

This article was downloaded by: [University of East Anglia Library]

On: 17 May 2012, At: 07:28

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Europe-Asia Studies

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ceas20>

Velež Mostar Football Club and the Demise of 'Brotherhood and Unity' in Yugoslavia, 1922-2009

Richard Mills ^a

^a University of East Anglia

Available online: 09 Aug 2010

To cite this article: Richard Mills (2010): Velež Mostar Football Club and the Demise of 'Brotherhood and Unity' in Yugoslavia, 1922-2009, Europe-Asia Studies, 62:7, 1107-1133

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2010.497018>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Velež Mostar Football Club and the Demise of 'Brotherhood and Unity' in Yugoslavia, 1922–2009

RICHARD MILLS

IN 1972 JOSIP BROZ TITO—PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST Federal Republic of Yugoslavia—addressed members of Velež Mostar Football Club on the occasion of the club's fiftieth anniversary:

Comrades, you are on the right path, not only since yesterday, but from your origin . . . Furthermore, you have remained politically united. I want the future to foster brotherhood and unity, which is needed to steadily become stronger and to be consolidated. I want especially that you, the young generation that follows sport, become the first soldiers of those who will guard against every nationalist assault . . . You must be united; you should cherish and strengthen the brotherhood and unity of our nation. That is our socialist way. (Škoro 1982, p. 6)

These carefully chosen words provide a brief insight into the esteem in which Velež Mostar Football Club was held in communist Yugoslavia. In fact, as this essay will demonstrate, Velež not only may claim quite legitimately to have been 'in step with the revolution' in Yugoslavia (Škoro 1982, p. 10), but also to possess impeccable communist credentials stretching back as far as 1922. However, from the perspective of today's ethnically riven and physically shattered post-communist Mostar, Tito's 1972 speech also contains a haunting element. This essay will argue that in attempting to fulfil Tito's request to guard 'brotherhood and unity'—and therefore preserve the multiethnic character of Yugoslavia and subsequently of the Republic of Bosnia & Hercegovina—Velež became a distinct target for divisive ethnic nationalists during the Bosnian civil war of 1992–1995. Moreover, it is argued that the decentralising policies of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (*Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije*, KPJ), along with its subtly evolving stance on nations and nationalities during the final decades of its rule, bear a great deal of responsibility for the fratricidal war that carved Bosnia & Hercegovina into ethnically homogenous territories during the 1990s, and resulted in the ethnic cleansing of Velež Mostar—newly castigated as a 'Muslim' club. Viewed in

this light, Tito's plea that Velež should continue in 'guarding and developing a sporting spirit', and especially in preventing 'nationalist tendencies' (Miladinović 2009, p. 8), stands both as evidence of the club's prominent role in the development of Yugoslav socialism and as a poignant reminder of how swiftly 'nationalist tendencies' ripped the country apart in the wake of communism's demise.

Duke and Crolley (1996, p. 3) argue that 'the extent of overlap between the state and nation in a given country is crucial to an understanding of the politics of football in that country'. It will be argued that in the particular case of Velež it was actually the club's attempt to transcend the complex overlapping ethnic boundaries of both the Republic of Bosnia & Hercegovina and the Yugoslav Federation which eventually resulted in the persecution of the club by ethnic nationalists. This is because the conflict of the 1990s resulted in the destruction of a multiethnic solution to politics and the state, to which the club had been an active adherent, and its replacement by narrow monoethnic successor states and statelets. As a formerly proud adherent of brotherhood and unity within Tito's Yugoslavia, Velež was faced with an identity crisis as it was effectively left without a state. With its own ideology and 'nationalism' based upon a country that no longer existed, the club was unable to avoid becoming the victim of ethnic categorisation and the subsequent ethnic cleansing that this invoked (see Figure 1).¹



FIGURE 1. REMINDERS OF VELEŽ'S PAST GLORIES CAN STILL BE SEEN THROUGHOUT WAR-TORN MOSTAR TODAY. HERE, A FOOTBALL BEARING THE CLUB'S NAME ADORNS A HEAVILY SCARRED BUILDING IN TODAY'S 'MUSLIM' EAST OF THE CITY

¹All photographs included in this essay were taken by the author during 2008 and 2009.

However, the identity shift that was enforced upon Velež both by the collapse of Yugoslavia and by the specific targeting of it by ethnic nationalists, has bestowed great symbolic meaning upon the club in the period since the civil war. For whilst Velež's members continue to advocate a multiethnic solution in the form of a united Bosnia & Hercegovina, the plight of the club has tied it deeply to the Mostar Muslim community which *de facto* it has come to represent. In the preface to a 2009 book about the club, the prominent Bosnian literary figure and *Oslobodenje* journalist Alija Kebo stated that in a time when 'almost everything is destroyed, demolished and ruined', Velež continued to inspire love in generations of people from Mostar. 'Without Velež and its stars and legends', he continued, 'Mostar would be two cities, bitter cities. They are a symbol of [the city's] stability and tradition'. Then, in order to emphasise the symbolic value of the club to Mostar's inhabitants, Kebo paid Velež a deep compliment by equating its importance to the city with that of the legendary Mostar Bridge (Miladinović 2009, pp. 3–4). Hence, whilst it is virtually impossible not to view modern Mostar as an ethnically partitioned and 'bitter' city, these sentiments highlight the fact that during the post-conflict period the club has become a beacon of hope for those—predominately but not exclusively Muslim—inhabitants of Mostar who support a multiethnic state solution. In this respect, Velež must be viewed as far more than a mere football club, a helpless victim of collateral damage. As this essay will demonstrate, the club's very survival in the face of adversity, its newly forged identity and its dogged determination to remain an integral part of contemporary Mostar society, have given refugees hope in an eventual return to their West Mostar homes and has enabled many to embrace some level of continuity between the heritage of a cherished past and a belief in a brighter future.

This essay draws on interviews with individuals holding prominent roles in the club, including former player and current club director Avdo Kalajdžić, club employee of 30 years standing Enes Vukotić, and Coke—a life-long supporter and current member of the leadership of the Velež supporters' group Red Army Mostar.² Whilst there has been some academic research into the interaction between football and nationalism in a number of former Yugoslav republics (Čolović 2002; Mills 2009; Sack & Suster 2000; Vrcan 2002), to my knowledge there has not been any work conducted in the English language for Bosnia & Hercegovina. However, Rolland's ethnographic study (2007) into the nature of post-war football rivalry in Mostar examines the extent to which confrontation between the city's two football clubs is utilised in forging conflicting ethno-national identities. The importance of sport to the former socialist regime has been partially demonstrated via the pre-dissolution work of a number of Yugoslav scholars (Eterović 1989; Tomić 1983).

It is only on the basis of an understanding of the unique development of Bosnia & Hercegovina itself that one can begin to trace the origins of the founding of Velež Mostar by the prohibited KPJ during the period of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, or the

²This article utilises group interviews with a total of three supporters' groups, alongside one interview with FK Velež employees. The supporters' group interviews were conducted with representatives of each group, all of whom have been involved within their respective organisations for many years. These individuals are referred to using only their first names. The exception to this rule is the interview with FK Velež employees Enes Vukotić and Avdo Kalajdžić, as they were interviewed because of their prominent and public positions within the club.

club's embrace of brotherhood and unity as it emerged from the violent crucible of the Second World War into a revolutionary socialist state, or the historical circumstances which made it possible for Croat nationalists to brand Velež a 'Muslim' club during the early 1990s. Moreover, only by examining the club's complicated past will it be possible to appreciate the value of its survival into the present and the esteem with which Velež is now held by many of Mostar's inhabitants.

A multiethnic Bosnia & Hercegovina

Whilst the specific ethnic composition of Bosnia & Hercegovina has constantly shifted through time as a result of the processes of war, migration and religious conversion among others, the final Yugoslav census is indicative of the Republic's diversity. In 1991, Bosnia & Hercegovina consisted of 43.7% Muslim, 31.4% Serb, 17.3% Croat and even included 5.5% who saw themselves as Yugoslav (Lampe 2003, p. 337). Urban centres were particularly diverse and the city of Mostar is a perfect example of this, with its 1991 population incorporating 35% Muslim, 34% Croat and 19% Serb inhabitants (Yarwood *et al.* 1999, p. ix).

Since the nineteenth century such diversity has been complicated by the fact that Bosnia & Hercegovina's Serbs and Croats have largely conceived of themselves as extensions of their respective national groups beyond the borders of Bosnia & Hercegovina. In an attempt to combat such centrifugal forces, along with the largely unsuccessful assimilationist ideologies which accompanied them (Banac 1994, p. 134), the majority of post-Ottoman Muslim politicians offered their support to large heterogeneous states (Donia & Fine 1994, p. 105). Bougarel (2003) argues that this tactic resulted in Bosnia & Hercegovina's Muslims becoming loyal adherents to the Yugoslav nation-building projects of the twentieth century, as a powerful Yugoslav state was deemed to be the most effective solution for the preservation of a territorially integral and multiethnic Bosnia & Hercegovina. These conflicting national interests of Bosnia & Hercegovina's principal ethnic groups, further aggravated by external occupiers and revanchist nationalisms, undoubtedly contributed to the ferocity of fighting following the outbreak of World War II. In a series of conflicts that featured hegemonic nationalist extremists intent upon the acquisition, retention and forcible nationalisation of ethnically diverse territories, one multiethnic programme—that of Tito's communist Partisans—became increasingly attractive to people of all ethnic denominations.

