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Narratives about the Bosnian War: The United States Intervention through a Discourse Analysis of CIA Documents
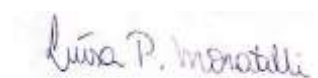
Master's Thesis

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Prague, 12th June 2024   Luísa Pussieldi Moratelli

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Abstract

The following research aims to add to the extensive scholarship on the Bosnian War by analysing it from a Decolonial perspective. The analysis is done through a Critical Discourse Analysis of the CIA collection of declassified documents *Bosnia, intelligence, and the Clinton Presidency: The Role of Intelligence and Political Leadership in Ending the Bosnian War*. It analyses the narratives used by the US authorities in its interpretation and intervention in the War. The research is guided by the questions "Through which discourse framework(s) did the CIA interpret the Bosnian War?" and "What Postcolonial and Decolonial lenses can tell us about how discourses might have affected how decision-makers acted in the Bosnian War?". This Master's Thesis is organised into four chapters. The first provides a historical contextualisation and a literature review of the wars that followed the breakup of Yugoslavia and its interpretations. The second chapter outlines the theoretical and methodological frameworks relevant to the analysis, discussing the contributions of Post-Colonial theory to studies about post-socialist spaces, debates on Balkanism, and the main contributions of the Decolonial theory in analysing the CEE and SEE regions. The third chapter analyses the CIA collection of documents through a Critical Discourse Analysis, establishing the discourse frameworks through which the CIA interpreted the Bosnian War. The fourth chapter concludes with a discussion on how the analysis is done in the third chapter dialogues with the contextual and theoretical literature from the first and second chapters.

Keywords

Bosnian War; United States; Central Intelligence Agency; CIA; Post-Colonial Theory; Decolonial Theory; Critical Discourse Analysis.

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Table of Contents

Introduction

> I think the Dayton Peace Process is something *we are all very proud to have been part of*, and it really stands as one of President Clinton's many lasting legacies. The legacy is that today, *Bosnia is a multi-ethnic and democratic state*, and I think that the team here on stage deserves really a large chunk of that credit, and most importantly President Clinton. But the unsung hero in this, I think, is also the intelligence community.

These were the words professed by Nancy Soderberg in 01st October 2013, in a press conference to release the documents declassified by the CIA in the collection *Bosnia, intelligence, and the Clinton Presidency: The Role of Intelligence and Political Leadership in Ending the Bosnian War*. Calling Dayton a successful democratisation process, a saviour of multi-ethnicity, and something to be proud of is an exaggerated idealisation. The phrase surprises anyone slightly familiar with the current Bosnia-Herzegovina political system and social organisation. Even though more than ten years separate the press release from the publication of this Master's Thesis, the overall scenario has not changed much in BiH since then.

The Bosnian political system created in Dayton has remained unchanged since 1995. As discussed in the following chapters, many scholars point to its failures and the current challenges Bosnia-Herzegovina faces. A country divided into two entities and represented by three presidents of three constituent ethnicities – a structure that is anything but "multicultural" – and an international actor appointed by other international actors that has veto power are a few characteristics that bring political instability and disputes, lack of representativity, and interference from both neighbouring and distant countries into local politics. The country has been in the process of EU accession since 2003 when it was identified as a potential candidate for EU membership in Thessaloniki; it applied in 2016, and only in 2023 the European Council "decided it will open accession negotiations once the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria is achieved" (EC, 2023). In March 2024, the European Union gave the green light to start accession negotiations with Bosnia.

More recent dilemmas have rocked Bosnian politics, reflecting the still ongoing impacts of the Bosnian War in contemporary Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the 23rd of May 2024, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the Srebrenica genocide, designating 11 July as the "International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica". According to the UN press release, "The resolution (document

A/78/L.67/Rev.1) condemned any denial of the Srebrenica genocide as a historical event and actions that glorify those convicted of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide by international courts" (United Nations, 2024). After the approval, the government of Republika Srpska, led by president Milorad Dodik, stated that they would send a document to the Federation to "peacefully disassociate from the country" (Čurić, 2024). The president also stated that 'it would only be natural and historically justified for Serbs to live in one singular country', suggesting Republika Srpska joining Serbia into a single state" (Čurić, 2024), reflecting the unsolved issues of territory, separatism, ethnicity, and nationalism.

The contemporary situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina shows how the war-time issues were not completely solved and still affect the country, even almost 30 years after the end of the war and the signature of the Dayton Agreement. Even though there has been extensive research on the wars that followed the breakup of Yugoslavia, the region is often studied through the lenses of "peace, (in-)stability, Europeanisation, memory, war and post-conflict, nationalism, and post-socialist transition (in particular), since all these themes seem to be tinged with a Western a priori and therefore with a modern/colonial pre-supposition" (Blondel, 2022, p. 53).

Shifting the interpretation of the region and proposing a more critical perspective on the war and post-war periods can help understand why the country and its population have faced so many challenges since the war. The present research aims to add to the extensive scholarship on the Bosnian War by analysing it from a Decolonial perspective through a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of the CIA collection of declassified documents cited above. Its innovation lies in a primary source analysis of a relatively new and still understudied collection of documents, interpreting it using the CDA and combining this analysis with Post-Colonial and Decolonial theories. It builds its analysis on reading raw, primary sources to understand the discourses that guided the US policy-making process to end the Bosnian War.

Motivated by the inconsistency between the US narrative present in the press release and detected above and the contemporary Bosnia-Herzegovina, the research is guided by the questions "Through which discourse framework(s) did the CIA interpret the Bosnian War?" and "What Postcolonial and Decolonial lenses can tell us about how discourses might have affected how decision-makers acted in the Bosnian War?" The hypotheses are: the US discourses and its political and economic motivations influenced the policy-making process – for example, whether the US should intervene or not, if it should use force or not, and the leadership in designing the peace agreements – throughout the war. Another hypothesis is

that the US intervention throughout the war has reproduced colonial patterns of power in BiH during and after the war, and it reiterated ethnic cleansing and ethnic divisions.

This Master's Thesis is organised into four chapters. The first provides a historical contextualisation and a literature review of the wars that followed the breakup of Yugoslavia and its interpretations. The second chapter outlines the theoretical and methodological frameworks relevant to the analysis, discussing the more consolidated analysis of the contributions of Post-Colonial theory to studies about post-socialist spaces. In addition, it describes the main interpretations of the Decolonial theory. It explores the possibility of applying this theory in analysing the CEE and SEE regions – a relatively new and underexplored possibility. The second chapter also outlines the Critical Discourse Analysis framework and some challenges in reading declassified intelligence documents for academic research. The third chapter analyses the CIA collection of documents through a Critical Discourse Analysis, establishing the discourse frameworks through which the CIA interpreted the Bosnian War. The fourth chapter concludes with a discussion on how the analysis is done in the third chapter dialogues with the contextual and theoretical literature from the first and second chapters.

1. The Breakup of Yugoslavia, the Bosnian War, and its interpretations

This chapter first aims to provide the historical context of the Bosnian War and discuss the main events of the decade before the war, following essential literature on the topic. Secondly, a literature review will be conducted on the contending explanations for the reasons behind the breakup of Yugoslavia, and the wars that followed. Thirdly, a literature review will discuss previous works on discourse analysis about the Western views of the Bosnian War.

1.1 Historical Context of the Breakup of Yugoslavia and the Bosnian War

Before delving into the interpretations of the Bosnian War, it is necessary to briefly explain some essential characteristics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)[1] and its historical context of crisis and dissolution. The Federation officially ceased to exist on the 25th of June 1991, when the republics of Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence, which was internationally recognised on the 15th of January 1992. It was the culmination of a series of events during the 1980s after the death of its political leader, Josip Broz Tito. However, even before Tito's death, Yugoslavia went through significant changes that impacted the internal functioning of the Federation.

Tito's Yugoslavia had two pillars: a one-party state, where the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and Tito himself played a centralising role, and the principle of brotherhood and unity, which based the Yugoslav identity on a multinational working class and emphasised equality among its nations. However, the Yugoslav concept of "nations" differs from the West. The SFRY's understanding and classification of nationality was based on a three-tier system: a) the nations of Yugoslavia (or *Jugoslovenski narodi*); b) the nationalities of Yugoslavia (*Jugoslovenski narodnosti*); and c) the other nationalities and ethnic groups. The first category comprised five groups until 1974 - the Croats, Serbs, Slovenes, Montenegrins, and Macedonians – and after the 1974 Constitution, the Bosniaks were included as a sixth constituent nation. The second group comprised the Hungarian and Kosovar Albanians, who had their "nation" outside of Yugoslavia, and the third group comprised other minority ethnic groups, like Jews, Greeks, Roma, Vlaks, etc (Bringa, 2000).

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[1] From now on, whenever the term Yugoslavia is used, it refers specifically to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

This interpretation clearly differs from the Western interpretation of nationality and centres on the relationship between the state and nationality. Since the Western perspective of nationality is centred on the idea of one state, one nation, being a citizen of a particular state means being a national of the same state. In Yugoslavia, however, belonging to a nationality was different and in addition to being a Yugoslav citizen. This differentiation between the Western and the Yugoslav interpretation of nationality and ethnicity will be relevant in criticising the design of the Dayton Accords and how the United States and the European Community acted towards the war (Bringa, 2000).

In addition to this change in the definition of the constituent nations, the 1974 Constitution also brought another significant change: it replaced the centralising figure of the Party's President with a collective federal presidency, in which every Republic and Province had its representative. According to Hayden (2000), the changes brought about by the 1974 Constitution turned the country into a highly loose federation. In this new configuration, the republics and provinces had a virtual veto power over federal actions and legislation, and the federal government had powers similar to those of another republic. The veto power produced a "combative federalism," where all important matters to the federation became political contests between the republics (Hayden, 2000, p. 30).

However, these changes could not effectively address the economic and ideological challenges of the 1980s. These challenges started in the previous decade, with the effects of Yugoslavia's 1973 international oil crisis. The country's most significant issue was foreign debt related to international loans to invest in infrastructure and social service projects. In addition, with the end of guestworker programmes in Western European countries, the flow of foreign currency to the country was drastically reduced, and there was an opportunity for unemployed Yugoslavs to find a job outside the country (Baker, 2015).

Critical scholars like Michael Parenti (2000) argue that Western interests profoundly influenced the economic crisis in Yugoslavia during the 1980s. Calling the late 1960s and early 1970s loans "a disastrous error," Parenti understands the creditors' – like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – austerity measures as a strategy for dismantling Yugoslavia's economic system. The "restructuring" demanded by the creditors consisted "of a draconian austerity program of neoliberal "reforms": wage freezes, the abolition of state-subsidised prices, increased unemployment, the elimination of most worker-managed enterprises, and massive cuts in social spending" (Parenti, 2000, p. 20).

This scenario caused Yugoslavia to call de facto bankruptcy in 1979. At least two attempts were made during the 1980s to solve the economic crisis. Still, neither tackled the

issue appropriately since the problem was also related to the fundamentals of the self-management system (Baker, 2015). Therefore, the federation was put under significant economic stress – which later turned political. In the late 1980s, the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the federal structure led to several debates over constitutional changes, and projects for amending the constitution were proposed in May 1988. According to Hayden (2000, p. 32), "One of the announced goals was to improve the efficacy of the federation by clarifying and widening its jurisdiction over some areas and by giving the federal government greater authority to enforce federal acts."

Nevertheless, the economic crisis did not affect all Republics and Provinces equally. Instead, it increased the already existing inequality. While the Republics of Slovenia and Croatia were the less affected by the crisis, Kosovo, for example, saw its already low per capita income fall to below 29,684 dinars. Against this economic strain, Kosovars protested massively in 1981 that "combined two long-running unsolved problems: Yugoslavia's regional disparities and Kosovo's status as a region" (Baker, 2015, p. 27).

The regional disparities highlighted by the economic crisis brought about political disputes between the Republics, and "the various peoples of Yugoslavia began to remember (or were encouraged to recall) a series of grievances that they interpreted in national terms" (Wachtel & Bennett, 2009, p. 20). The debate over economic modernization, framed within the context of national identities, became popularly depicted as a struggle against the detrimental influence of 'Belgrade' and the 'backward South' (including Bosnia-Hercegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro) on the economic progress of the 'advanced' North (Croatia and Slovenia). Consequently, economic modernization was broadly associated with nationalist forces, which the Tito regime had meticulously sought to suppress since 1945 (Wachtel & Bennett, 2009).

During the 1980s, artistic and academic sectors of the society started to reinterpret historical knowledge built during Tito's Yugoslavia, mainly regarding the events around World War II in the country. To legitimise its rule and to create the narrative around "Brotherhood and Unity", the League of Communists worked on the simplification and selectivity of historical memory, and "events which did not fit that framework lived on as semi-private local knowledge and rumour. 'Victims of Fascism' were widely commemorated, but specifically ethnopolitical dimensions of violence in 1941– 45 were not" (Baker, 2015, p. 31). The "crisis of historical interpretation" is expressed by the publication of the SANU memorandum, an exemplary work of Serbian nationalist programme, but also the Agrokomerc scandals in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Contributions for a Slovenian

National Programme document. All cases point to the rise of ethnonational-based politics in the Republics.

