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, Vanderbilt University Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 2009.

As Glaurdic shows, this conservative-realist worldview led the Bush Administration, right up until the end of 1991, to champion Yugoslavia's unity rather than its democratic reform. Though the U.S. gradually lost faith in Milosevic, its animosity in this period was above all directed at the 'separatist' regimes in Croatia and Slovenia. The irony was not only that Croatian and Slovenian separatism was a direct response to the aggressive policies of the Milosevic regime, but also that the latter was promoting the break-up of Yugoslavia as a deliberate policy. Through its unwillingness to oppose Milosevic and its hostility to the Croats and Slovenes, Washington in practice encouraged the force that was promoting the very break-up of Yugoslavia that it wished to avoid.

The problem was not that the Bush Administration lacked accurate intelligence as to what Milosevic's regime was doing, but that it chose to disregard this intelligence, instead clinging blindly to its shibboleth of Yugoslav unity, indeed of Yugoslav centralisation. Thus, as Glaurdic shows, a 'conservative realist' ideology resulted in a highly unrealistic, dogmatic policy. In October 1990, the CIA warned the U.S. leadership that, while the latter could do little to preserve Yugoslav unity, its statements would be interpreted and exploited by the different sides in the conflict: statements in support of Yugoslav unity would encourage Serbia while those in support of human rights and self-determination would encourage the Slovenes, Croats and Kosovars (110). The Bush Administration nevertheless continued to stress its support for Yugoslav unity.

This meant not only that the West failed to respond to Milosevic's repressive and aggressive policy, but that Milosevic and his circle actually drew encouragement from the signals they received from the West. Milosevic scarcely kept his policy a secret; at a meeting with Western ambassadors in Belgrade on 16 January 1991, he informed them that he intended to allow Slovenia to secede, and to form instead an enlarged Serbian stage on the ruins of the old Yugoslavia, that would include Serb-inhabited areas of Croatia and Bosnia and that would be established through the use of force if necessary. This brazen announcement provoked U.S. and British complaints, but no change in policy (135-136).

The problem was not merely ideological rigidity and mistaken analysis on the part of Western and particular U.S. leaders, but also sheer lack of interest. Glaurdic describes the paradoxical Western policy toward the Yugoslav Federal Prime Minister, Ante Markovic, who – unlike Milosevic – really did want to preserve Yugoslavia, and whose programme of economic reform, in principle, offered a way to achieve this. In comparison with the generous financial assistance extended to Poland in 1989-1990, no remotely similar support was offered to Markovic's government, because in U.S. Ambassador Warren Zimmermann's words, "Yugoslavia looked like a loser" (68).

The United States's dogmatic support for Yugoslav unity was shared by the West European powers. Glaurdic demolishes the myth – already exploded by authors like Libal and Richard Caplan³ – that Germany supported or encouraged Croatia's and Slovenia's secession from

³ Richard Caplan, *Europe and the Recognition of New States in Yugoslavia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007.

Yugoslavia. When the president of the Yugoslav presidency, Janez Drnovsek, visited Bonn on 5 December 1989, German chancellor Helmut Kohl expressed to him his “appreciation for Yugoslavia’s irreplaceable role in the stability of the region and the whole of Europe”. On the same occasion, German president Richard von Weizsaecker informed the Yugoslav delegation that he supported a “centralised” Yugoslavia (59). A year later, on 6 December 1990, German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher told his Yugoslav counterpart, Budimir Loncar, that Germany “has a fundamental interest in the integrity of Yugoslavia”, and consequently would make “the Yugoslav republics realise that separatist tendencies are damaging to the whole and very costly” (124-125).