Seeking a durable solution, the Partisan war effort was based upon Tito's unifying policy of brotherhood and unity (*bratstvo i jedinstvo*). Aiming at the creation of a Federal Yugoslavia based upon six autonomous republics and 'bringing freedom, equality and fraternity to all the nationalities of Yugoslavia' (Tito 1942, p. 50), the Republic of Bosnia & Hercegovina was to be an integral part of this strategy. For whilst the other five republics were each based upon one specific national group, a 1944 edition of *Oslobođenje*, a communist newspaper, explained that Bosnia & Hercegovina was 'neither Serbian nor Croatian, but rather equally Serbian, Croatian and Muslim. Serbs, Croats and Muslims live blended within it, with equality among themselves'.

The same article argued that Bosnia & Hercegovina would no longer be a coveted object of Greater Serbian or Greater Croatian 'plundering cliques', but in fact would come to form an 'object of wedlock and the cornerstone of Serbo-Croat relations in

Yugoslavia'.³ Tito's concept of brotherhood and unity must thus be viewed as a genuine attempt to solve the complex nationality problem, both in Bosnia & Hercegovina and the state as a whole. By restoring Bosnia & Hercegovina to its historical borders and offering equality to all of its 'constituent peoples', brotherhood and unity offered Bosnia & Hercegovina's Muslims security against Serb and Croat expansionism, whilst enabling the Serbs and Croats of Bosnia & Hercegovina to unite with their fellow nationals in Serbia and Croatia within the overarching institution of the Yugoslav Federal state.

Whilst Bosnia & Hercegovina's Muslims were not recognised by the communists as a distinct 'ethnic' nation at this stage, Tito and his party were careful to acknowledge both their equality and unique status within Yugoslavia (Banac 1994, p. 144; Donia & Fine 1994, pp. 148–49). As a result of such policies the KPJ succeeded in mobilising Bosnian Muslims for its own Yugoslav project (Bougarel 2003, p. 105). Indeed, Djokić (2003, p. 7) notes that this community eventually became one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the new Yugoslav Federal State. Yet as will become apparent, within one particular organisation located in the small city of Mostar in Hercegovina, such enthusiasm and ethnic solidarity predated the wartime emergence of socialist Yugoslavia by a number of years.

Red Velež

Sitting at a small, cluttered desk in front of an imposing black and white photograph of the 1939 Velež Mostar squad with large five-pointed stars emblazoned on their football shirts, Enes Vukotić—a man who has worked at the club in various capacities for 30 years—explained that 'Velež was formed in 1922 as a workers club, and most of the players and people inside of Velež were communists'.⁴ This opinion is supported by a 1982 history of the club produced to coincide with its sixtieth anniversary celebrations, which also served to demonstrate the extent of Velež Mostar's loyalty and devotion to Tito, Socialist Yugoslavia and the concept of brotherhood and unity (Škoro 1982). Within this book, numerous photos feature Velež members with prominent leaders such as Edvard Kardelj and even Tito himself, whilst another shows an elaborate stadium celebration for Tito's official birthday. Moreover, such affection was not merely the routine action of any prominent organisation within the confines of a one party dictatorship; this is confirmed in Tito's extensively reproduced speeches concerning the special position of Velež within the socialist pantheon (Škoro 1982). The club history proudly notes that, by the decree of Tito, Velež was awarded 'the order of brotherhood and unity with a gold wreath' in 1972 for, among other services, 'massive participation and contribution in the national liberation struggle, and for spreading brotherhood and unity among our nations' (Škoro 1982, p. 4; see also Miladinović 2009, pp. 12–13).

Perhaps it will be easier to comprehend why a small Bosnian football club came to be held in such esteem and showered with praise by Yugoslavia's socialist leaders if we examine its pre-war origins. The club's own history *Velež 1922–'82* (Škoro 1982)

³Bosna i Hercegovina u Federativnoj Jugoslaviji', *Oslobodenje*, January 1944.

⁴Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

recalls that following the prohibition of all 'disobedient' political parties, associations and clubs by the Kingdom of Yugoslavia's government in 1921, Velež was formed in the following year by the outlawed KPJ in order to 'gather workers and other devotees of football in Mostar and together present one of the powerful locations which will help to strengthen the organised revolutionary struggles of the working class' (Škoro 1982, p. 12). Carefully disguising its involvement in the club, in order to avoid the unwanted attention of the authorities, the KPJ placed Party members in key administrative and managerial positions. Noting the pre-war success of Velež in binding and strengthening the ranks of workers and of all progressive forces in Mostar, the official history goes on to state that via club activities, 'the KPJ policy that workers' sport must be an integral part of the revolutionary struggle of the working class was immediately realised' (Škoro 1982, pp. 13–15). However, such activities, along with the involvement of high-profile communist activists, ensured that throughout this period Velež Mostar came under close scrutiny by the authorities, and in 1940 the club was finally prohibited, following a large anti-fascist demonstration. This prohibition continued during the occupation of Bosnia & Hercegovina by the fascist Croat *Ustaša* regime of the Second World War NDH (Independent State of Croatia, *Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*) (Škoro 1982, pp. 22–25; Rolland 2007, p. 192).

The pre-war period of communist activity within the club ensured that with the outbreak of the Second World War, former Velež members swelled the ranks of the Partisan resistance units and were involved in numerous underground activities at the request of the KPJ. Glenn (1996, p. 160) states that the city of Mostar became famous over the course of the war because its mixed Serb, Croat and Muslim population largely resisted the temptation to indulge in ethnically motivated violence. He notes that 'Mostar Croats saved Serbs, Serbs protected Moslems and communal life revived in Mostar faster than almost anywhere else' in Bosnia & Hercegovina after the war. That Velež was an integral part of this phenomenon is demonstrated by the fact that nine of its former footballers and functionaries were subsequently proclaimed national heroes for their contributions to the liberation struggle. Alongside their photographs, the club history declares these men 'the pride of Velež', but it is also keen to stress that 'the list of names for history, really of all those who, in the pre-war and wartime years, appeared in the shirt with the five-pointed star or were activists of the club, is very long' (Škoro 1982, pp. 26–28). Following this statement the book lists a further 77 footballers and 21 functionaries who died during the course of the war as Partisan fighters or camp inmates, whilst noting that a further six members had already lost their lives in forced labour camps before the war had even begun. In memory of these individuals the club erected a monument at its Bijeli Brijeg Stadium in honour of all of its members who had fallen in the National Liberation Struggle (Miladinović 2009, p. 13). During the 1990s this monument would be singled out for desecration by Croat extremists (see Figure 2).

Whilst Velež was by no means the only sporting association with both inseparable ties to the KPJ and a record of revolutionary activity and wartime sacrifices, with clubs such as Hajduk Split also held in high esteem in this respect, it is possible to see why the club—representative of the ethnically diverse Mostar—became a vehement supporter of socialist Yugoslavia and Tito's principle of brotherhood and unity. For this pre-war organisation, which unlike many other contemporary sporting



FIGURE 2. THE NOW DESECRATED SOCIALIST MONUMENT TO THE FALLEN FOOTBALLERS AND FUNCTIONARIES OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE

associations was not founded upon an exclusive ethnic basis, the revolutionary victory of socialism in Yugoslavia served to legalise communist activity which Velež Mostar had been involved in since its founding in 1922. In promoting ethnic tolerance and the unique status of Bosnia & Herzegovina within the Federation, the revolution also provided both Velež and the city of Mostar with a sense of stability that had been lacking in previous years. This enabled the club to flourish during the heyday of Tito's Yugoslavia, establishing itself in the First Federal League in 1954, and remaining there until the country's violent dissolution nearly 40 years later.