On the Serbian side, Miloševic aimed for centralisation to the point that amendments in the constitution revoked Vojvodina and Kosovo's autonomy passed in 1989. On the Slovenian side, Kučan, the main driving force for federalisation, made several amendments to the Yugoslav constitution to give Republics more independence and end the League of Communists' political monopoly. These positions confronted each other in the Party Congress of 1990. According to Baker (2015)

> The January 1990 congress should have reformed the SKJ so that it too, could function in a multi-party system. However, every Slovenian proposal was rejected. The Slovenian delegation left, believing Miloševic had always intended to reject the plans. The Croatian delegates followed them, led by the Croatian Party's new leader, Ivica Racan. The Congress did not just mark the federal Party's breakdown but openly aligned Croatia's leadership with the Slovenian position (Baker, 2015, p. 38).

After the breakdown of the Communist Party, the first multi-party elections in Yugoslavia happened in each Republic, first in Slovenia on the 8th of April 1990, then Croatia on the 22nd of April, Macedonia on the 11th of November, BiH on the 18th of November and Serbia and Montenegro on December. Nationalist parties were elected in every Republic. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the nationalist parties SDA, SDS, and HDZ, each representing Bosniak, Serb, and Croat nationalities, formed a coalition. Despite Ante Markovic's, the Federation's Prime Minister, reformist efforts to control inflation and the economic crisis and reform Yugoslavia's political structure without breaking it apart, his Party and the project failed. The final attempt at reforming Yugoslavia was made in October 1990, when Croatia and Slovenia jointly proposed turning the country into "a confederation of sovereign nation-states with their own defence and foreign policies, even the right to individually apply for European Community membership" (Baker, 2015, p. 44). Soon after, Slovenia called a referendum for independence on the 23rd of December and Croatia on the 19th of May 1991.

The independence triggered a ten-day war in Slovenia and the "Homeland War" in Croatia, in which the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) – which throughout its history has developed the role of protector of Yugoslav communism against counter-revolution and subversion – aligned with Miloševic. JNA's alignment, however, was relativised by some authors like James Gow (2014), who claims that this alignment happened simultaneously as a Serbianisation of the army, as defections of non-Serbs increased since the beginning of the

1990s. The conflict initially centred around Serb-majority regions such as Krajina, Eastern Slavonia, and parts of Dalmatia. The violence happened especially in Krajina and the city of Knin, where several incidents occurred during the election period and where the Serb Democratic Party of Croatia was regularly attempting to take control (Baker, 2015).

While the conflict intensified in Croatia, the cooperation between the coalition elected in the first multi-party elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina broke down, and each party started to arrange its access to arms. After leaving the Bosnian Parliament on the 15th of October 1991, SDS formed an assembly, held a referendum on seceding, and proclaimed a sovereign 'Republika Srpska' on the 9th of January 1992. On the other hand, SDA called a reference independence for the 29th of February, in which sixty-three per cent of all registered voters and 99.7% of participants voted for the independence. In areas controlled by the SDS, the party assured that as many Serbs as possible boycotted the referendum. On the 5th of April, around one hundred thousand Sarajevans gathered in front of the Bosnian Parliament, protesting against the war and demanding a resolution among the leaders. During the protest, snipers shot in the direction of the Parliament, killing two and hurting four people, which marked the start of the siege of Sarajevo. The next day, the Republic declared its independence, recognised internationally on the 7th of April 1992.

Since the 1990s, the conflict has been explained through ethnic lenses and often approached by describing identity differences between the parties. However, the ethno-national framing was used by politics on all three sides of the conflict, by SDS, SDA, and HDZ, to justify its economic goals and generate panic among the citizens. According to Baker,

> the "ethnic and religious" frame masked questions about the distribution of economic resources. Competition between and within nationalist political elites to appropriate the collapsed Yugoslav state's assets and infrastructure was a major factor in the wars, and wartime logistics and recruitment were interdependent with organised crime (Baker, 2015, p. 59).

Not only SDS and Miloševic had territorial interests in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but also HDZ and Franjo Tuđman. The party's military branch in BiH, called HVO, "though initially allied with the Bosnian government, also aspired to create its own territorial entity ('Herceg-Bosna') to unify with Croatia" (Baker, 2015, p. 63). Similar to SDS, HDZ BiH also used paramilitaries to kill, imprison and remove non-Croats from the region. This expansionist enterprise also used ethno-national frames to justify economic and political interests (Baker, 2015, p. 63).

The ethnonational framing was used as a political and military strategy, which has been called 'ethnic cleansing' (translated from the original *etnicko cišcenje* and introduced to English during the war). This was done through massive population exchange and forced migration, urban sieges, sexual violence, and mass murder. One extensive analysis of the siege of Sarajevo by Mirjana Ristic (2018) shows how, through strategies of sniping and shelling, the SDS aimed at paralysing the city, denying access to collective spaces and purifying ethnic mixing in urban spaces – a process of "urbicide". Baker (2015) points out the demonstrative dimension of ethnopolitical violence in the Bosnian War, the targeting of evidence of a multi-ethnic, multi-confessional past, and the unmaking of communities.

Srebrenica is the ultimate expression and culmination of this strategy described above. The city, together with Sarajevo, Tuzla, Goražde, Bihać and Žepa, was recognised by the UN Security Council in May 1993 as a safe area that would provide refuge and protection to civilian populations amidst the intense fighting and ethnic cleansing. Ingrao (2009, p. 202) argues that this move was a response from the international community to earlier human rights violations in Croatia in 1991 and Bosnia in 1992 and an attempt to "at least appear to do something." Some of the issues regarding the establishment of these safe areas were related to the territorial limits of each of them, the failure to disarm both Bosnian Serbs and Bosniak forces, the parties' lack of trust in the UN and the insufficient UN troops (only 7,500 out of the 35,000 initially recommended) and equipment. Ultimately, the safe areas were used by the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina (ARBiH) as resting, training, and equipping locations, as well as for firing at Serb positions.

This strategy to "do the least and hope for the best" (Ingrao, 2009, p. 203) resulted in the fragilisation of the civilian population. On the 28th of June 1995, the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS) forces planned to take power over the city and took over UNPROFOR observation posts on the 6th of July. The UN Dutch battalion requested air strikes, which were refused by the UNPROFOR commander and UN special envoy, and evacuated the city with only a few UN employees. Between 11th and 13th July, SDS forces captured 8,000 remaining men and boys to nearby sites, where they were shot dead and buried in mass graves. According to Ingrao (2009, p. 201), "the prevailing discourse represents the safe areas' civilian populations as victims of the international community's lack of political will as they were subjected to a succession of barbaric acts that culminated in the July 1995 Srebrenica massacres".

The events in Srebrenica, ruled by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) as genocide, were the turning point in the war, which led to quick

negotiations and Western military intervention to end the conflict. Many scholars have discussed the initial Western non-intervention policy and its shift after Srebrenica. Ingrao (2009) focuses on how the international community designed the Safe Areas to show involvement in the conflict but in a limited way. Additionally, he shows how the US did not commit any of its military forces to the UNPROFOR mission despite pressing for larger troops in the safe areas. Some authors, like James Gow (1997), argue that the international community's inconsistent and often contradictory policies demonstrated a profound lack of political will. The hesitancy to engage militarily and the failure to protect designated safe areas exemplified this reluctance, highlighting political, moral, and ethical failures.

Parenti (2000), a strong critic of the West and generally neglected by the hegemonic discourse on the Bosnian War, focuses on the economic aspects of Western intervention in the war, explaining how the breakup of Yugoslavia was actually in the economic and geopolitical interests of the West. Unlike Gow, Parenti argues that the West orchestrated this apparent "lack of will" so that the conflict deteriorated before more definitive action. In addition to these aspects, the author also discusses how the post-Srebrenica Operation Deliberate Force was not about protecting human rights or supporting the Bosnian government but to assert NATO influence in the region and the US leadership in the post-Cold War global order. In his perspective, similar atrocities like Srebrenica were happening at the same time in the world. Still, they did not get as much attention due to US and Western-specific interests in promoting its political and economic agenda. Similarly, Gibbs (2009) argues that the shift of policy aimed at asserting US leadership in the global order reflected a broader trend in American foreign policy, favouring demonstrating military strength over diplomatic efforts. The events in Bosnia set a precedent for future US international intervention.

After Srebrenica and the launching of military operations in Bosnia, the Dayton Accord was planned, and retained the previous plans' (Carrington–Cutileiro and Vance–Owen Peace Plan) ethnic principles. It divided the territory into two units, Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the former divided into ten self-governing 'cantons.' It established a power-sharing arrangement that would ensure political representation of all three sides, which included a tripartite presidency, a bicameral parliament, a council of ministers, and ethnic quotas to prevent the dominance of any ethnicity over the others. Moreover, it created the Office of the High Representative (OHR) to oversee the civic implementation of the Dayton Agreement and the IFOR to oversee the military implementation.

According to Christopher Bennett (2016), the Dayton Agreement brought several challenges both to the international community and to Bosnia-Herzegovina. It brought about stabilisation in the country but did not result in effective reconciliation among the warring parties. The new political system generated institutional weaknesses in post-conflict BiH thanks to the tripartite rules and the international intervention in the figure of the OHR. Finally, it also created minority and human rights issues related to the return of displaced persons, segregation, and non-recognition of minorities outside of the three ethnicities.

1.2   Contending explanations of the breakup of Yugoslavia

According to Dragović-Soso (2007), there are five different explanations for the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the wars that followed. The first comprises works that focus on *longue durée* explanations and emphasise "ancient hatreds," "clash of civilisations," and the legacy of imperial rule in the region. Alongside these concepts of "ancient hatreds" and "clash of civilisations," the idea – or even myth – of an "ethnic war/conflict" is also one of the aspects of this interpretation. Because most of these works were published during the wars in the 1990s and by American or European authors – such as George Kennan and Samuel Huntington – they can also be read as primary sources since their description and analysis of the events is impregnated with specific discourse types. This research will focus more on this "primary source" aspect of these works, which will be further discussed in the third section of this chapter. The main issue with this interpretation is that it is embedded in essentialist and determinist perspectives of identity, ethnicity, and nationality.

The second explanation centres on the historical inheritance of the nationalist ideologies in the South Slavic region during the 19th Century and the initial attempt at state-building with the formation of Yugoslavia from 1918 to 1941. Authors like Ivo Banac discuss the impact of competing national – Croat, Slovene, and Serb - ideologies and the viability of Yugoslavia as a state in the country's dissolution. Others, like Ljubodrag Dimić, focus not on the incompatibility of particular national ideologies but "on the incompatibility of all 'particularist' nationalist visions (Serb, Croat, Slovene) with an overarching, supranational 'Yugoslavism' acting as the cultural and ideological foundation of the common state" (Dragović-Soso, 2007, p. 7). These interpretations, however, do not consider the fact that not only these particularist visions of national ideology existed alongside each other and alongside Yugoslavism but also that the dynamic interaction between them shaped their particular characteristics.

The third school of explanation for the breakup of Yugoslavia centres on the Socialist system, the federal structure, the constitutional development, its ideological delegitimation and economic failure. According to this interpretation, the 1974 Constitution brought changes that affected the functioning of the Yugoslav institutions and "weakened the [Yugoslav] federation by paralysing the decision-making process and removing real federal competences, [and] promoted the federal units into sovereign states and the only real centres of power, making decision making in the federation subject to consensus" (Dimitrijević, 1996, as cited in Dragović-Soso, 2007, p. 10). In addition, this school notes that Yugoslavia faced the same fundamental flaws inherent in all socialist economies, including poor efficiency, a deficit in technological innovation, and limited flexibility.

The fourth explanation focuses on the post-Tito crisis in Yugoslavia and the role played by political dispute and intellectual agency. According to this trend, even with the fall of Communism, Yugoslavia could have gone through economic and social reform if it was not for the articulation of either the national political leaderships, intellectuals, or the national elites of each Republic (Dragović-Soso, 2007, p. 14). It was, among other things, thanks to the manipulation of historical memories and the construction of alarmist narratives, that these groups managed to seize control over the institutions and to pursue personal interests disguised as "national" interests.

Finally, the fifth explanation focuses on the impact of external factors in the dissolution of the country and the wars that followed. Three different trends can be identified. One discusses Yugoslavia's external debt and the position of international financial institutions regarding this debt, which made the country vulnerable towards macroeconomic reforms. A second trend argues that the premature recognition of the independence of Slovenia and Croatia by Western governments – especially Germany – purposely dismembered the country. In contrast, a third trend argues that other Western countries pushed for the continuation of Yugoslavia's unity, which encouraged the armed conflict.

1.3 Discourse Analysis of Western Views of the Balkans and the Bosnian War

Lene Hansen (2006) made one of the most extensive readings of the Western discourse about the Balkans and the Bosnian War in the book *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War.* Her analysis is divided into two different moments of the Western perspective on the Balkans: the historical discourses about the Balkans (before the

1990s War) and the discourses during the War. Hansen divides the first moment into Romantic, Civilisational, and Balkanisation Discourse and the second into "the war as Balkan" and "the war as Genocide."

The Romantic discourse interprets and produces a Balkan identity based on the rural world, the tribal, natural, unpolluted people, emphasising heroism, pride, and braveness (Hansen, 2006, p. 88). It creates an exoticisation and idealisation of the region and its people, which should not change and emulate the West but maintain its attractive characteristics. However, according to Hansen, "while this discourse constructed 'the Balkans' in positive and attractive terms, it was nevertheless a subject constructed through the discourse of the West. 'The Balkans' did not, in other words, have the right to define 'its' identity or to embark on a route of Westernising transformation" (Hansen, 2006, pp. 88-89).

The Civilisational discourse, on the other hand, sees these same characteristics of rurality and "backwardness" through negative instead of positive lenses. It considers the Balkans through the larger tradition of the European political thought of the Enlightenment, centred on the ideas of civilisation. The region and its people were interpreted as underdeveloped but capable of transforming into Western civilisation – which will only be possible with the West's assistance and interference in its "civilising mission" (Hansen, 2006, pp. 89-92). Therefore, the West is seen as superior, and the Balkans as inferior.