This German opposition to Croatian and Slovenian independence continued right up until the latter was actually declared in June 1991, and beyond. According to Gerhard Almer, a German diplomat and Yugoslav specialist at the time, “Everything that was happening in Yugoslavia was viewed through Soviet glasses. [West German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher's] idea was, ‘Well, Yugoslavia disintegrating is a bad example for Soviet disintegration, and this was bad for us since we needed a Soviet Union capable of action because we needed to get a deal with them on our unity’. This was widely accepted in the ministry.” (160). Contrary to the myth of anti-Yugoslav imperialistic tendencies on the part of Helmut Kohl’s Christian Democratic government, the latter’s support for the Yugoslav *status quo* in the face of Belgrade’s abuses was so rigid that it provoked strong resistance from the Social Democratic opposition.

Genscher, subsequently demonised as a supposed architect of Yugoslavia’s break-up, actually resisted this pressure from the Bundestag for a shift in German policy away from unbending support for Yugoslav unity and toward greater emphasis on human rights and self-determination. The turning point for him, as Glaurdic shows, came with his visit to Belgrade on 1 July 1991, after the war in Slovenia had broken out. The combination of the overconfident Milosevic’s aggressive stance in his talk with Genscher, and the Yugoslav government’s inability to halt the Yugoslav People’s Army [JNA] operations against Slovenia, destroyed the German Foreign Minister’s faith in the Belgrade authorities, leading to his gradual shift in favour of Croatia and Slovenia. Eventually, after a lot more Serbian intransigence and military aggression, Germany reversed its traditional policy by 180 degrees, and came out in favour of the recognition of Slovenia’s and Croatia’s independence, while the EC split into pro- and anti-recognition currents of opinion.

Nevertheless, as Glaurdic shows, Germany’s change of heart was a double-edged sword, since it aroused the anti-German suspicions and rivalries of other EC states, particularly France and Britain, which consequently hardened their own stances against recognition. On 6 November 1991, while the JNA’s military assaults on the Croatian cities of Vukovar and Dubrovnik were at their peak, Douglas Hogg, the UK’s Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, explained to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons that his government was opposed to the recognition of Croatia since it would create an “obstacle” to territorial adjustments in Serbia’s favour and at Croatia’s expense (253). Several days later, the French president, Francois Mitterand, made a similar public statement, indicating that he saw Croatia’s existing borders as a ‘problem’ that prevented its recognition (253-254).

The Bush Administration, meanwhile, acted as a brake on the EC's shift against Belgrade and in favour of recognition, teaming up with the British and French to counter Germany's change of policy. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and his deputy Lawrence Eagleburger, as well as the UN special envoy Cyrus Vance (himself a former U.S. Secretary of State) waged a diplomatic battle in this period against any shift away from the West's non-recognition policy, and against any singling out of Serbia for blame for the war – even as the JNA was massively escalating its assault on Vukovar in preparation for the town's final conquest. Eagleburger had signalled to the Yugoslav ambassador in October that, although the U.S. was aware that Milosevic was attempting to establish a Greater Serbia, it would do nothing to stop him except economic sanctions, and even these only after Greater Serbia had actually been established (243-246). As late as December 1991, Vance continued to oppose recognition and to support the idea of a federal Yugoslavia, and continued moreover to put his trust in Milosevic, the JNA and Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, while viewing the Croats dismissively as “these Croatian insurgents” (264-265).

Glaurdic has marshaled an enormous wealth of documentary evidence to show that the British, French and Americans, far from reacting in a weak and indecisive manner to a sudden outbreak of war, actually pursued a remarkably steady and consistent policy from before the war began, right up until the eve of full-scale war in Bosnia-Herzegovina: of vocally supporting Yugoslav unity and opposing Croatian and Slovenian secession; of resisting any singling out of Serbia for blame or punishment; of opposing recognition of Slovenia and Croatia; of seeking to appease Milosevic and the JNA by extracting concessions from Croatia as the weaker side; and finally of appeasing the Serb nationalists' desire to carve up Bosnia. EC sanctions imposed in November 1991 applied to all parts of the former Yugoslavia equally, while there was no freezing of the international assets or financial transactions through which the JNA funded its war. The UN arms embargo, whose imposition had actually been requested by the Yugoslav government itself, favoured the heavily-armed Serbian side and hurt the poorly-armed Croats. Although, largely on account of Germany's change of heart, the EC at the start of December 1991 belatedly limited its economic sanctions to Serbia and Montenegro alone, the U.S. immediately responded by imposing economic sanctions on the whole of Yugoslavia.