The decentralisation of Yugoslavia

The development of socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s and 1970s saw a gradual move away from the theme of brotherhood and unity, as ever more power was devolved away from the centre to the individual republics. Jović's thorough article on this subject explains that at the root of continuing decentralisation was an ideological debate between Tito, who upheld a concept of brotherhood and unity that envisaged Yugoslavia as a state for South Slavs, and the revisionist Edvard Kardelj, who saw the Yugoslav state as an ideological, rather than an ethnic project (Jović 2003,

pp. 157–58).⁵ Kardelj's views on this matter were principally formed in the belief that the greatest threat to a post-Tito Yugoslavia would be the renewal of some form of heavily centralised state (Jović 2003, p. 168). Jović (2003, pp. 157–58, 160) argues that the resulting victory of Kardelj's 'Yugoslav socialist patriotism'—embodied in the 1974 constitution—and consequent relegation of Tito's position to a 'tolerated exception', enormously weakened the state. The constitution declared that republics rather than nations were its subjects, and effectively granted those republics the right to secession. This ensured that with the collapse of the socialist project in the late 1980s, Yugoslavia's better off republics, harbouring national ambitions of their own, saw little reason to remain in a Yugoslav Federation in which they felt economically exploited (Pavlowitch 1992, p. 79). These constitutional changes would eventually prove extremely detrimental, not only for the survival of Yugoslavia as a whole, but also for the stability of multiethnic Bosnia & Hercegovina, Mostar and even Velež itself. The logical conclusion of Kardelj's progressive theory, which equated Yugoslavism with socialism, and which declared that the Yugoslav state was only necessary for as long as it furthered the common interests of all of its constituent republics, was that following the demise of socialism, the need for this emasculated version of Yugoslavia also swiftly vanished (Jović 2003, pp. 169–70).

The principal problem with Kardelj's well meaning attempts to grant the maximum possible autonomy to Yugoslavia's constituent nations was that republican boundaries were by no means contiguous with national ones, as the case of Bosnia & Hercegovina demonstrates only too well. Hence, in the event of Yugoslavia's dissolution, in the name of its constituent nations, but actually along republican lines, the Kardelj-inspired amendments to the constitution had made Bosnia & Hercegovina's position untenable. This problem was unintentionally exacerbated by the recognition in 1968 of the Bosnian Muslims as a fully fledged nation in the ethnic sense. Bougarel has noted that the unsurprising outcome was that the Muslim population at large 'became strongly committed to Tito's Yugoslavia' (Bougarel 2003, pp. 107–8, 111). Although the act of recognition merely constituted the official acknowledgement of a patent fact, it underlined the existence of three official nations within Bosnia & Hercegovina, the newest of which—unlike the Bosnian Serbs and Croats—did not enjoy a republic of its own beyond Bosnia & Hercegovina's frontiers. Evolving socialist policies thus paradoxically provided both a platform for Bosnian Muslims to emerge as a distinct national group, and at the same time—by promoting the rights of national groups to self-determination—fundamentally weakened the heterogeneous state structures that enabled the Muslims to thrive within a complex and fragile multiethnic environment.

Moreover, the pace of urbanisation in Bosnia & Hercegovina had ensured a blurring of the ethnic boundaries in the cities of that republic, which meant that by the beginning of the 1990s 40% of all urban couples were ethnically mixed (Donia & Fine 1994, p. 186). This, along with strong loyalties for the Yugoslav state and a deep reverence for President Tito, meant that by the final decade of Yugoslavia's existence,

⁵As early as 1962 Kardelj stated: 'Our Yugoslav socialist community will . . . be the stronger, the more deeply conscious it is that its unity rests not on any kind of nationalistic ideology but on its socialist self-management, humanist, internationalist and universal conception' (Kardelj 1981, pp. 137–40). Jović (2003, p. 171) notes that for Tito on the other hand, the ideology of socialism was a tool for securing the unity of Yugoslavia. Tito's views on the national question in Yugoslavia, whilst sharing many similarities with Kardelj, contain important differences (Tito 1983).

Bosnia & Hercegovina's cities not only had more self-declared Yugoslavs than any other republic,⁶ but unquestionably, they also had the most to lose in any narrowly ethnic settlement. 'In many respects the republic of Bosnia & Hercegovina became the last bastion of genuine Yugoslavism' and 'Bosnians from all three major national groups supported the preservation of Yugoslavia against the forces of division and fragmentation' (Donia & Fine 1994, p. 194). The ethnic tapestry that constituted Bosnia & Hercegovina was much better suited to Tito's unifying policies than to Kardelj's promotion of national self-determination, which unwittingly encouraged chauvinistic and separatist tendencies. As Glenny has pointed out, those people who best understood the implications of Yugoslavia's disintegration 'were most concerned about the impact it could have on Bosnia' (Glenny 1996, p. 143). Meanwhile, urban Velež, having also invested deeply in both Yugoslavia and Tito's brotherhood and unity, would be left without a state to call its own.

Velež Mostar—the last of the Yugoslavs

Research has demonstrated that as the divisive politics of ethnic nationalism began to spread across Yugoslavia over the course of the 1980s, many of the country's football supporters—particularly those from Serbia and Croatia—zealously backed the political ambitions of their own ethnically based republics (Čolović 2002; Mills 2009; Sack & Suster 2000; Vrcan & Lalić 1999). However, it is important to note that contrary to the findings of this body of research, some of Yugoslavia's supporters' groups were initially not swept along in the prevailing trends of extreme ethnic nationalism. In particular, in Bosnia & Hercegovina, groups from the large multiethnic cities initially adopted a pro-Yugoslav stance, before moving towards support for a multiethnic Bosnia & Hercegovina when the survival of Yugoslavia became politically unrealistic following the events of 1991. Such a stance was necessary for supporters' groups like Velež Mostar's Red Army and Željezničar Sarajevo's Maniacs, not least because the ethnic make-up of these groups was so diverse. Coke and Mirza, two longstanding members of Red Army, recalled that because Velež was Mostar's sole representative in the Yugoslav league, all nationalities supported them.⁷ Enes, a long serving club employee, also recalled that support for Velež existed far beyond the suburbs of Mostar, and that 'it did not matter from which nation they came from . . . Serbs and Croats and Muslims' all followed the team.⁸

This multiethnic outlook closely reflects the pre-war diversity of cities such as Mostar and Sarajevo, and supporters from more ethnically orientated groups from

⁶A total of 7.9% of Bosnia & Hercegovina's total inhabitants declared themselves Yugoslav in the 1981 census (Bougarel 2003, pp. 107–8).

⁷Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁸Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008. In Sarajevo the situation was very similar. Maniacs member Željko stated that his group 'consisted of different religions, different nations—and they did not differentiate between which ethnicity people came from, or what type of praying people did'. Željko, Hamo and Lejla—The Maniacs, FK Željezničar Sarajevo Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Sarajevo, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 23 May 2008.

Yugoslavia's other republics corroborate the existence of this phenomenon in Bosnia & Hercegovina during the 1980s. For example, members of the Red Firm Supporters' Club, fans of FK Vojvodina, based in Novi Sad, noted that the aforementioned Bosnian groups 'were practically Yugoslavian'.⁹ These Serb interviewees thought that such groups adopted a pro-Yugoslav stance because it kept their multiethnic groups together. They also remembered a popular song: 'Serbia and Croatia hear that Bosnia is a community of brothers'.¹⁰ For the Red Army Supporters' Group the name of Tito meant even more than it did for Velež (Didić 1989) and they came to view their former president as the embodiment of such ethnic tolerance. A similar phenomenon is also demonstrated by Red Army graffiti throughout Mostar to this day (see Figure 3).

Unfortunately however, for both Velež Mostar and its supporters' group, Yugoslavia's deteriorating political situation made the maintenance of such ideas of brotherhood and unity ever more difficult. In the aftermath of the KPJ's collapse in 1990, subsequent democratic elections and referenda resulted in declarations of independence by the republics of Slovenia and Croatia in June 1991. All football clubs from those republics subsequently withdrew from the Yugoslav First Federal League



FIGURE 3. RED ARMY MOSTAR GRAFFITI DECLARING POSTHUMOUS ADMIRATION AND DEVOTION FOR PRESIDENT TITO VIA THE USE OF SLOGANS SUCH AS 'TITO WE LOVE YOU' CAN STILL BE SEEN ON SHATTERED BUILDINGS ACROSS THE CITY

⁹Miroslav from the author's group interview with Ognjen, Miroslav and Nebojša—Red Firm, FK Vojvodina Supporters' Group, Novi Sad, Serbia, 8 November 2007.

¹⁰Ognjen from the author's group interview with Ognjen, Miroslav and Nebojša—Red Firm, FK Vojvodina Supporters' Group, Novi Sad, Serbia, 8 November 2007.

in July and August 1991, following the outbreak of full-scale war on Croatian territory.¹¹ Whilst voting in Bosnia & Hercegovina's first democratic elections of 1990 also reflected the republic's ethnic composition, the three victorious ethnic parties initially agreed to govern by means of a coalition (Donia & Fine 1994, pp. 210–11). These political developments placed Velež under increasing pressure, as many Mostar Croats demanded that the club also withdraw from a competition which was now—devoid of Croat and Slovene teams—branded the 'football league of Serboslavia' (Parović 1991a). The situation swiftly began to deteriorate and in early August 1991, as Croat and Serb forces fought over the territory of neighbouring Croatia, Croat extremists threatened to blow up the club's Bijeli Brijeg stadium unless a decision was made to withdraw from the rump Yugoslav league (Parović 1991a). Despite such threats the Velež management, along with their counterparts from all of Bosnia & Hercegovina's leading clubs, decided to continue competing in a league that still contained teams from Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia as well.