Despite the differences between the Romantic and the Civilisational discourses,

> Both construct the time of the Ottoman Empire as a brave struggle for independence, and both discourses articulate a Western responsibility for assisting 'the Balkans,' whether on its road to civilisational development or in a liberation of the Romantic Slavic peoples. These complex constructions of difference, attraction, and responsibility were, however, absorbed into a discourse of 'Balkanization' after World War I, a discourse which radicalised the difference between 'the Balkans' and 'the West,' constituted it as an alien and dangerous Other, and absolved 'the West' of any moral or geopolitical responsibility for its development. It is this concept of 'the Balkans,' rather than its two predecessors, which achieved twentieth-century hegemonic status and was mobilised by the Balkan discourse of the 1990s (Hansen, 2006, p. 92).

The Balkanisation discourse, therefore, stressed a clear distinction between the West and the Balkans. As they didn't share any similarities, the Balkans were constructed as incapable of change, improvement or rectification, and the West was absolved of any responsibility of helping or protecting the region (Hansen, 2006, p. 93). The concept of

Balkanisation and the framework developed around it will be further discussed in the next chapter.

According to Hansen (2006), these historical discourses contributed differently to shaping the discourse during the War in the 1990s, and the author divides it into a discourse of "the war as Balkan" and "the war as Genocide". The first one interprets the war through a similar lens as the Balkanisation discourse described above, i.e., that it was a "'Balkan war' driven by violence, barbarism, and ancient intra-Balkan hatred stretching back hundreds of years" (Hansen, 2006, p. 94). It constructs the Balkans as radically different from the West and incapable of changing – the same way as the Balkanisation discourse. Therefore, those involved in the war were constructed as "parties" or "factions" with the same level of responsibility for the conflict. Moreover, the question of whether the West should intervene or not was situated in a security discourse of national interests and military and strategic feasibility, and the critical debate was whether there was a threat of the conflict spilling over into neighbouring countries.

To analyse the Balkan discourse, Hansen focuses on four main works published before and during the Bosnian War to argue how they influenced the general understanding and the conceptualisation of the war. These works are *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, by Rebecca West, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History*, by Robert D. Kaplan, *Clash of Civilisations*, by Samuel P. Huntington, and George F. Kennan's Introduction to the 1993 edition of the *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*. These books generated the discourse around the concepts of "civilisation" and "ancient hatreds" and constitute the *longue dureé* explanation described above.

While the first two books mentioned present a Romantic discourse, *Balkan Ghosts* mixed this with a Balkanisation discourse. On the other hand, Huntington portrayed a civilisational discourse around the 'Islamic Other' rather than the 'Balkan Other' and strongly advised against Western intervention. Kennan also articulated its discourse around civilisational ideas but advised in favour of Western intervention to prevent possible conflict spillover in neighbouring countries.

The developments on the ground and media coverage of the war challenged the stability of the Balkan discourse and opened space for the emergence of the Genocide discourse. To analyse this discourse, Hansen focuses on a series of political commentaries, editorials, and publications like *A Witness to Genocide: The First Inside Account of the Horrors of 'Ethnic Cleansing' in Bosnia*, by Roy Gutman, *Rape Warfare,* by Beverly Allen,

National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia, by David Campbell, *To End a War*, by Richard Holbrooke, and *Balkan Odyssey*, by David Owen. Ethics and the Western responsibility of responding to the Serbian conduct toward the Bosniaks was the most evident challenge to the Balkans discourse, and from "factions" fighting equally in the same war, the frame changed to "victims" and "perpetrators".

Hansen divides the genocide discourse into three variations: a) American "lift and strike" approach, b) Balkanising Serbia, and c) Gendering Genocide. In the first variation, "It was argued that 'Bosnia' embodied multiculturalism and tolerance, that it was a 'model of what a multi-ethnic society in the Balkans could be, […] 'Bosnia' hence was relocated from its place in an Orientialised 'Balkan' in 'the far corner of Europe' to Europe's geographical and cultural 'heart'" (Hansen, 2006, pp. 99-100). Therefore, the United States was seen as having a more prominent role in preventing genocide because of its history of multiculturalism and the interpretation that heterogeneity and diversity were the foundations of the country. This interpretation was used as an argument for the strategy of "lifting" the arms embargo on all factions, enabling the Bosniaks to access advanced weaponry, and "striking" the Bosnian Serbs in case they insisted on attacking.

Europe, on the other hand, because of its tradition of nationalism and more homogenised societies, was expected to have a minor impact in preventing genocide. Still, because Europe was unwilling to adopt the policy of 'lift and strike', it became doubly responsible, first for its inability to prevent atrocities in Bosnia and second for its blockage of the American enactment of its responsibility.

The Genocide discourse not only shifted the narrative about Bosnia as "outside" the Balkans logic, but it also differentiated and balkanised the Serbs – the second variation of the discourse. Hansen argues that through this variation, "The Serbian subject was reconstituted through a separation of genocidal leaders and manipulated population, with the latter as the victims of the propaganda of the former" (Hansen, 2006, p. 100). Hence, the discourse located agency outside of the Serbian subject, who could not make independent decisions, and legitimised Western intervention since "transgressions of sovereignty were undertaken not (only) out of consideration for their own national interests, but in the defence of 'the people' of the country subjected to intervention" (Hansen, 2006, p. 166). Ultimately, by eliminating the agency of the Serbian subject, the discourse also erases the initial differences between leaders and people, equating "Serbia" to "the Balkans" constructed in the Balkan discourse.

Finally, the third variation of the discourse turned the political-cultural national-ethnic terrain shared by preceding narratives into a gendered interpretation of the identities. "The separation between 'patriarchic men' and 'female victims' implied that 'Balkan women' were constituted not only as non-violent and non-combatants but also as essentially different from men, and this construction of women as the peaceful nurturing core of the nation reverberated with a Romantic conservative discourse" (Hansen, 2006, p. 170).

Hansen turns her analysis to two memoirs from the war, by David Owen, the EC/EU representative and joint author of the Vance-Owen Peace Plan, and Richard Holbrooke, the US representative who brokered the Dayton Accords. Both present their memories to legitimise their actions, interacting in ambiguous terms with the different discourses described so far. While the first resonates more with the humanitarian discourse, the second resonates with the Lift and Strike Genocide discourse. Still, both articulate these two, on some level, with the Balkan discourse (Hansen, 2006, p. 181-185).

Dialoguing this interpretation with David Campbell's book *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia*, he analyses the different attempts of peace plans throughout the war. His analysis is precious for this work since it shows how the peace accords portrayed a particular interpretation of nations and ethnicities – a Western concept of national and ethnic identity based on the idea of one state, one nation and one nation, one state (Bringa, 2000). Campbell uses the concept of "Ontopology" to refer to the Western interpretation of the Bosnian war. According to him,

> Ontopology is a neologism that signifies the connection of the "ontological value of present-being to its *situation,* to the stable and presentable determination of a locality, the *topos* of territory, native soil, city, body in general". A key assumption — if not *the* most important assumption — that informs the dominant understandings of the Bosnian war discussed above is that the political possibilities have been limited by the alignment between territory and identity, state and nation, all under the sign of "ethnicity," supported by a particular account of history (Campbell, 1998, p. 80).

Unlike the first variation of the genocide discourse, which positively highlights multiculturalism in Bosnia, Campbell argues that Western *ontopology,* in fact, fears and rejects any form of multiculturalism. This was consolidated by the Dayton agreement, which institutionalised a form of 'metaracism' in which, in place of biological distinctions, "culture" is regarded as a naturalised property such that differences are inherently conflictual or threatening, and apartheid is legitimised as an 'antiracist' solution" (Campbell, 1998, p. 161-162).

Hansen's discourse analysis described above will be used to analyse the CIA documents in the third chapter of this work. Her classification of the discourses as "the War as Balkans" *versus* "the War as Genocide" will help identify different trends in the CIA's interpretation of the war and whether and how they fit in her typology. However, this work will try to expand Hansen's analysis by relating these discourses (Romanticisation, Civilisational, Balkanisation, American "lift and strike", Balkanising Serbia, and Gendering Genocide discourses) to a broader discourse about Coloniality – according to the debate on Decolonial Theory and the intertwining between Post-Colonial and Post-Socialist analysis, proposed in the next chapter.

# 2.	Theoretical-methodological approach

The following chapter discusses the theoretical and methodological framework used to analyse the data from the documents. It will be split into two subchapters, divided into five parts. The theoretical subchapter comprises 1) a discussion of the overlap of Post-Colonialism and Post-Socialism, 2) the debate on Balkanism, and 3) an overview of theories on Decolonial thinking. The methodological subchapter shall consist of 4) a description of theories on Discourse Analysis and 5) discussions on the analysis of declassified intelligence documents.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1.1	Post-Colonialism, Post-Socialism and "Thinking Between the Posts"

This section will explore writings from four seminal authors discussing the overlap of the Post-Colonial and Post-Socialist experiences: Larry Wolff, David Moore, Catherine Verdery, and Sharad Chari. It will firstly explain the origins of this overlap, followed by an explanation of why there is a certain reluctance to this comparative analysis, and a defence of it by showing the benefits of "thinking between the posts."

Wolff (1994) paved the way for the discussion by arguing that the stereotypes and characterisation of Eastern Europe that existed during the Cold War were invented long before, at least two centuries before the "fall of the Iron Curtain". During the European Enlightenment in the eighteenth Century, Western Europe created Eastern Europe simultaneously with the notions of civilisation. Before the Enlightenment, however, the internal European opposition was between the South and the North, deeply related to the Roman Empire, the Renaissance, and the rule of the Catholic Church.

From the Enlightenment onwards, this opposition switched to West and East: Paris, London, and Amsterdam replaced Rome, Venice and Florence; Poland and Russia replaced the lands of barbarism and backwardness of the Northern kingdoms. Since this was related to the idea of civilisation, this process happened together with the development of Orientalism.

> The idea of Eastern Europe was entangled with evolving Orientalism, for while Philosophic Geography casually excluded Eastern Europe from Europe, implicitly shifting it into Asia, scientific cartography seemed to contradict such fanciful construction. There was room for ambiguity. The geographical border between Europe and Asia was not unanimously fixed in the Eighteenth Century, located sometimes

at the Don, sometimes farther east at the Volga, and sometimes, as today, at the Urals (Wolff, 1994, p. 7).

As a result, the region was "invented" based on a demi-Orientalisation project, constructed under a paradox of inclusion and exclusion, of a mediate between "real" Europe and the Orient. Maria Todorova and Milica Bakic-Hayden will further develop this argument in their analysis of the Balkans, which is understood even more through this "bridge" paradox. In Wolff's words (1994, p. 13), "Eastern Europe was located not at the antipode of civilisation, not down in the depths of barbarism, but rather on the developmental scale that measured the distance between civilisation and barbarism."

Moreover, Wolff describes two other layers in this paradox. Firstly – and Wolff refers to Immanuel Wallerstein's work on the Origins of the European World-Economy – despite its process of demi-Orientalisation, it played a role of periphery in the world economy, together with regions that suffered a process of "total" Orientalisation. Secondly, the level of integration in this world economy also varied within the areas of Eastern Europe: "Not all of modern Eastern Europe participated even in the periphery of the European world economy in the sixteenth Century: 'Russia outside, but Poland inside; Hungary inside, but the Ottoman Empire outside'" (Wolff, 1994, p. 8). The second aspect will also be developed further by Bakic-Hayden in what she defines as "Nesting Orientalisms."

David Moore (2007) proceeds to describe the reasons for a certain reluctance and silence in looking at these similarities between the "Post-" in "Post-Socialism" and "Post-Colonialism," silence that comes both from scholars of the Post-Colonial and Post-Soviet spaces. According to him, there are two reasons why post-colonial scholars tend to ignore these similarities. Firstly, because they focus on the Western model of colonialism, divided into three types, being Orientalism its common basis: a) the classic model based on "long-distance but nonetheless strong political, economic, military, and cultural control is exercised over people taken as inferior" (Moore, 2007, p. 5); b) "the settlement model, in which the colonisers turn the indigenous populations into Fourth World' subjects" (Moore, 2007, p. 5); and the c) dynastic model, like the Hapsburg empire. Other empires, like the Russian, do not fit in this model – it has territorial proximity between metropolis and colony; Russia is seen as neither East nor West; it has, at the same time, a dynastic reach and a settler control; and a character of revenge and reverse-cultural colonisation – the colonies were seen as prizes since Russia was believed to be culturally inferior.

The second reason for post-colonial silence on the similarities with the post-soviet space is the legacies of the Three-Worlds theory, which led to an understanding that "the

First World largely caused the Third World's ills and an allied belief that the Second's socialism was the best alternative" (Moore, 2007, p. 4). In addition, many Post-Colonial scholars refuse to compare the Soviet Union to the British and French empires – therefore, villains – because the Post-Colonial Theory emerged from a Marxist critic (Moore, 2007, p. 5).

On the other hand, the post-Soviet scholars' silence is related to claims of Europeaness and radical (and racial) differences from other colonised peoples. The idea that Russia and Eastern Europe sit in the dividing line between West and East but are still a part of the West is used to differentiate these people from the "properly colonised" peoples. In addition, the post-colonial condition is responsible for this silence: "As many colonisation theorists have argued, one result of extended subjugation is compensatory behaviour by the subject peoples (Moore, 2007, p. 5). This compensatory behaviour can be expressed in two forms: firstly, by praising a distant past in which these people controlled a more significant territory than now, and secondly, by craving the dominating cultural form and creating new hierarchies within the region.