According to myth, the Western powers applied the principle of national self-determination in a manner that penalised the Serb nation and privileged the non-Serbs. As Glaurdic shows, the reverse was actually the case. In October 1991, Milosevic rejected the peace plan put forward by the EC's Lord Carrington, which would have preserved Yugoslavia as a union of sovereign republics with autonomy for national minorities, in part because he feared it implied autonomy for the Albanians of Kosovo and the Muslims in Serbia's Sanjak region. Carrington consequently modified his plan: Croatia would be denied any military presence whatsoever in the disputed 'Krajina' region, despite that region being an integral part of Croatia inhabited by many Croats, while Serbia would be given a completely free hand to suppress the Kosovo Albanians and Sanjak Muslims. Carrington's offer came just after leaders of the latter had organised referendums for increased autonomy, and after the Milosevic regime had responded with concerted police repression (242).

Milosevic nevertheless continued to reject the Carrington Plan in the understandable belief that the West would eventually offer him a better deal. He consequently asked Carrington to request from the EC's Arbitration Commission, headed by Robert Badinter, an answer to the questions of whether the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia possessed the right to self-determination, and of whether Serbia's borders with Croatia and Bosnia should be considered borders under international law. Carrington submitted these to the Commission, along with a third question, of whether the situation in Yugoslavia was a case of secession by Slovenia and Croatia or a case of dissolution of the common state. That the Arbitration Commission ruled against Serbia on all three counts was, in Glaurdic's words, a "terrible surprise for Milosevic and for many in the international community" (260), given that Badinter was a close associate of President Mitterand, whose sympathies were with Serbia's case. The Badinter Commission's ruling dismayed both Carrington and French foreign minister Roland Dumas, and paved the way for international recognition of Croatia and Slovenia. But it did not fundamentally change the West's policy.

Glaurdic's account ends with the outbreak of the war in Bosnia, which as he argues, should be seen as the logical culmination of this policy. The failure of the EC foreign ministers to recognise Bosnia's independence in January 1992 along with that of Croatia and Slovenia was, in Glaurdic's words, "the decision with the most detrimental long-term consequences, all of which were clearly foreseeable... The EC had missed a great chance to preempt a war that would soon make the war in Croatia pale in comparison. Of all the mistakes the European Community had made regarding the recognition of the Yugoslav republics, this one was probably the most tragic" (281-282). Recognition of Bosnia at this time would have upset Milosevic's and Karadzic's plans for destroying that republic; instead, they were given every indication that the West would acquiesce in them.

Thus, on 21-22 February 1992, Bosnia's politicians were presented with the first draft of the plan of the EC's Jose Cutileiro for the three-way partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina into loosely linked Serb, Croat and Muslim entities. Since the plan, based on the ethnic majorities in Bosnian municipalities, offered the Bosnian Serb nationalists 'only' 43.8% of Bosnian territory instead of the 66% they sought, their assembly unanimously rejected it on 11 March. Once again, the EC abandoned universal standards in order to accommodate Serb intransigence, and Cutileiro modified his plan so that the three constituent Bosnian entities "would be based on national principles and would be taking into account economic, geographic and other criteria" (294), thereby opening the way for a Serb entity with a larger share of Bosnian territory than was justified on demographic grounds.