Yet, only days after the initial threats were issued, the Belgrade based daily newspaper *Sportski Žurnal* led with the alarming headline: 'Explosion in Mostar before the Match of Velež-Partizan: Dynamite in the Stadium!!!'¹² Noting that whilst nobody had been injured in the early morning attack, the newspaper stated that threats had become reality and went on to conclude that 'members of the extreme organ of the Mostar HDZ [Croatian Democratic Union, *Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*]' were assumed to be behind the bombing (Parović 1991b). This early ethnically motivated targeting of the club as a result of its refusal to bow to Croat nationalist demands, over six months before Bosnia & Hercegovina's own descent into war, must be seen as the initial blow to Velež's inclusive heterogeneous identity. Just four days after the explosion the Croat Vid Čuljak resigned from his position as club president, an act which was rumoured to be directly related to both the bombing and Velež's continued presence in the Yugoslav First Federal League (Parović 1991c). In the aftermath of these events a Velež Mostar team, which still included footballers from all three ethnic groups, continued to participate in the league throughout the winter of 1991–1992. However, by the following spring politics once again began to dictate events.

The abrupt exodus of Bosnian teams from the First Federal League came as a result of direct military conflict. Although violent incidents had taken place sporadically across Bosnia & Hercegovina in the aftermath of the republic's independence referendum of 29 February and 1 March 1992, the conflict did not really begin until a week before an independent Bosnia & Hercegovina was due to be recognised by the international community, against the will of Bosnian Serbs (Glenny 1996, pp. 161–71). The north-eastern town of Bijeljina was attacked by Serb paramilitaries on 1 April, and in the following days the war spread across the republic (Silber & Little 1996, pp. 167–78).

Over the weekend of 4–5 April 1992 *Politika* noted that many clubs from both the First and Second Federal Leagues experienced problems where a Bosnian team was involved, and a number of matches were cancelled. According to this newspaper the 'disruption of transport on the territory of this republic by countless road blocks from which justice is carried out by masked members of the Moslem, Serb or Croat

¹¹*Sportski Žurnal*, 3 August 1991; Mihajlović (1991).

¹²*Sportski Žurnal*, 19 August 1991.

nationalities, also stopped the players' (Simeunović 1992a, p. 13). Club employee Enes remembered that Velež Mostar played an away match against Spartak Subotica in Serbia's Vojvodina province over this weekend.¹³ A contemporary newspaper report on this fixture noted that Velež had to field an extremely inexperienced team as eight first team players boycotted the match (Inić 1992), whilst Enes recalled that the only Croat who travelled to Serbia for the game was the first team coach Franjo Džidić.¹⁴ Following a post-match interview with Džidić, *Sportski Žurnal*, sensing the magnitude of the occasion as Bosnia & Hercegovina descended into war, stated that for Velež

in the most difficult days of its own history . . . to make its way to the northern remnant of Yugoslavia is at least symbolic that it gave all of itself for the survival of Yugoslav football. And for that, great recognition must really be bestowed upon the people from Mostar. (Inić 1992)

Enes recalled that this away trip to Serbia turned out to be 'the last game in the Yugoslav league which Velež played':

After that last game, while the club was travelling back from Subotica, Red Star Belgrade offered Velež, as did Budućnost Titograd—Podgorica now—to stay on with them. This was a very friendly offer to stay there as the war was starting across all of Bosnia & Hercegovina and also in Mostar during those days, but the team did not accept this offer. Football Club Velež wanted to come back to Mostar, but all of the Serbian players—when they returned to Mostar—stayed in Nevesinje in Eastern Hercegovina because it had a mostly Serbian population. So they stayed there because they did not want to return to Mostar.¹⁵

Sportski Žurnal reported that the Velež squad had been forced to divert to the Montenegrin city of Podgorica whilst returning from the Subotica match, as Mostar's airport had been closed to traffic as a result of the incipient conflict.¹⁶ The newspaper went on to explain that on arrival in Podgorica the people from Mostar were indeed greeted by FK Budućnost, which provided lunch for its guests. In a statement with deep echoes of the communist sentiments from Velež's past, the newspaper concluded that this hospitality proved that 'the aspiration of sport still lasts and this flame of companionship and friendship, evidently, no one and nothing can extinguish'.¹⁷

As it quickly became apparent that the war left Velež—and the majority of Bosnia & Hercegovina's other clubs—unable to complete the season, the club announced its withdrawal 'from the Yugoslav football order' just days after the outbreak of hostilities (Simeunović 1992b, p. 12). Whilst the streets of Mostar became a frontline in the fighting, a number of Velež's better players swiftly relocated to the rump

¹³Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

¹⁴Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

¹⁵Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

¹⁶*Sportski Žurnal*, 8 April 1992.

¹⁷*Sportski Žurnal*, 8 April 1992.

Yugoslavia, joining clubs in Belgrade and Novi Sad (Anđus 1992; Gavrilović 1992; Simeunović 1992b). One announced that he had decided to do so because Velež, the club ‘which I am tied to heart and soul, no longer exists’ (Gavrilović 1992).

Even in these difficult periods however, when Velež was targeted by ethnic extremists, endured player boycotts, and was finally torn apart as Bosnia & Hercegovina submerged into ethnic warfare, the club attempted to remain loyal to its communist origins. Photographs in an August 1991 edition of *Sportski Žurnal* clearly showed that large portraits of President Tito still hung proudly in the Velež club offices, while on the terraces of the Bijeli Brijeg stadium supporters could be seen holding up the red flag of the KPJ just hours after the ethnically motivated bombing of the stadium.¹⁸ These demonstrations of loyalty to the former communist regime, in a period when Tito’s personality cult had already been thoroughly deconstructed (Pavlowitch 1992, pp. 87–94), demonstrate that many of those involved at the club harboured deep preferences for a return to the era of brotherhood and unity, rather than for an uncertain future based upon exclusive ethnic nationalisms.

Zrinjski reformed—the ethnic identity challenge

In many respects, the conflicts that engulfed the Hercegovina region and its principal city of Mostar can be viewed as a reasonably accurate microcosm of the wider Bosnian war. With the outbreak of fighting across Bosnia & Hercegovina in April 1992, the situation in Hercegovina followed the general pattern, with the predominantly Serb Eastern section of this region seceding as part of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia & Hercegovina (Marić 1992). Mostar was bombarded by the ubiquitous combination of Serb paramilitaries and the Yugoslav People’s Army, which aimed to partition Hercegovina with the Neretva River—which dissects both the city and the region—forming a new border. By June 1992 however, Croat forces were able to repel the attack, forcing both the Serbian military formations and Mostar’s Serb inhabitants, out of the city altogether (Silber & Little 1996, p. 293). Yet, although the ethnic composition of Hercegovina partly reflected that of Bosnia & Hercegovina as a whole—with Muslims forming a majority in the main urban centres (Glenny 1996, pp. 229–30)—the existence of an absolute Croat majority in Western Hercegovina, comprising of over 200,000 Croats, provided a significant additional complication. The presence of such a homogenous group over a territory which is contiguous with Croatia proper was always likely to incite calls for border change, and the nature of Hercegovian Croat nationalism in this region meant that further conflict was always a likely outcome (Goldstein 1999, p. 244; Silber & Little 1996, p. 293).

The extreme nationalism which was present amongst the Hercegovian Croat community is well recorded. During the conflict one Croat soldier explained that Western Hercegovians are ‘the most radical Croats. We are, if you like, more Croat than the Croats’ (Glenny 1996, p. 156). The existence of such nationalism led to the founding of the self-proclaimed autonomous ‘Croat Community of Herceg-Bosna’ in November 1991. Hence, although war between Bosnia & Hercegovina’s Croat and Muslim communities was avoided until 1993, portents of conflict along this particular

¹⁸*Sportski Žurnal*, 20 August 1991.

fault line were present before 1992, as the aforementioned stadium bombing incident suggests (Goldstein 1999, p. 244; Silber & Little 1996, p. 291). Ominously for the city's Muslim majority, Mostar was proclaimed the capital of the 'Herceg-Bosna' in August 1993 and the city quickly became the focal point of the Muslim–Croat conflict when it finally erupted (Goldstein 1999, pp. 246–47). Members of Red Army Mostar mourned the fact that Velež became 'a symbol of the war between the Army of Bosnia & Hercegovina and the Croatian Defence Council [*Hrvatsko Vijeće Obrane*, HVO]';¹⁹ the reasons for such an observation are intimately entwined with the re-emergence of ethnic nationalism and the direct challenge to Velež's identity that this entailed.