This reluctance, however, should give place to theories that understand both experiences as being part of the same process, i.e., of societies that live in the shadows of empires. According to Verdery and Chari (2009), "thinking between the posts" is a relevant tool in three aspects: to rethink contemporary imperialisms, to refuse Cold War processes and representation of reality, a critique of State racism and the creation of State enemies.

Firstly, regarding rethinking the concept of Imperialism, the authors argue that it is necessary to expand it and to include other experiences, such as the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, but also to analyse imperial relationships of the present, such as the United States imperialism. They propose to expand the concept, the idea of Imperialism as "Accumulation by dispossession", based on writings by David Harvey (2003), to understand "the links between accumulation and market exclusion/inclusion, which can be used to compare spatial dynamics of government, accumulation, and commodification across empires" (Chari & Verdery, 2009, p. 14). Another aspect of expanding the interpretation of Imperialism is how all empires foster or suppress ethnic and national sentiments. This criticism is highly relevant to this work since the manipulation of ethnic identities during the war, and the reification[2] of these identities is central to understanding the Bosnian War.

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[2] Here I am using the concept of "reification" and the idea of "reification of ethnic/racial identities" according to post-colonial authors like Frantz Fanon (2021) and Edward Said (1978). These authors argue that colonialism was responsible for reifying and essentialising identities pre-existing to colonial rule and using

Therefore, "the dialectics of suppression and reification across postsocialist and postcolonial nationalisms might yield important comparative insights" (Chari & Verdery, 2009, p. 17).

Secondly, to refuse Cold War representations of reality means to reject the Three-Worlds Ideology "that associates postcoloniality with a bounded space called the Third World and post-socialism with the Second World" (Chari & Verdery, 2009, p. 12). This association is, in line with David Moore's, the reason for the analytical separation of socialist and colonial empires. Moreover, since Cold War representations failed to criticise the development concept – interpreted by postcolonial scholarship as "another form of Eurocentric domination" – thinking between the posts also contributes to a critique of development theories (Chari &Verdery, 2009, p. 20). Thirdly, thinking between the posts allows us to analyse another common feature of Socialist and Colonial regimes: the creation of internal and external enemies and the unequal distribution of resources among subject populations based on racial distinctions. This process is related to the differentiation and "othering" of people, ultimately responsible for the definition of life and death of subject populations.

Verdery and Chari proposed with that the disposure of these two posts and the use of a comprehensive one, "post-Cold War":

> A central task of ethnographies of imperialism and neo-colonialism today lies in apprehending the traces of the past as they emerge, not as hostage to the overarching power of "capitalism," "colonialism," or "socialism" qua fixed entities, but as signs of the tenuous re-workings of twentieth-century capitalist empires and their twenty-first-century successors (Chari & Verdery, 2009, p. 30).

2.1.2 Narratives about the Balkans: Orientalism, Nesting Orientalism, and Balkanism

The theories described above, however, fail to differentiate between the Post-Soviet and the Post-Yugoslav contexts, ignoring the nuances specific to the Balkan experience. While focusing not only on the "Post-Soviet" aspect of Eastern Europe but also on the characteristics of the Russian Empire, these theories generalise the "Post-Soviet" experience

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them in favour of colonial domination. Exporting this idea to the context of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Balkans, ethno-national identities were constructed and fixed during the time of imperial (mainly Ottoman), rule in the Balkans, but were kept after the end of the empires. During SFRY, these identities were used to classify the population, therefore reproducing the imperial categorization, but were suppressed in favour of the ideology of "Brotherhood and Unity". The nationalist elites, before and during the war, also failed to overcome this categorization, and the Dayton peace agreement, too. All these processes imposed ethnic hierarchies, essentialising diverse cultures and peoples into monolithic stereotypes. Fanon especially emphasises the need for decolonisation as a process of dismantling the reified structures of race and ethnicity.

as the only "Post-Socialist" experience. Two authors, Milica Bakic-Hayden and Maria Todorova, contributed to expanding this debate.

Like the authors on Post-Socialism described, Bakic-Hayden (1995, p. 917) explores how the east/west dichotomy is "much more of a project than a place". The author describes two processes that are valuable for this thesis' analysis: the axes of European Symbolic Geography and the process of Nesting Orientalisms. The first concept describes the basis of the creation of Europe's Other: the notion of a "civilised world" created during the Enlightenment, of Western progress and civility versus backwardness and violence of the Other. This process of Othering, however, proceeded to happen in the 20th Century, with the differentiation from an ideological other, communism, and after the end of the Cold War, the differentiation between developed and underdeveloped. (Bakic, 1992, pp. 3-4). According to the author,

> All of these axes of European symbolic geography intersect in Yugoslavia, whose territory has seen the meeting place of empires (Eastern and Western Roman; Ottoman and Hapsburg), scripts (Cyrillic and Latin, and, into the nineteenth Century, Ottoman Turkish), religions (Roman Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, Protestantism, Islam, Judaism) and cold-war politics and ideologies (between the Warsaw Pact and NATO, communist-run but unorthodox, and non-aligned (Bakic-Hayden, 1992, p. 4)

It is in this framework that the process of Nesting Orientalisms flourishes. Based on the differentiations fabricated by Western Europe, the Others created by Orientalist discourses replicated the same logic by creating new hierarchies within the Orient – a "gradation of Orients". This gradation is repeated within Europe, with Eastern Europe self-portraying as superior to the Balkans, which are "more eastern", and within the Balkans. If in Tito's Yugoslavia, the *brotherhood and unity* ideology focused on the positive connotations of the cultural differences between the societies in the Yugoslav republics, during the 1980s, there was a shift to the negative aspects of mistrust, threat and exploitation within the federation country.

This hierarchisation was defined by cultural-religious aspects: the Northern republics of Slovenia and Croatia, both Catholic, see themselves as more Western than the Orthodox republics of Serbia and Montenegro. The Orthodox Church was associated with authoritarianism, and the Catholic Church was related to economic development and industrialisation – surprisingly, considering the traditional Weberian association between Protestantism and Industrialization. The more "Western" republics have justified their integration into Europe with Catholicism and industrial development, features of their

superiority, stressing its "western-like participation in the cultural circles of Mittel Europa, without consideration of how they participated – as equal actors or otherwise" (Bakic-Hayden,1995, p. 924).

In the pre-breakup era, "these contrasting images helped nationalist political figures in Croatia and Slovenia to justify the need to break away from the Balkans. Further, the adoration of a posited (western) Europe was meant to build support for the separation and "post-modern nationalism" among those who count: the West (Bakic-Hayden, 1992, p. 12). Here, an interesting twist happened: Bosnia-Herzegovina was perceived by Slovenia and Croatia as rightfully belonging to Europe despite its Muslim majority – but for strategic and geopolitical reasons, according to Bakic-Hayden. Islam, traditionally associated with the Orient, was ignored in that period to support the political claims of the republics. However, the nesting phenomena in Bosnia-Herzegovina are more complex because of the country's multicultural background, and the relationship with the other republics is distinct. While paternalistic and tutorial views nurture Croatian attitudes towards Bosnia, the Serbian attitude is nurtured by a "betrayal syndrome" because of the conversion to Islam[3].

These differentiations were manipulated by the political and intellectual elites, restoring "original" identities to create new political identities, disregarding the diachronic dimension of these identities and their relationships in the past and their common aspects. "By evoking one of the lowest aspects of their historical association and ignoring the significance of their other interactions and integrations (most notably 45 years of post-World War II experience), each group perpetuates not only disparaging rhetoric but destructive modes of association" (Bakic-Hayden, 1995, p. 930). The nefarious result of the European Symbolic Geography, Orientalist and civilisational discourses "in Yugoslav debates created a standard against which peripheral European countries could judge their multiple selves in competition against each other" (Bakic-Hayden, 1995, p. 930)

In addition to that, the construction of these essences is also responsible for the explanations for the conflict: "In a region ('the Balkans') already labelled as 'violent' ('the powder keg of Europe'), even some scholarly explanations resort to an appeal to a concept of irrationality" (Bakic-Hayden, 1995, p. 929). The naturalisation of political identities reflects on the explanatory slogan of "ancient hatreds" between the region's peoples, rhetoric

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[3] Regarding the Serbian attitude to Bosnia, Linda E. Boose in *Crossing the River Drina: Bosnian Rape Camps, Turkish Impalement, and Serb Cultural Memory* describes how the conversion to Islam and the alleged practice of impalement played an important role in building and manipulating the Serbian cultural memory in the 1980s. This discussion, however, goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

that "obscures the modernity of the conflict based on contested notions of state, nation, national identity and sovereignty" (Bakic-Hayden, 1995, p. 929).

On the other hand, Maria Todorova (2009) argues that, despite the general understanding that Orientalism guides the Western perspectives about the Balkans, there is a different phenomenon, which she calls Balkanism. This concept is directly related to the use of Balkanisation to characterise the "parcelization of large and viable political units, a synonym for a reversion to the tribal, the backward, the primitive, the barbarian" (Todorova, 2009, p. 3). In her analysis, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's 1914 *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars* was an essential source for forming the Balkanist discourse.

This document, as seen in the title, explains the First Balkan War of October 1912 to May 1913 and the Second Balkan War of June to August 1913. According to its interpretation, the first was a defensive war of independence, and the second was a predatory war. In the report, the authors question "the duty of the civilised world in the Balkans" (Todorova, 2009, p. 4). According to the authors, the same institution published the 1993 The Other Balkan Wars Report, which described "the same Balkan world" and the reasons for the 1990s wars, the same as the wars of 80 years ago. "What we are up against is the sad fact that developments of those earlier ages, not only those of the Turkish domination but of earlier ones as well, had the effect of thrusting into the southeastern reaches of the European continent a salient of non-European civilisation which has continued to the present day to preserve many of its non-European characteristics" (Todorova, 2009, p. 6). In addition to relating the 1990s war to two Balkan Wars, this document also described the violence in the Balkans to the First World War and Second World War, characterising a "tradition of violence" in the region. By analysing these documents, Todorova argues that "Balkanism was formed gradually in the course of two centuries and crystallised in a specific discourse around the Balkan wars and World War I" (Todorova, 2009, p. 19).

Therefore, for Todorova, there are seminal differences between Orientalist and Balkanist discourses, and Balkanism "is more than a mere variation of Orientalism on a Balkan theme" (Todorova, 2009, p. 8). Orientalism perceives the Orient as the complete opposite of the West, and its othering process is based on stereotypes of the Arab legacies, of female references (something exotic, infantile, paradisiac, submissive), and on a "real" colonial experience, which gave the regions a position of marginality regarding the West. These characteristics are not present in the Western perspective of the Balkans.

The Balkans are not perceived as the complete opposite of the West but rather as a transition to the East. This transitional character is related to the geographical location of the Balkans – in Europe but bordering the Orient – and to the historical legacies of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. While the Byzantine influence impacted the region politically, institutionally, religiously and culturally, Ottoman rule was, on the one hand, responsible for properly naming the region as Balkans; on the other hand, "it has been chiefly the Ottoman elements or the ones perceived as such that have mostly invoked the current stereotypes" (Todorova, 2009, p. 12).

These stereotypes, instead of female references like in the Orientalist discourse, the Balkanist discourse is based on male references to brutality, violence, and manhood: "The standard Balkan male is uncivilised, primitive, crude, cruel, and, without exception, dishevelled" (Todorova, 2009, p. 14). In addition to that, while the regions described as Oriental have experienced "real colonialisation", the Balkans have experienced a semi-colonial status. Firstly, because of the relationship between subordinates and the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empire – there was some level of autonomy in the regions – and secondly, because of the self-perception of not being colonised –much less acute victimisation.

All this led to a perception of ambiguity and in-betweenness in the Balkans. Here, referring to the definitions of liminality, marginality, and lowermost is valuable.:

> Enlarging and refining on Arnold van Gennep's groundbreaking concept of liminality, a number of scholars have introduced a distinction between liminality, marginality, and the lowermost. While liminality presupposes significant changes in the dominant self-image, marginality defines qualities "on the same plane as the dominant ego-image." Finally, the lowermost suggests "the shadow, the structurally despised alter-ego." (Todorova, 2009, p. 18).

In this spectrum, the Balkans can be treated as an illustration of the "lowermost", West's incomplete self, for two reasons. Firstly, religion: while the opposition between Greek Orthodoxy and Catholicism was one of the versions of the East-West dichotomy, the Orthodox Church is still in the Christian world, and it is not perceived as a bridge to Islamism, perceived as the real opposition to Christianity. Secondly, race: while there is a general perception of the Balkans as a racial mixture, the region is still seen as positioned on the "White" side of the racial spectrum, still opposed to the "coloured" world (Todorova, 2009, pp. 18-19).

As we can see in her description, "There is overlap and complementarity between the two rhetorics, yet there is similar rhetorical overlap with any power discourse: the rhetoric of racism, development, modernisation, civilisation, and so on" (Todorova, 2009, p. 11). Todorova reflects if the "methodological contribution of subaltern and postcolonial studies can be meaningfully applied to the Balkans" (Todorova, 2009, p. 17), to what she argues that it is impossible to do – provincialise Europe when speaking about the Balkans, to epistemologically emancipate it – because it constitutes a part of Europe. To question that interpretation and to reflect critically on the possibility of an epistemological emancipation, the Decolonial thinking, as it will be argued next, is a relevant resource.