Ultimately, Bosnian president Alija Izetbegovic rejected the plan. But as Glaurdic writes,

"The damage that the Cutileiro plan did to Bosnia cannot be overstated. By accepting the ethnic principle for the reorganisation of the republic, Cutileiro in essence recognised the platforms of the SDS [Serb Democratic Party led by Karadzic] and the Boban wing of the HDZ [Croat Democratic Union] and opened a Pandora's box of ethnic division that still mars Bosnia to this very day. Cutileiro's intent was obviously to appease the Bosnian Serbs and their Belgrade sponsor into not

implementing their massive war machinery. However, instead of lowering tensions and giving the three parties an impetus to keep negotiating, the plan actually gave them a “charter for ethnic cleansing” (290)

In these circumstances, the West’s belated recognition of Bosnia’s independence in April 1992 was naturally not taken seriously by the Serb leaders; Milosevic rather wittily compared it to the Roman emperor Caligula declaring his horse to be a Senator (298).

My principal regret is that Glaurdic did not fully apply the logic of his iconoclastic analysis to his consideration of the Croatian dimension of the Yugoslav tragedy. He carefully and correctly highlights the retrograde nationalist ideology of Croatian president Franjo Tudjman, including his equivocal statements about the Nazi-puppet Croatian regime of World War II and his promotion of the partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Yet he does not properly stress the extent to which Tudjman’s repeated retreats in the face of Serbian aggression merely encouraged the latter, just as did the similar retreats of the Western leaders. Thus, Tudjman capitulated to the JNA’s bullying in January 1991 and agreed to demobilise Croatia’s reservists and arrest Croatian officials involved in arms procurement, including the Croatian Defense Minister Martin Spegelj himself. Glaurdic argues that this “defused the [JNA] generals’ plan for a takeover” and brought Yugoslavia “back from the brink” (134), but it would be more accurate to say that such Croatian appeasement merely encouraged further Serbian assaults, and that the killing in Croatia began only weeks later.

Glaurdic has carefully described the Milosevic regime’s secessionism vis-à-vis the Yugoslav federation, but one significant detail omitted from his book is the promulgation on 28 September 1990 of Serbia’s new constitution, which stated that “The Republic of Serbia determines and guarantees: 1 the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia and its international position and relations with other states and international organisations;...”. In other words, Serbia declared itself a sovereign and independent state before either Croatia or Bosnia did. This is relevant when evaluating not only the Milosevic regime’s hypocrisy regarding ‘separatism’, but the extent of the West’s policy failure. Milosevic posed as Yugoslavia’s defender while he deliberately destroyed it. Western leaders were hoodwinked: they sought both to uphold Yugoslavia’s unity and to appease Milosevic’s Serbia. As Glaurdic has brilliantly demonstrated, their dogged pursuit of the second of these policies ensured the failure of the first.

The stated goal of this book is, according to its author, twofold: it seeks to explain the influences of Western States (Britain, France, Germany and the United States) and international organizations, such as European Community, the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the United Nations, on the process of Yugoslavia's disintegration. It aims also to explain the demise of the South Slav federation «within the larger historical context of the end of the Cold War in Europe» (3). Thus, the interplay between this systemic change and the disintegration of the Yugoslav State are at the core of Glaurdić's analysis.

The book presents two-level analysis; it focuses on the internal dynamic of the Yugoslav disintegration and the Western diplomatic reactions to it, step by step, during five years, from 1987 to 1992. Each of the eight chapters of the book covers a specific sequence of the Yugoslav crisis, and the Western perception of it. From the outset of the Yugoslav crisis and during the wars in Croatia and Slovenia (1991-1992), Western foreign policy goals in the Yugoslav conflict were the preservation of the political and territorial unity of the South Slav Federation. A call for the creation of new states in Europe, advocated by Slovenia, Croatia, Slovakia and the Baltic states, was loudly rejected by western leaders. The acknowledgment of the right to the self-determination of the people evoked and claimed by Croatia and Slovenia after the fall of the Berlin Wall was, to put it mildly, unwelcomed by western leaders.