The Croatian Sports Club Zrinjski Mostar (*Hrvatski Športski Klub Zrinjski Mostar*), which had been prohibited at the beginning of Tito's socialist regime, was reformed by Croat nationalists in 1992. During the Second World War Zrinjski Mostar became heavily associated with the fascist *Ustaša*-led NDH, participating in the regime's football league in 1941.²⁰ The club's nationalist credentials, along with this association with the NDH, were the principal reasons why Tito's victorious regime put a 'large black stop' to its activities in 1945.²¹ The fact that Zrinjski Mostar was a Croat nationalist club was shown by the content of its officially sanctioned online *History*. The opening 400 words of this short document contain no mention of football whatsoever, but instead focus on the importance of the club in the preservation of Croatian nationalism in Mostar in the face of historic adversities such as 'ostensibly pro-Yugoslav but essentially Greater-Serbian rule between the two world wars' and 'nearly 50 years of Communism ingloriously fallen together with the vampire Serbian hegemonism'.²² Finally, this *History* leaves the reader in no doubt as to the task of the club following its 1992 resurrection: 'We hope and trust in God that Zrinjski shall again spread the glory of the Croats of Mostar'.²³ Both the name of the club and the club badge, which features the distinctive red and white chequered *šahovnica* emblem that is an important element of Croat nationalist symbolism, also underscore a Croat identity for Zrinjski Mostar (see Figure 4). Even the name 'Zrinjski' is steeped in the colours of Croat nationalism, as it is derived from a noble family which championed the cause of Croats against both the Ottomans and the Austro-Hungarians in the seventeenth century (Goldstein 1999, pp. 43–45).

¹⁹Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

²⁰HŠK Zrinjski Official Website, *HŠK Zrinjski History*, available at: http://www.hskzrinjski.ba/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=35, accessed 21 May 2008; for a league table of this 1941 NDH Championship see, Podnar (2006, p. 152).

²¹HŠK Zrinjski Official Website, *HŠK Zrinjski History*, available at: http://www.hskzrinjski.ba/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=35, accessed 21 May 2008; Rolland (2007, p. 197). This ban on the activities of all nationally orientated clubs also resulted in the closure of the Serbian team Slavija Sarajevo, which was also subsequently re-established with the collapse of communism in the early 1990s. Željko, Hamo and Lelja—The Maniacs, FK Željezničar Sarajevo Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Sarajevo, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 23 May 2008.

²²HŠK Zrinjski Official Website, *HŠK Zrinjski History*, available at: http://www.hskzrinjski.ba/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=35, accessed 21 May 2008.

²³HŠK Zrinjski Official Website, *HŠK Zrinjski History*, available at: http://www.hskzrinjski.ba/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=35, accessed 21 May 2008.

Regarding the refounding of Zrinjski, Rolland (2007, p. 198) explains that the ‘rebirth of the club with the collapse of communism and Yugoslavia symbolised the strength of will which had enabled the Croatian people to survive despite the vicissitudes of history’. However, it is important to note that the resurrected ultra-nationalist Zrinjski also maintained a strong association with its fascist past, especially as far as its supporters’ group—Ultras Zrinjski—were concerned. In the opinion of Mirza, a member of the rival Red Army Mostar Supporters’ Group, Ultras Zrinjski consisted solely of Croat nationalists who:

... are proud to be *Ustaše*. You know, the *Ustaša* were fascists who were with the Nazi Germans during the Second World War ... And they all hail like this now [raises his arm in a Nazi salute]. ... They hail like this with crosses ... all in black uniforms.²⁴

This view of Zrinjski supporters as fascist is corroborated both by the findings of Rolland’s anthropological study of the group (2007, p. 199) and by those of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, which found that Zrinjski supporters displayed swastikas and a portrait of the *Ustaša* leader Ante Pavelić at a football match against Velež in 2002.²⁵ The openly nationalist ideologies of the club, along with the nationalist and fascist orientation of a section of its supporters are thus beyond doubt.

The existence of such an ultra-nationalist organisation left Velež, with its long tradition as a non-ethnically orientated club with a proud communist tradition forged in the struggle against fascism, in an extremely difficult position. The resurrection of



FIGURE 4. THE EMBLEM OF ‘CROATIAN SPORTS CLUB ZRINJSKI MOSTAR’, COMPLETE WITH THE CHEQUERBOARD SHIELD OF CROAT NATIONALIST RENOWN, ON THE WALL OF THE BIJELI BRIJEJ STADIUM

²⁴Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters’ Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Herzegovina, 22 May 2008.

²⁵The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Report on the State of Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina—Analysis for January–December 2002 Period*, available at: <http://www.bh-hchr.org/Reports/reportHR2002.htm>, accessed 25 May 2008.

Zrinjski amounted to an explicit challenge to Velež's identity. Indeed, according to Wilson (2006, pp. 179–80), certain individuals involved with Zrinjski argued that the principal reason for the club's re-establishment was because 'Croats accuse Muslims of having hijacked Velež, the club that once represented the whole community'. It is perhaps in Velež's initial refusal to succumb to nationalist threats and abandon the Yugoslav First Federal League in August 1991 that the seeds of this idea were sown. Donia and Fine (1994, pp. 262–63) also note that, at least in the opening years of the war, it was inaccurate simply to equate the forces which advocated a unified Bosnia & Hercegovina as 'Muslim', as this body also contained considerable numbers of urban non-Muslims who favoured 'the perpetuation of a multiethnic state'.

Nadim Hasić, a Sarajevo-based journalist, stated that 'Zrinjski was a product of the war' between Muslims and Croats (Hasić 2000). Such an opinion was certainly held by Coke and Mirza, members of Velež's Red Army Supporters' Group, who commented that the Ultras group which followed Zrinjski 'exist only because of us. If we did not exist then Ultras would not exist either'.²⁶ The logic behind such a statement derives from the idea that Zrinjski, and other ethnically orientated clubs, were resurrected solely in the pursuit of ethnic separation, or in other words, as another vehicle from which Croat nationalists could challenge the inclusive and multiethnic values of brotherhood and unity which Velež had always claimed to uphold. Such a policy would coincide with the twin goals of Serbian and Croatian extremists to eradicate 'the pattern of ethnic intermingling' whilst 'promoting hatred and intolerance among Bosnia's nationalities' in their attempt to destroy the legitimacy of the emerging independent Bosnia & Hercegovina as a genuinely multiethnic successor to Yugoslavia (Donia & Fine 1994, pp. 245, 266).

In this respect, Hasić has noted that Bosnian football became 'just another forum to exercise and reconfirm existing ethnic divisions' (Hasić 2000). The fact that Velež was also a prominent symbol of a communist regime which many nationalists viewed as repressive, only served to increase its value as a target. Regardless of whether such tactics were intentional, the immediate result, in the aftermath of the war, was a migration of supporters of Croat ethnicity away from Velež to newly emerging Croat clubs such as Zrinjski Mostar and Široki Brijeg.²⁷ Coke stated that all of the fans at these new clubs 'supported Velež before the war' because 'before the war there was only one club in the town', but that today hardly any Croat supporters of Velež remain.²⁸ The creation of Zrinjski has thus led to a direct challenge to the values which Velež always stood for. As Mirza noted:

I mean—Football Club Velež—if you speak to officials from Zrinjski and their fan members . . . they would say that Velež is a Muslim club. They want to create this, and they want to explain to the people that it is like that, but it is not like that, and it should not be like

²⁶Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

²⁷Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

²⁸Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008. The interviewees noted that Velež does still have a number of Croat supporters and that Zrinjski, likewise, enjoys the backing of some Muslims.

that. I would not be a fan of Velež if it was . . . Really! I would not cheer for a Muslim club—that is fascism, it would be stupidity. If I was a Croat I would not be a fan of Zrinjski—really I would not. What does it mean? Only us Croats and nobody else!²⁹

Enes, the long term employee of Velež, also went to great lengths to explain that unlike 'Croatian Sports Club Zrinjski', his club is not ethnically exclusive: 'We do not have any prefix that Velež is more Muslim or more Serbian, it is only "Football Club Velež"'.³⁰ In a similar vein, the club published another book about its history in 1997 (Dervišević 1997), which—echoing the previously cited 1982 edition (Škoro 1982)—eagerly underlined Velež's multiethnic values and the prominent role which it had played in the struggle against fascism, both during the Second World War and the wars of the 1990s.

However, as Rolland's critical findings make clear (2007, p. 200), even though Velež still considered itself to be a defender of multiethnicity, as a result of the advent of Zrinjski, post-war changes in public perceptions and the changed political situation in Mostar, the club had become—reluctantly—the *de facto* Muslim team of the city. Velež Mostar has found it virtually impossible to alter public perceptions on these issues. This is underlined by the fact that the same Serbian supporters who stated that Velež's Red Army Supporters' Group were 'practically Yugoslavian' during the 1980s, went on to note that such Bosnian groups later 'declared themselves as Muslims', causing their Serb and Croat members to leave.³¹ Although this opinion is much disputed, some members of the Bosnian groups in question undoubtedly severed ties on ethnic grounds.³² However, both Red Army Mostar and Željezničar Sarajevo's Maniacs were keen to stress that the 'Muslim' label was largely imposed upon them by their adversaries, rather than zealously adopted from within.³³

Bijeli Brijeg and ethnic cleansing

Whilst the re-emergence of Zrinjski served as a symbolic attack upon the values of Velež, the unfolding events in the military conflict over the city of Mostar quickly resulted in Velež becoming a physical target as well. Following the commencement of hostilities against West Mostar's Muslim community, Croat military forces utilised Velež Mostar's Bijeli Brijeg Stadium as a temporary detention facility. As shown by the transcripts of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), Muslim civilians were initially rounded up into the stadium, prior to their

²⁹Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

³⁰Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

³¹Ognjen, Miroslav and Nebojša—Red Firm, FK Vojvodina Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Novi Sad, Serbia, 8 November 2007.