2.1.3   Decolonial Theory – from Latin America to Europe

The reason for using Decolonial thinking is that these theories can help to tie down the *thinking between the posts* and the analysis of Balkanism. Enrique Dussel, Walter Mignolo, Ramón Grosfoguel, Santiago Castro-Gomes, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and Aníbal Quijano are the "founding fathers" of decolonial thinking in Latin America, and this section will start by referring to the main arguments and concepts posed by them. After that, it will describe some possible dialogues beyond Latin America's borders, as Madina Tlostanova and Cyril Blondel proposed.

The authors mentioned above started building the argument around Decolonial Theory and Decoloniality in the late 1990s and early 2000s after several symposiums throughout the Americas. Also referred to as the "modernity/coloniality group", these authors have established a series of concepts that created a common ground for this theory, building upon the World System Theory and Post-Colonialism analysis. The group aimed to point to the gaps and complement these two analyses. According to them, both theories criticise developmentism and Eurocentric forms of knowledge. Still, they emphasise different determinants: The Post-colonial studies focus on the colonial discourse and the cultural agency of Imperialism. In contrast, World System studies focus on capital accumulation and economic structures. This binary opposition of culture and economy is eliminated in the Decolonial approach:

> From the decolonial perspective of the modernity/coloniality group, culture is always intertwined with (and not derived from) the processes of the political economy [...]. Cultural and postcolonial studies have overlooked the fact that it is impossible to understand global capitalism without considering how racial discourses organise the world's population in an international division of labour that has

33

direct economic implications. [...] The modernity/coloniality group recognises the fundamental role of epistemes but gives them an economic status, as proposed by world-system analysis[4] (Grosfoguel, 2007, pp. 16-17).

The Decolonial perspective, therefore, argues that because the capitalist world order was established with the colonial expansion, Modernity and Coloniality are two sides of the same coin, and the power structure of contemporary capitalism is formed by an intersectionality of multiple and heterogeneous global hierarchies that were created during the colonial expansion. The authors coined the concept *colonialidad del poder* (hereof coloniality of power) to argue that ethno-racial principles are the main pillars of these heterogeneous global hierarchies, and they did not end with the end of colonialism (Grosfoguel, 2007). Consequently, the capitalist system reproduces *patrones coloniales de poder* (hereof colonial patterns of power), enduring structures and power dynamics established during the colonial period and continue to shape societies. These patterns constitute "the complexity of the processes of capitalist accumulation articulated in a global racial/ethnic hierarchy and its derivative classifications of superior/inferior, development/underdevelopment, and civilised/barbaric peoples"[5] (Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 19).

Even with the juridical-political decolonisation of the 19th and 20th centuries, the world still has to go through a second decolonisation that should eliminate these hierarchies. Therefore, the authors differentiate between *colonialidad* (coloniality) and colonialism. While colonialism refers to colonial situations – cultural, political, sexual and economic oppression and exploitation of racialised/ethnicised groups – created by colonial structures of administration, coloniality refers to contemporary colonial situations without the mechanisms of colonial administration. Hence, the second decolonisation is a process of *decolonialidad* (decoloniality) of the structures and dynamics of power and the mentalities created by them.

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[4] From the original: "Desde la perspectiva decolonial manejada por el grupo modernidad/colonialidad, la cultura está siempre entrelazada a (y no derivada de) los procesos de la economía-política [...]. Los estudios culturales y poscoloniales han pasado por alto que no es posible entender el capitalismo global sin tener en cuenta el modo como los discursos raciales organizan a la población del mundo en una división internacional del trabajo que tiene directas implicaciones económicas. [...] El grupo modernidad/colonialidad reconoce el papel fundamental de las epistemes, pero les otorga un estatuto económico, tal como lo propone el análisis del sistema mundo.

[5] From the original: constituye la complejidad de los procesos de acumulación capitalista articulados en una jerarquía racial/étnica global y sus clasificaciones derivativas de superior/inferior, desarrollo/subdesarrollo, y pueblos civilizados/bárbaros.

Finally, one last concept of the Decolonial theory is relevant to this research. Since power dynamics reproduce Eurocentric coloniality, the modernity/coloniality group proposes *el pensamiento fronterizo* (hereof border thinking).

> Border epistemologies subsume a struggle for decolonial liberation for a world beyond Eurocentric modernity. Border thinking produces a redefinition/subsumption of citizenship, democracy, human rights, humanity, and economic relations beyond the narrow definitions imposed by European modernity. Border thinking is not an anti-modern fundamentalism. It is a transmodern decolonial response of the subaltern to Eurocentric modernity (Grosfoguel, 2006, p. 39)[6].

One example of this border thinking is the Zapatist movement and communities in Mexico. They do not refuse democracy nor embrace a fundamentalist approach; instead, they redefine democracy from the indigenous practice and cosmologies.

Unlike the Post-Colonial theories, which have been discussed extensively in the European context, the Decolonial ideas have been explored less. The most influential theorist of decoloniality in contemporary Europe is Madina Tlostanova, who has an innovative approach to art and cultural production from the post-Soviet sphere. She proposes using World of Imperial Difference and Subaltern Empires to characterise the regions under the Russian/USSR, the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian Empires. These regions have been in a condition of "coloniality vis-à-vis the West, and not direct colonialism" that function as intellectual and mental colonies of the West and generate their particular form of secondary colonial difference (Tlostanova, 2009, p. 2). Therefore, the idea of secondary colonial differences complements Bakic-Hayden's concept of Nesting Orientalisms since it adds to this post-colonial (cultural) perception of the decolonial turn – a combination of cultural and economic interpretation. The main consequence of this coloniality and secondary colonial differences is limiting the growth of contesting social and indigenous movements.

As discussed before, the Latin American decolonial authors argue that race and racism are the main pillars of the coloniality of power. In the case of the world of imperial difference, ethnicity takes the place of race, often manifesting as a form of discrimination based on minor and blurred differences that still have painful consequences. With that analysis, the author points out that "in reality, racial discourses have an indirect relation to

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[6] From the original: "Las epistemologías fronterizas subsumen una lucha por la liberación descolonial por un mundo más allá de la modernidad eurocentrada. Lo que el pensamiento fronterizo produce es una redefinición/subsunción de la ciudadanía, la democracia, los derechos humanos, la humanidad, las relaciones económicas más allá de las estrechas definiciones impuestas por la modernidad europea. El pensamiento fronterizo no es un fundamentalismo antimoderno. Es una respuesta descolonial transmoderna de lo subalterno a la modernidad eurocéntrica".

the colour of skin and are linked instead to the belonging or not belonging to Europe and modernity, virtual belonging in some cases" (Tlostanova, 2009, p. 8).

This is especially relevant when it comes to studying the countries in the Balkans, where the construction and manipulation of ethnicised identities play such an important role. According to Cyril Blondel (2022), the decolonial option in the Balkans allows us to analyse the multiple wounds derived from the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman subaltern empires and the creation of secondary colonial differences in the region. Additionally, it will enable us to analyse Yugoslav socialist modernity, which was mutant and marginal but still aligned with Western paradigms of modernity and civilisation. Blondel argues that

> Breaking the stereotypical way in which former Yugoslavia has been over-researched requires learning to unlearn in order to relearn other bases and frames of thought and sometimes to create new thoughts or reshape existing ones. Thus, the decolonial option is a political and epistemological choice, which leads to taking more into account the historical and cultural balance of power in the elaboration and understanding of the ethnographic situation (Blondel, 2022, pp. 51-52).

The decolonial theory presents itself as an option because it allows us to refuse the constitution and essence of the current knowledge system that created a coloniality of being and knowledge. For Tlostanova (2009, p. 6), "a delinking from modernity that would allow to question the very mental operations and logical structures that comprise the rhetoric of Western modernity which becomes further distorted and intensified in case of subaltern empires and their colonies".

2.2   Methodological Framework

2.2.1   Critical Discourse Analysis

This research uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyse the documents produced by the CIA. Therefore, this section aims to describe the main characteristics of CDA research and its theoretical basis and draft the methodology used. This outline is based on the collection edited by Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (2001). It gathers insights from the chapter's authors not to position myself in one or another of the approaches to CDA but to collect what I believe to be the most relevant of each to build my analysis.

Before defining what CDA is, it is essential to make explicit some assumptions CDA scholarship makes regarding the relationship between language and society and social interaction. CDA authors assume that language is a social phenomenon and that language,

expressed through texts (or discourse fragments), systematically represents individuals', institutions,' and social groupings' meanings and values. Not only do individuals who produce these texts express their meanings and values, but recipients of texts are not passive in their relationship to them. Moreover, the relationship between those speaking/writing and those listening/reading constitutes a power relationship. In CDA's perspective – and aligned with Foucault's interpretation – "language is also a medium of domination and social force. It legitimises relations of organised power" (Wodak, 2001, p. 2). In other words, when used by powerful people rather than having its own power, language gains power.

Therefore, Critical Discourse Analysis is "fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language" and "aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimised and so on by language use (or in discourse)" (Wodak, 2001, p. 2).

Before defining CDA's scope, explaining the concept of discourse is necessary. According to Siegfried Jäger, discourse is

> An institutionally consolidated concept of speech inasmuch as it determines and consolidates action and thus already exercises power' (Link, 1983, p. 60). This definition of discourse can be further illustrated by regarding discourse `as the flow of knowledge –and/or all societal knowledge stored – throughout all time' (Jäger, 1993 and 1999), which determines individual and collective doing and/or formative action that shapes society, thus exercising power. As such, discourses can be understood as material realities sui generis (Wodak, 2001, p. 34).

To understand how discourse plays a crucial role in expressing and perpetuating power dynamics, CDA has to consider both the historical context behind the social relations between the actors and the social process and the structure behind the production of the discourses. This means that an analysis of the historical context must be integrated into the discourse analysis. Furthermore, while analysing this context, attention should be paid to how the discourses determine reality. Jäger argues that CDA "is not (only) about interpretations of something that already exists, thus not (only) about the analysis of the allocation of a meaning post festum, but about the analysis of the production of reality which is performed by discourse – conveyed by active people" (Wodak, 2001, p. 36). Of particular interest to this research is how the discourses polarise the representation of groups divided into "us" and "them", the first in favourable terms about the second (Wodak, 2001, p. 103).

As discussed by many authors, the Critical Discourse Analysis does not constitute a well-defined empirical method but rather a theoretical base that can be used to analyse data. In other words, there is no recipe to collect data based on CDA, and there is "no clear line between data collection and analysis" (Wodak, 2001, p. 25). In other words, data collection is a permanently ongoing procedure. However, most of them agree that there is a four-step strategy of discourse analysis, which consists of a) establishing the specific contents/topics of discourse; b) investigating discursive and argumentation strategies; c) investigating specific linguistic elements and features (types); d) examination of specific instances or occurrences of linguistic elements (tokens) (Wodak, 2001, pp. 26-27). Besides that, the analysis should also consider the forms of implicit and indirect meanings in the discourse, ideas that can be inferred by the text even though they are not explicitly present.

In addition to this four-step strategy, Siegfried Jëger (Wodak, 2001, pp. 53-54) proposes a non-strict method of five elements for CDA. These are 1) characterisation of the discourse plane, i.e. printed media, magazines, songs, and videos; 2) processing the material base; 3) evaluating the material processed about the discourse strand to be analysed; 4) analysis of discourse fragments; 5) overall analysis of the discourse plane – "all the essential results that have hitherto been gained are reflected upon and added to an overall statement on the discourse strand in the newspaper or sector concerned" (Wodak, 2001, p. 54).

Finally, some scholars like Teun A. van Dijk argue that CDA is biased and does not deny its positions but defines them, and being biased does not make CDA inherently lousy scholarship. According to the author,

> On the contrary, as many scholars, especially among women and minorities, know, critical research must not only be good, but better scholarship in order to be accepted. No scholarship is attacked as ferociously because of its alleged lack or deficient methodology as critical scholarship. Specialised also in the critical (and self-critical) analysis of scholarly discourse, CDA, of course, recognises the strategic nature of such accusations as part of the complex mechanisms of domination, namely as an attempt to marginalise and problematise dissent (Wodak, 2001, p. 96).

I want to conclude this section by acknowledging and stating that this research is biased, as CDA describes. Moreover, following the Decolonial theory's argument that all knowledge is located epistemologically either in the dominant or subaltern side of power relations, claims of neutrality and objectivity are merely instruments that help produce myths of a universal knowledge/epistemology (Grosfoguel, 2006). This means that the choice of data to be analysed, the focus and questions posed to the data, and the theoretical and

methodological choices on how to interpret the data are guided by my historical background and experience and that I recognise the influence of these factors in my research.

In the analysis of the CIA documents in the next chapter, critical discourse analysis will be operationalised to identify and criticise the different types of discourses present in the documents. As mentioned before, in the first chapter, Lene Hansen's discourse typology will be used together with the Decolonial conceptual framework discussed in this chapter (Balkanism, Coloniality [of being; of knowledge; of power], Decoloniality, Colonial Patterns of Power) to establish the specific contents/topics of discourse (step a) mentioned above). By reading and analysing the documents, I aim to investigate discursive and argumentation strategies (step b), i.e. how the CIA builds these discourses to justify its political advice and evaluations and investigate specific linguistic elements and features – or types (step c) – in the discourse, for example, ethnicity, ethnic conflict, ancient hatred, tradition, historical, recurrent, etc.

2.2.2   Analysis of Declassified Intelligence Documents

Even though there is no comprehensive methodological work specifically on how to analyse declassified intelligence documents, this section aims to discuss some general ideas that, combined with CDA, will guide the data analysis. It will describe the potential and limitations of these documents and the possibilities of studying cultural history of diplomacy and intelligence.