By keeping Yugoslavia together the West hoped to create conditions for the orderly process of post-communist transition and to maintain *stability* in the South Eastern Europe (7). These political goals were in 1989/90 meaningful and realistic. They could have worked if the European Community (EC) and the United States had acted together and if they had been ready to back up their policy by skillful use of diplomacy and military force. As we now know, the United States, in June of 1991 willingly delegated to the EC handling of the Yugoslav crisis. Jacques Poos, Luxembourg's Foreign Minister and then the president of the EC Council of Ministers, proudly announced 'the hour of Europe', explicitly saying that Europe and not the U.S. should be in charge of resolving the Yugoslav conflict. Thus, Poos's memorable phrase became a title of Glaurdić's book. The EC peace initiative to stop the wars in Europe was supposed to be Europe's peacebuilding hour. A Few years later Poos's expression became a symbol of EC/EU diplomatic failure from which EU foreign and defense policy never fully recovered. The disunity of the EU members was in full display during Iraq crisis in 2003. The EU never became a unified international actor organically integrating economic, politic and military powers. It failed in Yugoslavia because its most powerful members (France, the UK, and Germany) were "more concerned with outmaneuvering each other than with solving real issues on the ground" (3). France and Great Britain were competing with each other as to who would better neutralize German diplomatic initiatives to stop Serbian aggression directed against Slovenia and Croatia. As far as the United States was concerned, it lost interest in Yugoslavia as a buffer-state after the end of the Cold War. In order to preserve the territorial unity of Yugoslavia, the West had to harness the political ambitions of Serbia and its ally Montenegro. While the West

was aiming to save Yugoslavia as a loose federation within existing borders, between federal units, the Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević was actively seeking to transform the Yugoslavian federation into a Serbian- dominated and centralized unitary state. After the wars in Slovenia and Croatia broke out (June 1991), Milošević was actively striving to carve up a 'Greater Serbia', thus changing the internal borders between Yugoslav republics by force. Instead of organizing strong resistance to Serbia's territorial expansionism, the Western states put pressure on Slovenia and Croatia, considering them to be the troublemakers of the regional order. The Western policy of appeasement toward Serbia, in 1991, later led to the wars in Bosnia, in 1992, and in Kosovo in 1999.

The author convincingly demonstrates that the British, American and French foreign policy makers were driven by political realism (Realpolitik) while elaborating their foreign policies toward Yugoslavia. This political realism was displayed as a "tendency to appease the strong and push the weak during negotiations" (30). In other words, the political principle which was guiding Western leaders during the early period of the Yugoslav crisis was 'Might is Right'. The might in the Yugoslav case was represented by Milošević and the Yugoslav Army. On the other hand, Germany, in the fall of 1991 distanced itself from the Realpolitik and was advocating a more ethical foreign policy toward former Yugoslavia based on values such as the right to self-determination and the protection of the human rights.

The empirical evidence in this book abounds. The author consulted primary sources from the presidential libraries and obtained new documents through the procedure of the Freedom of Information Acts in the United States and the UK. Original documents deposited at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) were also consulted, as well intercepted messages between Serbian leaders. While writing this book, the author conducted 42 extensive interviews with the diplomats and foreign policy makers involved in Yugoslav crisis. Josip Glaurdic's book fits into the historiography established by authors such as Ivo Banac, Sabrina Ramet, and myself, to name a few.¹ However, he used evidence which was not available to us. Readers and scholars will need to wait for the opening of the national archives to know more about the Yugoslav crisis.

Glaurdic's book reflects excellent scholarship and deserves a broad readership in the field of international relations.

¹ See, for example, Ivo Banac, *Raspad Jugoslavije, The Break-up of Yugoslavia* (Zagreb, Croatia, Durieux, 2001), Sabrina P. Ramet, *Thinking about Yugoslavia* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005), Reneo Lukic, *L'agonie Yougoslave 1986-2003* (Les presses de l'Université Laval, Quebec, Canada, 2003).