³²The Maniacs Official Website, *Joint Union History*, available at: <http://www.themaniacs.org/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=511&Itemid=99>, accessed 21 May 2008.

³³Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008; Željko, Hamo and Lelja—The Maniacs, FK Željezničar Sarajevo Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Sarajevo, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 23 May 2008.

expulsion or transfer to the infamous Heliodrom concentration camp.³⁴ Witness testimonies in the case against Bosnian Croat Commanders Mladen Naletilić and Vinko Martinović recall the harrowing events of 9 May 1993:

On 9th of May, early in the morning, I was awakened by shooting, intense shooting, which could be heard in the city. I turned on the radio, and on the radio, people of Bosniak [Muslim] ethnicity were called to put out a white cloth in the sign of surrender and nothing would happen to them . . . they took us to the Velež stadium in a van. In the stadium itself there were a lot of people, including women and children. And several hours later, they took us from the stadium to the Heliodrom.³⁵

From such evidence it is impossible to differentiate between this case and other similar situations which were happening in sports stadiums across Bosnia & Hercegovina. However, it was not solely the Muslim population who the Croat forces were determined to cleanse from West Mostar. In virtually all other instances of ethnic cleansing across the former Yugoslavia, culture had been targeted, with the extensive destruction of religious buildings, libraries and monuments, yet in this case it was the symbolic resident of the Bijeli Brijeg itself that was an object of the cleansing operation.³⁶

Velež Mostar's Bijeli Brijeg stadium, as it was located in the heart of 'Croat' West Mostar, made an ideal home for the resurrected Zrinjski club. Hence Velež—which as we have seen had come to symbolise both the former socialist regime and a multiethnic identity which was problematic for chauvinistic nation building projects—was now castigated as 'Muslim' and forced to endure the fate of the community to which it had been forcibly assigned. Enes recalled that his club was violently cleansed from the Bijeli Brijeg along with the rest of West Mostar's Muslim inhabitants:

During the war they practically erased everything that was concerned with Velež. All of these trophies and pictures of Velež were thrown into the garbage. And all of these trophies which

³⁴Case IT-98-34-T, *Mladen Naletilić and Vinko Martinović Amended Indictment*, 28 November 2000, available at: <http://www.un.org/icty/indictment/english/nal-ai01204e.htm>, accessed 5 July 2008; *Naletilić and Martinović Transcript*, available at: <http://www.un.org/icty/transe34/011210ED.htm>, accessed 5 July 2008, pp. 7251–52; *Naletilić and Martinović Transcript*, available at: <http://www.un.org/icty/transe34/010925ed.htm>, accessed 5 July 2008, pp. 2926–31; *Naletilić and Martinović Judgement*, 31 March 2003, available at: <http://www.un.org/icty/naletilic/trialc/judgement/index.htm>, accessed 7 July 2008. The transcripts of the Hague Tribunal reveal that Bosnian Serb forces also made extensive use of football stadiums as detention facilities, execution sites and burial grounds across the territories which they controlled. Case IT-00-39 & 40-PT, *Momčilo Krajišnik and Biljana Plavšić Amended Consolidated Indictment*, 7 March 2002, available at: <http://www.un.org/icty/indictment/english/kra-cai020307e.htm>, accessed 3 July 2008; Case IT-00-39-T, *Momčilo Krajišnik Transcript*, available at: <http://www.un.org/icty/transe39/040421ED.htm>, accessed 24 July 2008, p. 2385; Honig and Both (1997, pp. 59–60).

³⁵Anonymous witness, *Naletilić and Martinović Transcript*, available at: <http://www.un.org/icty/transe34/011210ED.htm>, accessed 5 July 2008, pp. 7251–52.

³⁶Cultural architecture was specifically targeted by ethnic cleansers on all sides of the conflict (Riedlmayer 2002; Bevan 2006).

you see now [adorning the shelves in his office] are what people found and illegally took, and brought here after the war . . . [L]ots of these things are still missing. What you can see is not even 10% of what there was, but these are the only things which were found.³⁷

Velež supporter Mirza explained why it was not possible to protect the historical objects inside the stadium, chillingly combining the plight of his club and the Muslim community in the process:

[D]uring the war the people who lived on the west side of the town were actually thrown out of their homes, with only what they had. They could not even bring anything to eat, and certainly not trophies and everything, or pictures . . . And as for all the offices in the stadium, they [the Croat forces] wanted to really erase all of the history . . . it was truly fascism.³⁸

The ruling Croat municipal council of West Mostar subsequently leased the Bijeli Brijeg Stadium exclusively to Zrinjski Mostar for a period of 99 years (see Figure 5).³⁹ Velež, banished to the Muslim controlled east side of the city, became homeless.

The dispute over the Bijeli Brijeg has become a major factor in Muslim–Croat relations in Mostar. Klemenčić (2000, p. 103) notes that this situation ‘represents a clear example of the symbolic significance of particular pieces of territory, in this case a piece of territory the size of a football ground’. In their work on territorial politics and football in Northern Ireland Bairner and Shirlow (1999, pp. 157–58) argue that football stadiums ‘consistently emerge as sites for the reproduction of a sense of alienation from the Other’, and that in terms of the ethno-sectarian divide, stadiums can become ‘alien’ or ‘hostile’ territory where members from the opposing group are unwelcome. These venues have become ‘quasi-religious sites, important in their own right but also as metaphors for the political territory which is regarded as being in need of defence’ (Bairner & Shirlow 1999, p. 162). In the case of Mostar the disputed territory in question—the Bijeli Brijeg—was representative of what advocates for the preservation of a centuries old multiethnic Mostar strove to defend and lost—symbolised here by the expulsion of West Mostar’s Muslim community and its losses in terms of territory, possessions and multiethnic communal life. But it is also representative of what has been taken away from Velež Mostar itself, for the latter was not only forced to abandon its stadium, along with aspects of its history, but it was also forced to become a symbol of the very concept which those involved with the club always endeavoured to distance it from—a monoethnic identity. This process began when both the club and the Muslim community were simultaneously targeted for expulsion, with the Bijeli Brijeg standing as a poignant monument in both cases. The memory of Velež’s fallen socialist heroes was also attacked, as the plaque on the club’s aforementioned war memorial was removed whilst the monument itself has now been

³⁷Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

³⁸Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

³⁹Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 2008; Rolland (2007, p. 197) notes that the lease was granted for 109 years.



FIGURE 5. THE DILAPIDATED BIJELI BRIJEG STADIUM IN WEST MOSTAR

adorned with the red and white chequer pattern of Croatian nationalism—a pattern which was extensively utilised by the fascist *Ustaša* regime (see Figure 2).

Militarily and politically the Muslim–Croat conflict was brought to an end by the Washington Agreement of February 1994. The Agreement created a fragile Muslim–Croat Federation in Bosnia & Hercegovina and constituted an important step towards ending the Bosnian War as a whole (Malcolm 2002, p. 248). Whilst this political development signalled an end to the fighting in Hercegovina, it did little to reintegrate the two communities, leaving Mostar effectively divided between a Croat west and a Muslim east. Red Army members noted that virtually everything in the city remained separated, including schools and universities,⁴⁰ whilst Rolland (2007, p. 201) has described Mostar as ‘a city characterised by the cloning of all institutions’. As this study has demonstrated, football reflects this general trend of ethnic cleavage. However, the advent of the Muslim–Croat Federation did eventually pave the way for an interethnic football league (Rolland 2007, p. 189). This ensured that in 2000 Velež Mostar returned to the Bijeli Brijeg for the first time since they were removed from it

⁴⁰Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters’ Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

in 1993 (Klemenčič 2000, pp. 103–5; Rolland 2007, pp. 190–91). However, they returned to their traditional home as guests, for the Bijeli Brijeg had become the residence of the Croatian Zrinjski Mostar.

Club secretary Enes recalled that Velež's return to the Bijeli Brijeg occurred 'with a great amount of fear. Amongst the supporters and the club staff there was a fear that there would be an incident'.⁴¹ Over 2,000 Velež supporters crossed the ethnic divide by bus for this historic match, whilst Muslim newspapers bitterly evoked parallels with the harrowing events of 9 May 1993 when Muslims had 'walked on the grass of the stadium west of the Neretva' as victims of Croat ethnic cleansing (Rolland 2007, p. 191).