The CIA created, in 1991, a Task Force on Openness to start a process of declassification of its documents. According to Karabell and Naftali (1994), this initiative has the potential to enrich diplomatic history and scholarship and close some gaps in literature. Because these documents show raw intelligence information, two main possibilities are presented. Firstly, analysing these documents might shed light on the relationship between intelligence and policymakers, allowing us to understand how policymakers assimilated the information provided. It might also offer the opportunity to learn how the Central Intelligence Agency has functioned as an instrument of executive foreign policy.

The main limitation of analysing these documents is related to the fact that they were consciously selected and publicised, meaning that any part of or integral document that "explicitly reveals or will allow a researcher to deduce sources and methods will be withheld" (Karabell & Naftali, 1994, p. 616). Because of that, some questions that could require detailed operational documents cannot be answered by the documents declassified. Then, it is up to

the researcher to adjust their questions and expectations about what can be found in the archives. Furthermore, because these documents do not go through a process of public cataloguing, a sense of mystery surrounding them and a certain fascination for finding missing documents and filling the documentary gap is created.

In addition to the more apparent potentials of examination described above, Dina Rezk (2014) points to the possibility of using intelligence documents for a more interdisciplinary and historical analysis of culture, ideas and mentalities. In her perspective, diplomacy and intelligence scholarship have failed to engage with Orientalism and how intelligence and its "producers of knowledge" have conceived the Arab culture. Rezk argues that Said's

> Subtextual analysis of the 'unspoken' in European literary depictions of the Orient argued that negative Western stereotypes of the Middle East were created by, and provided justification for, a colonial system of political domination based on the West's demonstrable superiority to the Middle East. Yet as Matt Connelly has observed: 'post-colonial scholars today catalogue the cultures of empire in novels and travel writing, museums and expositions, paintings and postcards – everywhere it seems, but the archives and personal papers of European and US policy makers' (Rezk, 2014, p. 225).

Rezk uses Said's concept of Orientalism to examine the CIA's internal communication documents and reports on the Middle East to understand "issues of national character". She identifies conceptualisations about the Arab culture articulated in the documents and how this reflects Western ideas of the Self and the Other that date back to the 19th Century and the Enlightenment. Some of these perceptions in the documents that Rezk points out describe the Arabs as devoid of social conscience, with no experience, and ignorant, but at the same time, simple, gentle and non-belligerent. Such analysis "reveals the innermost thinking of the elite producing 'knowledge' for policymakers about the Arab 'Other'" (Rezk, 2014, p. 226).

With that, it is possible to extend Rezk's idea to the scope of this research, to examine the production of knowledge about the Balkan 'Other' and have a more culturally-centred analysis of intelligence documents. By combining the theoretical and methodological framework discussed in this chapter, the analysis done in the next chapter aims to find how the CIA portrayed the Balkans and the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina through a Coloniality discourse.

3.   The CIA Collection

The following chapter will analyse the CIA collection "Bosnia, Intelligence and the Clinton Presidency: The Role of Intelligence and Political Leadership in Ending the Bosnian War". As stated in the previous chapters, the goal is to analyse these documents using CDA. The first part of the chapter will briefly describe the collection's main features and the process of document analysis in more practical terms, from collecting documentation to using software and coding. The second part of the chapter is the analysis itself, divided into three subchapters.

3.1   Practical Issues

The collection is available for public access on the Central Intelligence Agency's Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room. It is composed of 342 documents from the years 1983 to 1996, one report and one press release video, both produced in 2013 when the documents were declassified. From these 342 files, there are different types of documents: memorandums, estimates, assessments, pre-meeting memorandums, meeting minutes, post-meeting memorandums for the record, meetings' summary of conclusions, discussion papers, cables, intelligence reports, conference reports, situation reports, letters, and interviews. Overall, estimates, assessments, discussion papers, and intelligence reports are intelligence materials produced by the Balkan Task Force (BTF) established by the CIA on the 12th of December 1992. These documents focus on specific topics, such as each country's military capabilities, economic scenarios, sanctions, and possible effects. These documents are often referred to or even requested by memorandums, minutes, summaries, and cables, which are more general documents. In general, they list possible policies, questions regarding following steps, and Congress and Presidential decisions – meaning, more practical issues. Letters, cables, and situation reports are generally direct communications between two government members or units.

My analysis, however, did not distinguish between these types of documents – they were not selected or separated – but their differences are relevant in understanding who produced the knowledge contained in the document and for what purpose. Moreover, the documents were only classified and analysed in chronological order and separated according to the year of production. Even though the collection is extensive, not all records were relevant to my analysis.

I used the MAXQDA software for qualitative and mixed methods to perform the study. The software allowed me to create different codes according to the discourses identified in the documents. As mentioned in the first chapter, my analysis used Lene Hansen's (2006) typology of Western discourses on the Bosnian War: Balkanisation discourse (or The War as Balkans), Civilisational discourse, Romantic discourse, and The War as Genocide discourse. These were the codes created in the software to read the collection. In addition to these "umbrella" discourses, a few subtypes were created. In this case, some subtypes were based on Hansen's research, and others were developed throughout my analysis – this process will be explained in depth throughout the next section. The Balkanisation discourse was divided into ancient hatreds, an association of the region with violence and brutality, and a "nothing the West can do" narrative – the exemption discourse. The Civilisational discourse was divided into the need for economic/political reforms and the US leadership in the War and the New World Order.

Regarding The War as Genocide discourse, only references to the Lift and Strike discourse were found. My analysis did not identify any occurrences of Romantic, Balkanising Serbia, and Gendering Genocide discourses in the CIA documents. Therefore, these codes were not used in the study. The following section is divided according to these types and subtypes of discourses.

3.2. Critical Discourse Analysis of the CIA Documents

3.2.1. Balkanisation Discourse

The Balkanisation Discourse, as discussed in the first and second chapters, constructs the Balkans as a violent and brutal region, approaching its people as uncivilised, primitive, and incapable of change. According to Hansen's classification, the Balkanisation discourse expresses itself in three different ways in the Western interpretation of the Bosnian War – focus on the region's violence and brutality, the impossibility of the West in intervening and stopping the War, and the ancient hatred between ethnic groups as the main motivation for the wars. This discourse is widespread throughout the CIA documents. The first document in the collection, *Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?*, published on the 31st of January 1983 – almost ten years before the start of the War – points that "deep-seated ethnic tensions seriously threaten the post-Tito system of government" (CIA, 1983, p. 3), and that "confrontations among the ethnonational communities have been a recurrent feature of

postwar Yugoslav history" (CIA, 1983, p. 16), referring indirectly to the influence of ancient hatreds in the destabilisation of the region.

Contrary to my expectations, the ancient hatred discourse is not as present in the documents. In addition to the excerpts cited above, I identified eight other occurrences in two documents that presented direct or indirect references to the existence of ancient hatred between the parties as an explanation for the conflict. However, I understand the fact that these occurrences were identified in the collection's first documents as something relevant to analyse. Because of their publication dates, they are the CIA's "founding" interpretation of the War and guide the interpretation present in all other documents after them.

The first document, *Yugoslavia Transformed*, published on the 1st of October 1990, was an extensive national intelligence estimate prepared by a conjunction of intelligence units – CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, the Department of State, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army, and the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence. This document, curiously enough, predicted the disintegration and wars of Yugoslavia two years before the beginning of the War. The document states that the cohesive forces in Yugoslavia are within Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia and that "they are a mix of national pride, local economic aspirations, and historically antagonistic religious and cultural identifications" (CIA, 1990, p. V).

When describing the prospects of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the document states that "this republic's ethnic mix of Muslims (more than 40 per cent), Serbs (32 per cent), and Croats (18 per cent) has always been potentially dangerous" (CIA, 1990, p. 3). Regarding the prospects for Serbia, the estimate argues that "There is already rising fear in Serbian troops of interethnic confrontations and clashes within republics with unpredictable consequences. In many cases, traditional ethnic animosities are linked to irreconcilable territorial claims" (CIA, 1990, p. 8)

The second document, *A Broadening Balkan Crisis: Can it be Managed?* was prepared by the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) and published on the 1st of April 1992. This document is the most relevant in analysing the ancient hatred narrative. It dedicates one whole page to describe "The Balkan Powder Keg" (CIA, 1992a, p. 1). It explains how "age-old animosities are increasing and prevent any meaningful discussion of protecting minority and individual rights" (CIA, 1992a, p. 1). This description of "The Balkan can also be associated with a narrative about violence and brutality, as a reference to a powder keg shows how the region was interpreted as unstable and violent.

On the same page, there is a picture of a Serbian soldier, with the caption "It's 'back to the future' in the Serb-Croat civil War. Grizzled Serbian volunteer militiaman resembles his fore-fathers from Balkan Wars, World War I" (CIA, 1992a, p. 1). This exemplifies one pattern of Western interpretation widespread during the 1990s, a comparison of the Bosnian War with "The Other Balkan Wars" – as present in Kennan's text – and an understanding of a never-ending war in the region. Following this page, the document describes "A Balkan Tradition: Instability, Entangling Alliances, and War":

> The current crisis is not 1914 revisited, because no European Great Power has been promoting instability in the Balkans. But the competing territorial, ethnic, and religious claims that spawned World War I endured and have been rekindled by the collapse of Communism. The demise of Ottoman hegemony at the end of the 19th century contributed to the creation of shifting alliances among newly emerging states and challenges to the Great Powers […] The First Balkan War of 1912 led to the virtual dissolution of European Turkey. Competing territorial ambitions resurfaced in the Second Balkan War of 1913. (CIA, 1992a, p. 8)

This excerpt is highly ambiguous compared to the excerpts mentioned above, which are part of the same document. It discusses a "Balkan tradition" of instability, entangling alliances, and War, describing the First and Second Balkan Wars to justify this "tradition". However, it simultaneously states that "the current crisis is not 1914 revisited". This contradicts the statements in the previous pages of "back to the future" and "age-old animosities". The document is ambiguous since it dialogues with the ancient hatred discourse but tries to deny it at the same time. The use of types like "recurrent", "history", "traditional", "irreconcilable", "historically antagonistic", and "age-old" shows references to a Balkanist interpretation of the War focused on the ancient hatred between the parties.

Similarly to the ancient hatred discourse, the discourse about brutality and violence as being inherently "Balkan" is not as present in the documents as expected. Again, this discourse appears in the early phases of the War and in the same document where the ancient hatred discourses were identified. The 1990 document states, for example, that Kosovo is "Yugoslavia's killing fields" and analyses the history of violence in the conflict throughout the twentieth century. When mentioning Aleksandar Ranković's 1948 operations in Kosovo, the document states that he had "a free hand to conduct a campaign against the Albanian guerrillas that was *remarkable for brutality even in Balkan annals*" (1990, p. 4) [emphasis added].

In addition to these early appearances, the brutality and violence of the Balkans appeared later during the War. Interestingly, the discourse is present in more "personal" documents: in one meeting minutes and two memorandums. The first, *Principals Committee Meeting on Bosnia, the 5th of February 1993*, has two extremely revealing phrases. When discussing whether the US should intervene militarily on BiH, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said: "We should make an all-out effort to persuade and convince the parties rather than impose a settlement. On the other hand, we are not talking about an agreement among three Church groups in California. *This is the Balkans*. It is not realistic to think that we can do without enforcement, even of a good agreement" (CIA, 1993a, p. 6). Christopher's comparison with Church groups in California also shows an idea of superiority, meaning that it would be easier to deal with these groups than with "the Balkans." To that, General Colin Powell, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, replies that "the risk of casualties would be relatively low if there is an agreement *even by Balkan standards*" (CIA, 1993a, p. 6) [emphasis added].

On one remarkable memorandum in 1995, after the Srebrenica Genocide, Madeleine Albright, then US Ambassador to the United Nations, states that "the essence of any new strategy for Bosnia must recognise the one truth of this sad story: our only successes have come when the Bosnian Serbs faced a credible threat of military force" (CIA 1995c, p. 2). Despite not showing any direct reference to a Balkanisation discourse, the fact that Albright wrote that the only time the US was successful was when using military force can be seen as if, in her interpretation, Serbia only "speaks the language of violence." In all cases, the types "Balkan annals," "Balkan standards," and the classic "This is The Balkans" show how the Balkans are seen through intrinsic stereotypes of violence and brutality.

I have also identified this discourse at the end of the War, during and after the Dayton negotiations. In November 1995, during the Dayton negotiation process, several documents showed the same stereotypes. These are SITREPs[7] written by Don Kerrick to Anthony Lake describing the daily progress of the negotiations. Kerrick starts every SITREP with ironic and comic notes about how the three leaders – Izetbegović, Tudjman, and Milošević – behave during the conference.

> In scene reminiscent of the Godfather, two families (don Slobo and outcast Bosnian Serbs, don Izy and Federation) held truly remarkable six-hour map marathon. Despite hours of heated, yet civil exchanges,

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[7] SITREP, an abbreviation for "Situation Report," can include a wide range of information, from descriptions of troop movements to the aftermath details of military engagements. It is a recurring report that documents and describes specific events or occurrences, but it is not issued on a regular schedule.

> absolutely nothing was agreed. Astonishingly, at one moment parties would be glaring across table, screaming, while, at another moment minutes later they could be seen smiling and joking together over refreshments (CIA 1995e, p. 1).