I must admit that writing this response to the reviews by Richard Caplan, Marko Hoare, and Renéo Lukic has been very difficult for me – largely because I do not know what else to say about my book that they have not already said in such generous and eloquent form. Though they leave me at a loss for words, I am obviously very grateful for their kind endorsement. That said, I am also sure the consensus in these three reviews will not deceive the readers of H-Diplo about the state of academic study of Yugoslavia's breakup and wars. As Caplan rightly points out, there indeed has been a “dizzying array of competing interpretations and understandings”, and some of those interpretations – no matter how poorly supported by evidence – seem to be dying a very slow death.

Of course, disagreement over such contentious issues as the Yugoslav wars is only natural, and we can improve our common scholarly pursuit of truth only through reasoned argument. Nevertheless, the study of Yugoslavia's violent breakup seems to have generated a literature that is often too long on passionate interpretation and much too short on the pursuit and proper treatment of historical facts. Here immediately come to mind the nationalist interpretations which have poisoned the historiographies of Yugoslavia's successor states. Scholars from the former Yugoslavia are, however, not the only ones guilty of cavalier attitude toward facts and of clinging to arguments which fly in the face of evidence. I wholeheartedly agree with Hoare that the West is also lacking groundbreaking studies of the process of Yugoslavia's breakup at least in part because “Too many of the older generation of pre-1991 Yugoslav experts had too many of their assumptions shattered by the break-up; too many journalists and casual scholars flooded the market in the 1990s with too many under-researched, third-rate works; too many younger scholars were handicapped by political prejudices that prevented them from addressing the truth squarely.”

The unfortunate outcome of such weaknesses has been a field often marred by useless debates over ‘controversies’ which should not even exist in the first place, and by very slow progress in improving our understanding of what happened in Yugoslavia and why. All of this has taken place even though the breakup of Yugoslavia is probably the best documented international crisis of the past two decades – or, maybe, exactly because of it. Hoare is again right in stating that “the body of relevant primary sources has been vast and growing exponentially”. For newcomers to the field, especially for those who wish to draw broader or comparative lessons from the Yugoslav dissolution and wars, this can be a daunting task leading them to rely on secondary literature with serious shortcomings. Even for those who consider themselves specialists, the task of adjudicating between competing evidence is often extraordinarily difficult. The greatest challenge to contemporary history as a whole is arguably not the lack of access to official documents, but the difficulty of evaluating the credibility and comparative value of the increasing number of extremely diverse sources. In the case of Yugoslavia's dissolution and wars, this includes (but is not limited to): newspaper articles; television footage; oral histories; resolutions, declarations and statements of a range of national and international organizations and institutions; declassified official documents; trial witness testimonies and various types of evidence

generated by The Hague Tribunal. Faced with such an overwhelming challenge, we often choose to delve into our interpretations while relying on the work of those who came before us, perhaps not even considering the possibility that our predecessors may have been cutting too many corners – which is exactly what has unfortunately often been the case in the field of study of Yugoslavia’s breakup and wars.

The Cambridge historian David Thomson noted some time ago– probably in frustration – that a contemporary historian “will less often find himself poring over a single document, struggling to extract from it the last glimmers of knowledge about the past, and more often having to fight his way through acres of newsprint or shelf after shelf of documents in quest of relevant facts. It would surely be absurd, in such conditions, to pretend that he should, in the manner of Fustel de Coulanges, ‘continually begin afresh’.”¹ Yet in the field of study of Yugoslavia’s dissolution, exactly those works which have been based on the principle of “continually beginning afresh” and on the practice of their authors poring over shelves of documents and newsprint have contributed the most to our understanding of the period.² In *The Hour of Europe*, I have tried to do that to the greatest possible extent. My hope was to help demonstrate that a solid account and analysis of international policies toward Yugoslavia’s breakup and wars can (and should) be written with primary sources.