Regarding the atmosphere surrounding derby matches in the city, Coke, a member of Velež's Red Army Supporters' Group, stated that: 'When there is a derby it is like war in Mostar'.⁴² Although the level of violence at these matches has been relatively insignificant—principally because of extensive security measures—games held at the Bijeli Brijeg between Zrinjski and Velež are understandably highly symbolic (Rolland 2007, p. 186). Coke underlines the importance of these clashes: 'Now all of the confrontation actually takes place between the football clubs—due to the war. These two clubs have actually become symbols of what was left over from the war'.⁴³ Regarding a derby in 2002, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights recorded that 'the supporters of Zrinjski' goaded Velež by displaying a 'banner reading that Velež would never be allowed to return' to the Bijeli Brijeg.⁴⁴ In such a statement it is also implicit that Muslims will never be able to return to their homes in West Mostar either. Football in Mostar has thus become a continuation of the carefully cultivated Croat–Muslim conflict by other means—a kind of war by proxy. For individuals associated with Velež Mostar, matches at the Bijeli Brijeg do not provide catharsis; on the contrary, they are painful affairs providing an opportunity to contemplate both what they have lost and what has replaced them. With a sense of bitterness, Coke, who had grown up in West Mostar and for whom the Bijeli Brijeg 'was practically a playground' in his childhood, conveys his emotions with the following simple words: 'That stadium where Zrinjski plays—it is our stadium'.⁴⁵

Velež Mostar is by no means the first historical example of a cleansed or refugee football club. The research of Duke and Crolley (1996, pp. 76–81) has highlighted a similar phenomenon in Cyprus, where hostilities led both Greek and Turkish Cypriot teams to flee, along with their ethnic communities, to the south and north of the island respectively. Indeed, the plight of one Greek Cypriot

⁴¹Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁴²Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁴³Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁴⁴The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia and Hercegovina, *Report on the State of Human Rights in Bosnia and Hercegovina—Analysis for January–December 2002 Period*, available at: <http://www.bh-hchr.org/Reports/reportHR2002.htm>, accessed 25 May 2008.

⁴⁵Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

club, Ethnikos, is particularly analogous to that of Velež, for as Ethnikos' home town of Akhna was divided by the partition of Cyprus, the club had to relocate from its traditional stadium in the Turkish north to a new one in the Greek south of the town (Duke & Crolley 1996, p. 78). Unlike the Velež Mostar case, the ethnicity of these Cypriot refugee clubs was never in question—they had always been either Greek or Turkish. However, what all of these teams shared in common with Velež were the considerable difficulties of beginning from scratch in times of post-war austerity, having been separated from their stadiums, finances and training facilities.

'A phoenix from the ashes'—Velež is reborn

According to Velež supporter Mirza, 'since the break-up of Yugoslavia Velež is 100% the club which has suffered the most . . . it lost almost everything—if not everything'.⁴⁶ Current club director Avdo played for Velež both before and after the war, and he recalled the dire situation facing those who re-established Velež in 1994:

... it was really bad because after the war Mostar was destroyed, all of the town was destroyed—well, half of the town—and Velež was destroyed as well. But it rose like a phoenix from the ashes. When we first started training we did not have any football boots to play in. That was the bottom—there was nothing else.⁴⁷

Secretary Enes vividly remembered the meeting at which Velež Mostar was reborn. He recalled that 'we found one devastated house where we could gather together all of the former players and people who had worked in the club during the past period'.⁴⁸ Following this seminal meeting the club was able to utilise a field at Mostar's former Yugoslav Army barracks. The field was the wrong shape for a football pitch and the grass was in bad condition, but it enabled the team to start working with a football again. Economically, Velež struggled through this difficult period; the club's director noted that his club remained 'on a drip, like in the hospital', to this day.⁴⁹

Eventually in 1996, Velež found a football pitch that was good enough for competition. Located in Vrapčići, several kilometres away from Mostar, the pitch belonged to a factory and had previously been used by the factory workers.⁵⁰ The mountainous backdrop however, is stunning, and whilst it may be compact, Velež now at least has a ground to call its own again (see Figure 6).

⁴⁶Coke and Mirza—Red Army, FK Velež Mostar Supporters' Group, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁴⁷Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁴⁸Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁴⁹Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁵⁰Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.



FIGURE 6. VRAPČIČI, THE NEW HOME OF FK VELEŽ MOSTAR—SMALL BUT BEAUTIFUL

Enes noted that negotiations regarding a potential return to the Bijeli Brijeg had continued since the end of the war—‘everyday’—but that the political situation in Mostar rendered such a development an impossibility.⁵¹ Avdo, the club director, mourned that ‘Velež can never be what it was playing in Vrapčiči’, and that ‘of course everybody in Velež would like to get back to playing in the Bijeli Brijeg Stadium, but due to the political situation it is practically impossible for us to play there’.⁵² Others, such as Velež supporter Mirza, look at the situation practically: ‘Why struggle for something which is impossible?’⁵³ One thing that everybody connected with Velež was able to agree upon was that the crumbling communist era Bijeli Brijeg was now so dilapidated that it actually needed to be demolished. This highlights the fact that Velež’s attachment to the Bijeli Brijeg is grounded in sentiment and history, rather than in financial or infrastructural practicalities (see Figure 7).

The political failure to find some way to accommodate Velež back at the Bijeli Brijeg, even in terms of a ground-sharing arrangement with Zrinjski, underlines a

⁵¹Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁵²Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

⁵³Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.



FIGURE 7. AN OVERGROWN SET OF TURNSTILES AND A DIRT TRACK AT THE ANTIQUATED, BUT MUCH LOVED BIJELI BRIJEG STADIUM

much more serious political failure across the entire territory of Bosnia & Hercegovina. Under the terms of the Dayton Accords, which brought the Bosnian war to an end in 1996, refugees were to be allowed to return to their homes (Silber & Little 1996, pp. 378–82). However, the means by which Dayton achieved peace was through the recognition of an ethnically divided, federal Bosnia & Hercegovina, consisting of Serb controlled Republika Srpska and the Muslim–Croat Federation. Silber and Little (1996, p. 380) have commented that the Dayton Accords ‘embodied a contradiction: sanctioning two ethnic statelets within one unified whole and calling for the right of the refugees to return’. This statement is equally valid when one considers the fragile partnership within the Muslim–Croat Federation, which—as previously discussed—remains deeply riven between the two constituent ethnicities. This contradiction within Dayton underlines a serious misunderstanding of the war’s principal objective—from the beginning it had been a conflict ‘fought in the pursuit of ethnic separation’ (Silber & Little 1996, p. 382). It is thus unsurprising that the majority of the former Yugoslavia’s two million refugees have been unable to return to their pre-war dwellings, and in this respect Mostar is no exception (Goldstein 1999, p. 248; Silber & Little 1996, p. 378). Therefore, the plight of Velež can also be viewed as symbolic of the plight of the Muslim community that it has reluctantly come to represent, and aspirations for an unlikely return to the Bijeli Brijeg offer



FIGURE 8. A RETURN TO SOCIALIST ROOTS—THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE VELEŽ MOSTAR EMBLEM

West Mostar refugees some hope of an eventual return to their homes (Rolland 2007, p. 195).

The fate of Velež Mostar Football Club was inseparably entwined with that of the socialist regime which it helped to bring to power. Since the club's creation in 1922 it served as a vehicle for the furtherance of a revolutionary project, culminating in the victory of Tito's communism, based upon the powerful slogan of 'brotherhood and unity'. This slogan, along with the multiethnic society that it symbolised, was zealously supported by both Velež and the heterogeneous city of Mostar. However, as Yugoslav socialism developed, these unifying aspirations were implicitly dropped by the regime in favour of Kardelj-inspired policies which elevated the status and autonomy of Yugoslavia's ethnically based constituent republics. Eventually, these developments fundamentally weakened not only Yugoslavia, but also Velež Mostar's native Bosnia & Hercegovina. In a sincere attempt to preserve the rich multiethnic society around it, the club continued to cling to Tito's brotherhood and unity long after divisive ethnic nationalisms had begun to destroy the Yugoslav Federation. Finally losing the battle to preserve its multiethnic composition when Mostar itself was consumed by conflict, the club was specifically targeted by nationalist extremists as a prominent symbol of the heterogeneous and formerly socialist society which these forces endeavoured to destroy. Newly castigated as a solely 'Muslim' club by its attackers, Velež was cleansed from its traditional home and replaced by Zrinjski Mostar—a monolith to an ethnically exclusive Croatian nationalism that was fundamentally opposed to the principles of the former socialist regime.