This topic of the leaders' seemingly different personalities according to the social setting is recurrent in these documents. On a different occasion, Kerrick mentions that "Tudjman hosted dinner last night for *his two amigos* (Izy, Slobo) at officers club, Remain amazed at their ability to turn on charm socially while spouting venom in negotiations" (CIA, 1995f p. 1) [emphasis added]. These excerpts can be connected to an instrumentalist interpretation of the Bosnian War, according to which the elites instrumentalised the conflict by politicizing the ethnic cleavages. In Holbrooke's (1999, p. 23) words, "it was the product of bad, even criminal, political leaders [probably referring to Milošević and Karadžić, but not to Izetbegović] and who encouraged ethnic confrontation for personal, political and financial gain".

When describing the negotiations regarding the maps and the role of Haris Silajdžić, Kerrick wrote that:

> By this time, our entire delegation was fed up with the *Bosnians, led by Mad Dog*, who has been moving forward on the parallel track of constitutional issues. Yet Haris told me that today it has been the best day of Dayton so far, that peace was within sight, and so on. *I thought he must be on some controlled substance*, since it seemed to me that the tortoise of our progress was being outrun by the hare of the calendar. (CIA, 1995f, p. 3) [emphasis added]

Despite seeming anecdotal and irrelevant at first look, these comments might reveal an understanding of the Balkans that is filled with stereotypes. The irony of describing Izetbegović, Tudjman, and Milošević as part of the same family or as *amigos*, as characters of a fictional movie, referring indirectly to their "unstable" personality, describing Silajdžić as "Mad Dog" and suggesting that "he might be on controlled substances", all these references are charged with a Balkanising perspective of the leaders. Moreover, it seems that they are not taken seriously as leaders. Therefore, the documents implicitly show how the leaders instrumentalised ethnic differences – since they do not seem to care about these differences in their behaviour – for their political goals, also showed in the documents, but adding a Balkanised framework to the leaders.

When describing Izetbegović, Kerrick wrote, "He had no understanding of, or interest in, economic development or modernisation – the things that peace can bring. He shows remarkably little concern for the suffering his people have endured; after all, he has suffered

greatly for his ideals. (CIA, 1995g, p. 4). This excerpt shows how the leader was seen through both a Balkanisation and a Civilisational narrative – he has little concern for the violence people are going through and no interest in modernising his country, something that the US and the West were offering.

The last subtype of Balkanisation discourse is not only the most frequent Balkanisation discourse but generally the most recurrent discourse in the whole collection of documents. In my analysis, I have identified around sixty occasions with direct or indirect evidence of the so called 'exemption discourse'. Hansen (2006) argues that this view is derived from the interpretation of Western and Balkan civilisations as clearly distinct and the latter as incapable of changing from an uncivilised, violent region to a civilised one. Therefore, the West was absolved from any responsibility for helping or protecting the region.

In general, this discourse was present throughout the War, but it has expressed itself differently depending on the situation on the ground. I have identified four moments when the 'exemption discourse' was in force. Firstly, there was a "complete exemption" discourse before the War and during Bush's government. The War was seen as inevitable and unsolvable, and neither the Europeans nor the United States could intervene effectively. In *Yugoslavia Transformed* (1990), the CIA evaluated that:

> The United States will have little capacity to preserve Yugoslav unity, notwithstanding the influence it has had there in the past. Any US statements in support of the territorial integrity of the old federation will be used by federal leaders to strengthen their case against republic attempt to assert their independence […] European powers will pay lip service to the idea of Yugoslav integrity while quietly accepting the dissolution of the federation (CIA, 1990, p. 10).

This assessment seems to have guided the Bush government's policies in the first stages of War: "In sum, there is virtually no chance of a real negotiated settlement that leads to interethnic peace" (CIA, 1992a, p. V). Regarding this document, it is worth mentioning that Treverton & Mille's (2017) article discusses why the estimate did not prompt a policy response. According to the authors, despite its clear and correct analysis, several factors led to its disregard. Policymakers found the analysis irrelevant to their interests, overshadowed by other priorities, and struggled to accept its bleak outlook. Additionally, intelligence was interpreted through a lingering Cold War mindset, which distorted the impact of the estimate. The authors also discuss that the document failed to suggest actionable opportunities to influence the situation, which might have prompted a response.

Besides evaluating whether the West should or not intervene, some early documents also discussed the use of force in the region and the divergent positions regarding that, especially between European countries: "We believe most West European governments would oppose commitment of ground forces to separate warring factions or to impose a military settlement. Most also see limited utility and severe drawbacks to the use of punitive airstrikes as a means of resolving the conflict" (CIA, 1992b, p.1). In the transition period from Bush to Clinton – who had promised during his campaign that he would commit to US efforts to end the War – the CIA was responsible for evaluating and proposing different policies for the government. Some still saw Bush's approach as an option in February 1993: "We could say this is a European problem, and they should take responsibility for enforcing a settlement" (CIA, 1993c, p. 7). President Clinton replies: We can't do that without giving up our whole position in the world (CIA 1993c, p. 7) – and evidence of the Civilisational/US Leadership discourse, to be analysed later.

Secondly, the 'exemption discourse' turned into a 'mixed exemption' discourse in the period after Bill Clinton's election. Even though Hansen (2006) argues that the Lift and Strike discourse was part of the War as Genocide Discourse, I argue that at this moment, it was somehow intertwined with an 'exemption discourse'. Since the Lift and Strike discourse perceives Europeans as blocking US efforts to stop the War, the 'exemption discourse' mutated in this second phase to a "because the Europeans are blocking us, there is nothing we can do" narrative. Therefore, there was a "mixed exemption" discourse (between Lift and Strike and Exemption, and between a Balkanisation and a War as Genocide discourses) after Clinton's election, during the discussion of the Vance-Owen peace agreements, until roughly the end of 1994.

This second moment of the Exemption discourse is noticeable when the CIA refers to the UN mandate in BiH, the use of force, and more decisive Western intervention in the War. Regarding the UNPROFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the strengthening of its role, one of the arguments present in the documents was that if the West intervened militarily, the Muslims would see that as a "first step towards a favourable military solution and would abandon negotiations" (CIA, 1993d). Moreover, some documents also pointed to the US level of commitment to the intervention: "There was a consensus that we must make clear both privately and publicly that our commitment is limited to the UNPROFOR forces themselves (and does not, for example, extend to organisations like UNHCR or inhabitants of the "safe havens)" (CIA, 1993f). Already in 1993, there were signs that the West would not take responsibility in case there was any crisis in the Safe Areas.

Since 1994, the withdrawal of UNPROFOR has been one of the main points discussed in several documents. There were two main arguments surrounding the withdrawal. Firstly, "The prospect of increasing unrest and growing military weakness as a result of a UNPROFOR pullout might make the Muslims more amenable to the idea of a negotiated settlement" (CIA, 1994a, p. 2). The withdrawal was seen as a tool to push for a negotiated peace. Secondly, it was seen as an opportunity to push for the lift and strike strategy since "the risk an expanded conflict would pose to their forces on the ground always been one of the major European objections to lift and strike. Their departure might lead at least some governments to drop their reservations. (CIA, 1994a, pp. 2-3).

The third moment of the exemption discourse happened mainly in 1995 until the Srebrenica Genocide. I called this "Muddle Through" discourse, and the expression is referred to many times in the documents. In this period, the documents show not only an exemption discourse but also how the intelligence and the US government were at a dead-end and did not have clear directions for their policies – therefore, the "muddle through" expression. Overall, they sought to support Bosnia-Herzegovina rhetorically but were not able – or willing? – to take concrete actions to solve the War.

One core document for this discourse is *Former Yugoslavia: Policy Review*, which reviews US interests and actions:

> Throughout the conflict, we have sought to protect several core US interests: maintaining our strategic relationship with key Allies and protecting the credibility of NATO; avoiding a conflict with Russia that could undermine our efforts to promote reform and international cooperation; preventing the spread of the Bosnian conflict into a wider Balkan war that could destabilise Southeastern Europe and draw in US allies; and ensuring that the use of force to change borders and acts of genocide do not become legitimate forms of behaviour in post-Cold War Europe (CIA, 1995a, p. 2).

Besides that, it also lists more specific objectives like stopping and limiting the War, maintaining relief supplies, reducing human suffering, and achieving a negotiated settlement. Still, it recognises the US "have never set clear priorities among them" (CIA, 1995a, p. 2). Moreover, it points to three different policy options: "a) Continue our present policy; *muddle through while supporting the Bosnians*; b) Adopt a policy of neutrality toward the terms of a settlement and focus on active containment of the conflict; c) Containment of Conflict and Long-Term Quarantine of Greater-Serbia (CIA 1995a, p. 3) [emphasis added].

This document shows how there was no consistent leadership from the US throughout the War, and while the country was rhetorically supporting the Bosnian government against

the Serbs, in practice, the government faced not only a political deadlock within the International Community and the UN but also an internal political deadlock – there was no consistency and no clear policy direction from within the government. This scenario, observed throughout the documents, contrasts with the public image created by the US of pushing to end the War and supporting Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Finally, the fourth moment of the exemption discourse happened after the Srebrenica Genocide. One document (CIA, 1995b) points at "the failures of the Bosnian Army" forces in Eastern enclaves in defending Srebrenica. According to it, the army collapsed because of a combination of material shortcomings, the light infantry composition of the defenders, a lack of effective command and control, and an underlying reliance on UNPROFOR and NATO to deter Bosnian Serb attacks against the enclave. They lack organisation, training, and discipline, and they have not benefited from the influx of weapons into central Bosnia since the Croat-Muslim Federation was established.

Here, I can identify two levels of a Balkanisation discourse: the document firstly exempts the UN and NATO from the responsibility over Srebrenica, with an argument that the Bosniaks should not count on UNPROFOR to defend the civilians, as it sees the force as a "neutral" actor in the War. Secondly, it blames the Bosnian army for the events due to its lack of preparation, organisation, etc. This interpretation presented in the document contrasts with the current consensus that the Srebrenica genocide was highly influenced by UNPROFOR's lack of preparation and the characteristics of the Safe Areas themselves (Ingrao, 2009). The document once again points to an interpretation that the US and the West were not responsible and that the Bosnian government wrongly relied on the UN, as it was already prescribed by the former document (CIA, 1993f) on the US's limited commitment to the UNPROFOR and not to the civilians.

3.2.2. The War as Genocide Discourse: Lift and Strike

Hansen (2006) divides The War as Genocide Discourse into three subtypes: The Lift and Strike discourse, the Balkanising Serbia discourse, and the Gendering Genocide discourse. However, in my analysis, I identified only the Lift and Strike subtype, based on the US interpretation of BiH as multicultural and compatible with the US's history of multiculturalism. This would give the US the right to intervene in the War, push for lifting the arms embargo, and air strike Serbia. As mentioned before, according to this discourse, the Europeans were perceived as doubly responsible for their inability to prevent the War

and for the blockage of US action. I have identified around thirty-five occasions with direct or indirect evidence of the Lift and Strike discourse.

Between January 1993 and July 1994, the CIA documents showed more pressure – both from the intelligence and government sides – for the Lift and Strike strategy, and consequently, the discourse was more recurrent. In one document in mid-1993, the intelligence argues that "none of the parties can match a NATO-led force operating under rules of engagement that allow all necessary means to enforce the [Vance-Owen] Plan. Under such circumstances, assuming early challenges were met with force, fighting would be reduced, and humanitarian problems mitigated" (CIA, 1993g p. 6). Despite referring to NATO leadership instead of particular US leadership, later documents show how a NATO-led force means a US-led force (CIA, 1995c, p. 1).

There are a few arguments that surround the Lift and Strike discourse. Still, the main one is to use the lifting of the arms embargo and airdrops as a tool "to catalyse others to take action, to work with the Russians, and to push the Allies to do more" (CIA, 1993b, pp. 1-2). On many occasions, however, it was seen as a strategy to show US power and stances on the War, for example, as a way to show that the "US cannot stand by and permit brutal sieges" (CIA, 1993b, pp. 1-2) or to "deflect Islamic criticism that the UN embargo is unfair" (CIA, 1993e, p. 1)

As Hansen (2006) argued, the discourse blames the Europeans for not doing enough to prevent or stop the War and for hindering US action. This narrative is present in many documents. For example, when analysing the Europeans' threats to withdraw UNPROFOR, the Balkan Task Force intelligence writes that:

> Sarajevo and Gorazde make clear that the British and French are not prepared to authorise that kind of escalation when their forces are so vulnerable in harm's way. Given this fundamental fact, we may be better off seeing them go sooner rather than later. This could make the transition to lifting the arms embargo easier (CIA, 1994b, p. 5)

However, unlike Hansen's (2006) argument, the documents focus little on the US leadership based on its multicultural background. The focus was on the US role in the international post-Cold War order. Here is where the Lift and Strike discourse gives place to a Civilisational discourse.

3.2.3. The Civilizational Discourse

Finally, according to Hansen (2006), the Civilizational Discourse interprets the Balkans as inferior and underdeveloped and the West as superior, but with the help of the

West – in its "civilising mission" – the former can be developed and "Westernised". In my analysis, I have separated this discourse into two subtypes: Westernisation and US Leadership discourses. This discourse, too, was highly present in the documents.