The second principal goal I tried to achieve in *The Hour of Europe* was to integrate the story of Yugoslavia’s breakup and the Western responses to it into the larger story of the end of the Cold War in Europe. Lukic is very much correct in identifying the interplay between systemic change in Europe and the disintegration of the Yugoslav state as being at the core of my analysis. In the accounts of this crucial period of European history – whether scholarly, popular, policy, biographic, or autobiographic – Yugoslavia has much too often been left aside as somehow too special of a case to be useful for comparative analysis. *The Hour of Europe* hopefully demonstrates the extent to which there has been no need for that. As Hoare rightly points out, I view the West’s reaction to the Yugoslav crisis not as a series of reflexes to a sudden outbreak of violence, but as the result of a long-term policy fitting perfectly into the broader context of Western (re)actions in Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s. My argument is that it was exactly the status quo bias of the Western powers (or their “conservative-realist worldview”, as Hoare calls it), so clearly visible at the time, that had such a profoundly negative influence on the calculations of Yugoslavia’s principal

¹ David Thomson, “The Writing of Contemporary History,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 2, No. 1, (1967), 28.

² Some credit in this respect should in particular be given to the new generation of scholars from the region. Nikica Barić’s study of the so-called Republic of Serb Krajina, for example, would have been impossible without the vast original archival material acquired after Krajina’s ultimate demise. Nikica Barić, *Srpska pobuna u Hrvatskoj, 1990.-1995.* (Zagreb: Golden Marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2005). A series of very perceptive studies of the role of the Yugoslav People’s Army in the Croatian war by Davor Marijan also rests on both the captured documents of the JNA and the archival sources of the Croatian Army. Davor Marijan, *Bitka za Vukovar* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2004); and *Slom Titove Armije: JNA i raspad Jugoslavije* (Zagreb: Golden Marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2007). The recent voluminous study of Yugoslavia’s foreign policy during the Cold War and its involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement by Tvrtko Jakovina is basically a distillation of the massive archive of the late Yugoslav foreign minister Josip Vrhovec. Tvrtko Jakovina, *Treća strana Hladnog rata* (Zagreb: Fraktura, 2011).

actors – particularly those in Belgrade. Unfortunately for the people of former Yugoslavia, this is the lesson Western policy-makers and diplomats failed to learn for many years.

Finally, a short answer to the few critical points the reviewers raised is needed. Hoare is correct to point out that I do not discuss the promulgation of the Serbian constitution in September 1990. However, I do cover the constitution's principal points in my discussion of the Serbian referendum on its promulgation in July 1990 (108). I take Hoare's critique of President Tudjman's strategy in early 1991 very seriously and have struggled with that issue. However, on balance and after reviewing the events in Yugoslavia, the predominant international opinion, as well as the state of Croatia's police and armed forces at the time (it has to be remembered that Croatia's National Guard was not created until May 1991 and even then it was modestly equipped), I had to conclude that Tudjman's strategy at the time was sensible and ultimately correct.³

As for Caplan's "quibble" regarding the lack of bibliography – it is well placed and I share his frustration. The explanation is, as could have been expected, rather prosaic. The publisher deemed the manuscript to be too long. After significant and painful cuts, I was still left with the choice of shedding additional 30 pages from the text or losing the bibliography. I chose the latter as a lesser of two evils. A full bibliography, however, accompanies the Croatian edition of the book⁴ and hopefully will be included in the paperback edition, if there is one.

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³ In this regard, I find the refutation of General Martin Špegelj's argument by Davor Marijan particularly convincing. For his most recent contribution to the debate, see Davor Marijan, "The Sarajevo Ceasefire – Realism or strategic error by the Croatian leadership?" *Review of Croatian History*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2011): 103-123. See also his polemical, but very useful, critique of Špegelj's memoirs in Davor Marijan, "Hrvatske kontroverze o ratu 1991-1995. Povodom knjige 'Sjećanje vojnika' generala Martina Špegelja," *Tokovi istorije*, No. 3-4 (2004): 111-137.

⁴ Josip Glaurdić, *Vrijeme Europe: Zapadne sile i raspad Jugoslavije* (Zagreb: MATE, d.o.o., 2011).