Yet, as we have seen, since the post-war reformation of Velež, the club has once again attempted to promote itself as a non-ethnically based representative of the city of Mostar. Those involved with Velež have also demonstrated a reluctance to abandon its socialist roots, a phenomenon which is highlighted both by the modern presence of pro-Tito graffiti throughout the city (see Figure 3) and by the fact that during a derby match against Zrinjski in 2000, Velež supporters proudly chanted: 'We are Tito's and

Tito is with us!' (Rolland 2007, p. 185). Perhaps the best example of the club's unwillingness to be severed from its past is illustrated by the plight of its symbolic five-pointed star (*petokraka*). This red star, which since 1922 had been the club emblem and had symbolised Velež's unmistakable alignment with 'the revolutionary workers movement of the world' (Škoro 1982, p. 16), was removed from the club's badge in 1994. Explaining the reasons for this, club employee Enes recalled that 'the wounds were still fresh, and just after the war nobody had the courage to put the star back because it was a symbol of communism'.⁵⁴ This action underlines the extent to which the disintegration of communist Yugoslavia had deconstructed the principles upon which Velež had previously thrived. However, just 10 years after the end of the Bosnian conflict this politically loaded symbol was proudly reinstated as the club's emblem, emphasising the extent to which those involved with Velež were finally ready to emerge from a turbulent period of identity crisis and uncertainty (see Figure 8). The modern presence of the *petokraka* on Velež shirts, symbolic both of a return to the club's founding multiethnic principles and of the reclamation of a proud socialist era history, serves as a poignant reminder of how—against all the odds—Velež Mostar Football Club zealously battled to protect the communist legacy. In this respect, the club has faithfully fulfilled Tito's command to defend the socialist principle of brotherhood and unity against every nationalist assault.

University of East Anglia

References

- Andus, D. (1992) 'Najboji fudbaler Veleža—Nikola Jokišić u Beogradu—Behara više nema ...', *Sportski Žurnal*, 14 April.
- Armstrong, G. & Giulianotti, R. (eds) (1999) *Football Cultures and Identities* (London, Macmillan).
- Bairner, A. & Shirlow, P. (1999) 'The Territorial Politics of Soccer in Northern Ireland', in Armstrong, G. & Giulianotti, R. (eds) (1999).
- Banac, I. (1994) 'From Religious Community to Socialist Nationhood and Postcommunist Statehood, 1918–1992', in Pinson, M. (ed.) (1994) *The Muslims of Bosnia–Herzegovina: Their Historical Development from the Middle Ages to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press).
- Bevan, R. (2006) *The Destruction of Memory: Architecture at War* (London, Reaktion).
- Bougarel, X. (2003) 'Bosnian Muslims and the Yugoslav Idea', in Djokić, D. (ed.) (2003).
- Čolović, I. (2002) *Politics of Identity in Serbia: Essays in Political Anthropology* (New York, New York University Press).
- Crampton, R. (2004) 'Foreword', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 21, 5.
- Cronin, M. (2000) 'Playing Away from Home: Identity in Northern Ireland and the Experience of Derry City Football Club', *National Identities*, 2, 1.
- Đaro, B. (ed.) (1990) *R S D 'Sloboda' Tuzla i Udruženi Klubovi: Informator uz Sedamdesetogodišnjicu Postojanja i rada 1919–1989* (Tuzla, RSD Sloboda).
- Dervišević, I. (ed.) (1997) *Rođeni: 75 godina FK Velež* (Mostar, Fudbalski Klub Velež).
- Didić, M. (1989) 'Svoje Vole, Tuđe ne Mrže', *Tempo*, 29 November.
- Djokić, D. (ed.) (2003) *Yugoslavism: Histories of a Failed Idea: 1918–1992* (Madison, WI, University of Wisconsin Press).
- Donia, R. J. & Fine, J. V. A. (1994) *Bosnia and Hercegovina: A Tradition Betrayed* (London, Hurst).
- Duke, V. & Crolley, L. (1996) *Football, Nationality and the State* (Harlow, Longman).
- Eterović, S. (1989) *Ratnim Stazama Hajduka* (Split, NK Hajduk Split).

⁵⁴Enes Vukotić, Avdo Kalajdžić and Mirza—FK Velež, group interview with author, Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 22 May 2008.

- Gavrilović, M. (1992) 'Nastavlja se drama Nikole Jokišića, talentovanog fudbalera Veleža—Nova kuća u Novom Sadu', *Sportski Žurnal*, 19 April.
- Glenny, M. (1996) *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War* (London & New York, Penguin).
- Goldstein, I. (1999) *Croatia: A History* (London, Hurst).
- Hasić, N. (2000) *Fever Pitch*, 21 August, available at: <http://www.tol.cz/look/TOLrus/article.tpl?IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=4&NrIssue=13&NrSection=1&NrArticle=211>, accessed 10 May 2008.
- Honig, J. W. & Both, N. (1997) *Srebrenica: Record of a War Crime* (London & New York, Penguin).
- Inić, Z. (1992) 'Spartak—Velež (0:0—3:5)—Bujrum "rodeni"', *Sportski Žurnal*, 6 April.
- Jović, D. (2003) 'Yugoslavism and Yugoslav Communism: From Tito to Kardelj', in Djokić, D. (ed.) (2003).
- Judah, T. (2000) *The Serbs: History, Myth and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (New Haven, CT & London, Yale Nota Bene).
- Kardelj, E. (1962) 'The Federation and the Republics', in Kardelj, E. (1981) *The Nation and Socialism* (Belgrade, Socialist Thought and Practice).
- Klemenčić, M. (2000) 'Football across the Ethnic Divide', *IBRU Boundary and Security Bulletin*, Autumn.
- Klemenčić, M. & Schofield, C. (1996) 'Mostar: Make or Break for the Federation?', *IBRU Boundary and Security Bulletin*, Summer.
- Lampe, J. R. (2003) *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was a Country* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).
- Malcolm, N. (2002) *Bosnia, A Short History* (London & Basingstoke, Pan Macmillan).
- Marić, D. (1992) 'Nights of Chaos, Horror and Pain—Winds of War Sweep across Hercegovina', *Politika: The International Weekly*, 11 April.
- Mihajlović, A. (1991) 'They Don't Want Yugoslavia—They Want Europe: Croats and Slovenes Leave the First Football Division', *Politika: The International Weekly*, 3 August.
- Miladinović, D. (2009) *Veležov Spomenar: Zlatno Doba* (Mostar, IC Štamparija).
- Mills, R. (2009) "'It All Ended in an Unsporting Way": Serbian Football and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia, 1989–2006', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 26, 9.
- Parović, B. (1991a) 'Velež "liga Srboslavije"—Mine za Bijeli Breg!', *Sportski Žurnal*, 9 August.
- Parović, B. (1991b) 'Neprijatna predigra meča Velež—Partizan—Dinamit na dočeku Beograđana', *Sportski Žurnal*, 19 August.
- Parović, B. (1991c) 'Pozadina ostavke predsednika Veleža—Čuljak kao vrtuljak', *Sportski Žurnal*, 23 August.
- Pavlovitch, S. K. (1992) *Tito: Yugoslavia's Great Dictator, A Reassessment* (London, Hurst).
- Podnar, O. (2006) *Dinamo svetinja: sve o najvećem hrvatskom klubu* (Zagreb, vbz).
- Riedlmayer, A. (2002) *Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Bosnia—Herzegovina, 1992–1996: A Post-war Survey of Selected Municipalities* (Cambridge, MA, Riedlmayer).
- Rolland, S. (2007) 'Le football dans la Bosnie-Herzégovine d'après-guerre: exhibition symbolique et exaltation identitaire', *Migracijske i etničke teme*, 23, 3.
- Sack, A. L. & Suster, Z. (2000) 'Soccer and Croatian Nationalism: A Prelude to War', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 24, 3.
- Seldon, A. & Pappworth, J. (1983) *By Word of Mouth: 'Élite' Oral History* (London, Methuen).
- Silber, L. & Little, A. (1996) *The Death of Yugoslavia* (London, Penguin).
- Simeunović, M. (1992a) 'From Friday to Friday—War Strikes at Sports', *Politika: The International Weekly*, 11 April.
- Simeunović, M. (1992b) 'From Friday to Friday—War Threatens Most Successful Football Selector', *Politika: The International Weekly*, 18 April.
- Škoro, M. (1982) *Velež 1922–'82* (Mostar, Fudbalski Klub Velež).
- Thompson, P. (1978) *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford, Oxford University Press).
- Tito, J. B. (1942) 'The National Question and the Liberation Struggle', in Tito, J. B. (1983).
- Tito, J. B. (1983) *The National Question* (Belgrade, Socialist Thought and Practice).
- Tomić, B. (1983) *Partizanska Olimpijada* (Foča, Organizacioni odbor 'Partizanske Olimpijade Foča').
- Vrcan, S. (2002) 'The Curious Drama of the President of a Republic versus a Football Fan Tribe', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 37, 1.
- Vrcan, S. & Lalić, D. (1999) 'From Ends to Trenches, and Back: Football in the Former Yugoslavia', in Armstrong, G. & Giulianotti, R. (eds) (1999).
- Wilson, J. (2006) *Behind the Curtain: Travels in Eastern European Football* (London, Orion).
- Yarwood, J. R., Seebacher, A., Strufe, N. & Wolfram, H. (1999) *Rebuilding Mostar: Urban Reconstruction in a War Zone* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press).