The Westernisation discourse focuses on how the West can help carry out political and economic reforms in Bosnia-Herzegovina and how the country can be transformed into a capitalist liberal democracy. Moreover, it views the impossibility of having a multicultural, unified Bosnia-Herzegovina:

> These Intelligence agencies believe *a more manageable objective would be the survival of a fragmented Muslim-majority state* following *a partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, although that would require a *long-term commitment to provide substantial international assistance*. They believe that "*cantonisation" of Bosnia would be only a prelude to partition*, with the Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Croat territories in time unifying with Serbia or Croatia respectively. The predominantly-Muslim Bosnian government probably would be left with 3 to 5 noncontiguous enclaves in central and northwestern Bosnia. *Their political and economic viability would be questionable beyond the near-term, and some political association with Croatia probably would result.* According to this view, this is probably the most optimistic possible outcome of the on-going peace process in Geneva under UN and EC co-chairmen Cyrus Vance and David Owen. State/INR agrees that *Bosnia and Herzegovina probably cannot be restored as a unitary, multi-ethnic state precisely as it was before the invasion and onset of War in April, 1992, without massive, long-term foreign intervention*. However, it may be possible to reach a negotiated settlement in which the three major communities – Muslim, Croat, and Serb – can agree to co-exist in some sort of federal arrangement which could be politically and economically viable with a far smaller degree of foreign military intervention and involvement. The main obstacle to such an outcome is Serb intransigence, fueled by the belief that the Serbs basically have won the conflict and the international community is unwilling to intervene to alter the situation on the ground. (CIA, 1992c, p. 39) [emphasis added].

In this document, the CIA interprets BiH and the Balkans through a civilisational discourse, in which the Balkans is seen as less developed than the West/the US and because of that, the West has a "civilisational burden/mission" in the country. The argument for a long-lasting international (Western) intervention shows how the CIA sees the government as incapable of administrating itself during and after the War. The only possibility for the country's existence in the future is under international intervention or partition. The Decolonial concepts help analyse this document.

CIA's interpretation is rooted in a hierarchisation of race/ethnicity and the derivatives "developed/underdeveloped" and "superior/inferior". The "need for a long-lasting intervention" argued by the CIA shows an intrinsic logic of Coloniality, where new mechanisms perpetuate a colonial situation without the traditional mechanisms of Colonialism. Fasting-forward to the post-Dayton (and contemporary) period, establishing the OHR as a mechanism for "long-lasting intervention" can be interpreted as a mechanism of Coloniality.

Moreover, the intelligence's understanding that the cantonisation of BiH would lead to the partition of the country and unification with the neighbours is present in other documents throughout the War: "A three-way partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina – which largely reflects Serb and Croat aims – will be easier to implement than creating a multiethnic state as envisioned by the Vance-Owen Plan" (CIA, 1993h, p. 1). Another document (CIA, 1994c, pp. 3-4) regarding the signing of the Washington Agreement, establishing a cease-fire between BiH and Croatia and the creation of the Federation shows that the Bosnian Muslims were concerned about the agreement's terms "for full equality and consensus in decision-making with the Bosnian Croats, who have only one-third of their number". This evaluation repeats itself in the Dayton negotiations. In a Balkan Task Force assessment of September 1995, the CIA writes about Bosnian's leaders concerns that Croatians view the Federation as a means to partitioning Bosnia-Herzegovina (CIA, 1995d).

When drafting the Dayton agreement, Tony Lake warns President Clinton about Senator Robert Dole's resolution's[8] preamble: "We should try to get rid of the offensive language in the preamble, which characterises the Dayton agreement as 'ratification of ethnic cleansing', but we should focus our efforts on modifying the operative paragraphs" (CIA, 1995h, P. 1). Importantly, this document shows how the US was aware of the possibility of the Dayton Accords ratifying the results of ethnic cleansing.

The acknowledgment of ethnic cleansing ratification is extremely relevant for current-day Bosnia-Herzegovina. The country's division brought about by Dayton, still in vogue, influences heated political disputes not only between the Federation and Republika Srpska but also between Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks within the Federation. Regarding the

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[8] "Senator Dole introduced a joint resolution (S.J.Res. 44) that expressed support for the men and women of the United States armed forces serving in Bosnia, but did not "authorize" the deployment. It set numerous conditions and limitations on the U.S. military commitment. The resolution would have required the President to limit IFOR's role to military and not nationbuilding tasks, and to actively promote the establishment of a military balance in Bosnia through a separate train and equip program for the Bosnian Federation" (Kim, 1997, p. 8).

former, as seen in the introduction of this study, the Republika Srpska constantly challenges the OHR role and threats splitting from the Federation.

Regarding the Bosniak-Croat relationships in BiH, the Croats, too, constantly push for creating a third entity in the country in the areas where the majority of the population identifies as ethnically Croat. Several scholars, such as Zdeb (2016) and Toal (2015), have analysed Croat politics in BiH and the attempt to increase their influence and the claimed "rights" in the country. Unlike the Serbs' claim in BiH, full secession from the Croat side is not a topic anymore, but it was replaced by "blurred conceptions of territorial and non-territorial self-government" with two prevailing goals of territory and equality (Zdeb 2016, p. 551). The first means creating a third entity in addition to the Federation and RS, and the second means "the preservation of the minority veto with the 'vital interests' clause and their 'own' representation in the Presidency – a Croat candidate who represents a truly Croat party and is elected by Croats" (Zdeb, 2016, p. 552).

The US Leadership discourse was present throughout the documents, but after the Srebrenica Genocide, it became stronger. As argued previously, in the transition from Bush to Clinton, the US positioned itself as the rightful leader in the situation, and the leadership was discussed through a Lift and Strike discourse. However, the documents have shown the contrary so far, how the US could not hold this position. One document that marks a turning point in this discourse is Ambassador Madeleine Albright's Memorandum after the Srebrenica genocide, already mentioned before.

> But I have thought for some time that *we must put Bosnia in a larger political context* and re-examine our fundamental assumption that the Europeans have a greater stake in resolving Bosnia than we do. In so doing, we may conclude that extending the life of UNPROFOR is no longer in our interest. (*Why should we wait for the day when London and Paris tell us that they are leaving?*). The following paper is designed to examine how to shift from a European-led plan to an American-led plan. […] Our previous strategy – give primary responsibility to the Europeans, help the Bosnians rhetorically and hope the parties will choose peace – is no longer sustainable. […] The failure of our European allies to resolve the Bosnia crisis has not only exposed the bankruptcy of their polity, but *it has also caused serious erosion in the credibility of the NATO alliance and the United Nations.* Worse, our continued reluctance to lead an effort to resolve a military crisis in the heart of Europe *has placed at risk our leadership of the post-Cold War world*. President Chirac's comment – however self-serving – *that "there is no leader of the Atlantic Alliance" has been chilling my bones for weeks.* (CIA, 1995c, pp. 1-2) [emphasis added]

The document reveals the US' main interests in resolving the War. "Putting Bosnia in a larger context" to regain the leadership role in the post-Cold War world order and recover the NATO's and the UN's credibility. Albright's criticism of Chirac's comment shows that there should be leadership within NATO, which – implicit in her statement – must come from the United States. According to this perspective, the country should not wait and depend on the leadership of London and Paris. Later, Albright writes that "we have also failed to take into account the damage Bosnia has done to our leadership outside Europe. Moreover, our failure to act in support of Bosnia threatens to undermine moderate Islamic ties to the United States" (CIA, 1995c, p. 2), which shows how there is a bigger purpose behind American intervention in the Bosnian War.

A civilisational discourse was also present even after the Dayton Accords. Already on 29th of December 1995, the CIA in *Implementation of the Dayton Accords: Status Report #1* evaluates the political/humanitarian provisions established by the Dayton Accords. Regarding the provision "Permit, encourage, and facilitate the return of refugees and displaced persons without harassment or obstruction", the document states that: "all parties publicly endorse the right of return for all ethnic groups, but privately support ethnically homogeneous areas, particularly where their respective ethnic group has a clear majority" (CIA, 1995i, p. 13). This excerpt shows the acknowledgment of the trend for ethnic homogeneity in BiH.

Interestingly enough, another Post-Dayton evaluation document, *Prospects for Bosnia and Herzegovina Over the Next 18 Months*, published in May 1996, exempts the West from the responsibility over the trend towards partition of BiH. It describes the factors that are hampering reconciliation in the country, including mutual distrust and fear, unfavourable trends in resettlement and the permanence of nationalists in power (CIA, 1996, p. 5). This document shows a mixture of Balkanisation/Exemption and Civilisational discourses since, at the same time, it exempts the West from the responsibility of creating "stability" in the country. It perceives BiH as required to fit into a Westernised pattern of "stability" and "successful country".

Finally, the same document foresees the Bosnian dependence on the international community generated by Dayton: "In the longer term, the challenge Dayton has set for the international community is to create something new, a Bosnian state neither dependent on a larger Yugoslav polity or market nor dominated by an outside power or a single ethnic group" (CIA, 1996, p. 7).

4. Conclusion

This chapter aims to summarise the main findings from the discourse analysis done in the previous chapter, relating it to the literature review and theoretical framework to answer the questions that guided this research. The main question guiding this research was which discourse frameworks the CIA interpreted the Bosnian War. The analysis has shown the presence of specific discourses about the Balkans in the CIA collection, based on the Discourse Analysis done by Lene Hansen (2006). The most recurrent ones were the Civilisational-US Leadership discourse, the Lift and Strike discourse, and the Balkanisation-Exemption discourse.

The different types of discourses identified in the analysis are deeply connected with the perspectives analysed in the theoretical framework of this study regarding the intertwining of Post-Colonial and Post-Socialist analysis. The documents and discourses identified show how interpretations of development, civilisation, and barbarism influenced the CIA's reading of the conflict.

The Ancient Hatred and Violence subtypes of Balkanisation discourse were more present at the war's beginning and at its end. In the first moment, the documents presented both discourses to identify the reasons for the breakup of Yugoslavia and the wars that followed and produce a historical analysis of the conflict. For ancient hatreds, some of the phrases identified to characterise the discourse were: "deep-seated ethnic tensions", "recurrent confrontations",; "historically antagonistic identifications"; "the ethnic mix has always been potentially dangerous"; "traditional ethnic animosities are linked to irreconcilable territorial claims"; "age-old animosities". Two highly relevant phrases that associated the Bosnian War with the Balkan Wars from the early 20th century were: "It's back to the future in the Serb-Croat civil war" and "a Balkan tradition: instability, entangling alliances, and war."

When it comes to the association of the Balkans with violence and brutality, other phrases were identified to characterise the discourse: "Kosovo is Yugoslavia's killing fields"; "remarkable for brutality even in Balkan annals"; "we are not talking about an agreement among three Church groups in California"; "this is the Balkans"; "Balkan standards". This type of discourse was also present towards the end of the War. During the Dayton negotiations, the documents refer to the political countries' leaders' "character" and their behaviour in the meetings – for example, they called Silajdžić "the Mad Dog" and said Izetbegović had no understanding of economic development or modernization.

The last subtype of Balkanisation discourse was the "Exemption Discourse". It was the most recurrent discourse identified, and it centres on Western and (US specifically) lack of capability/responsibility to maintain Yugoslav and BiH unity, to negotiate a settlement and to end the war. Here, the discourse was identified in relation to the deployment of US military forces and the UN mandate in the safe areas. The most interesting excerpts mention how the US commitment is limited to protecting the UNPROFOR forces and not the inhabitants of the Safe Areas. Also connected to the safe areas is the post-Srebrenica discourse. The documents show how the Bosniaks were indirectly partially blamed for the Genocide because they counted on UNPROFOR to protect the Safe Areas and because they were not militarily prepared to defend them. The topic of the Safe Areas and the international community's role in the Srebrenica Genocide analysed in the documents adds to the literature reviewed in the first chapter, especially the work by Ingrao (2009) and his arguments around the failures of the West in establishing the Safe Areas. As seen in the documents, not only the US and other Western powers failed to define the purposes of the Safe Areas, but the CIA also attempted to exempt its responsibility over them and blamed the Bosnian government for failing to protect its citizens from genocide.

One subtype of the Exemption Discourse, the Muddle-Through discourse, most prominent in a moment when the US seemed to be at a political dead-end, contrasts with the post-war narrative created by the United States. The analysis shows clearly that there was no consistent leadership from the US throughout the war, and while the country was rhetorically supporting the Bosnian government against the Serbs, in practice, the government faced not only a political deadlock within the International Community and the UN but also an internal political deadlock – there was no consistency and no clear policy direction from within the government. The documents show that the US has never set clear priorities among limiting the war, maintaining relief supplies, reducing human suffering and achieving a negotiated settlement.

The Lift and Strike discourse was identified in a mixed form with both the Exemption Discourse and the Civilisational discourse. Its main features described by Hansen (2006) – multiculturalism as a common factor between the US and BiH and a reason for it to intervene – were not identified in the documents. Multiculturalism was, in fact, seen as inviable in the Civilisational discourse, which shows inconsistency with the US rhetoric of supporting the country. The viability of BiH as a country was also questioned throughout the documents, and this was related to the partition of the country between Croats, Muslims, and Serbs. The problems of partition and multiculturalism were present in the Dayton period, and

the documents show the US acknowledgement of the ratification of ethnic cleansing that the agreement could bring about.

In creating the Dayton Accords and dividing the Bosnian territory administratively, the US negotiators consciously ignored the concerns mentioned by Bosniak leaders about the creation of the Federation, Croats' claims for a third entity, and warnings from within the US government about the ratification of ethnic divisions. By analysing the documents and contrasting them with the literature on post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina, the US priority was to consolidate its leadership in ending the war and the post-Cold War world order. From the document analysis, it is possible to question whether the US priority was to create a functioning post-war country, considering its evaluations of the impossibility of maintaining a multi-cultural Bosnia-Herzegovina and the need to divide the country, or to simply take the window of opportunity brought by the Srebrenica genocide to consolidate its power by leading the peace negotiations.

Civilisational discourse also took shape on the topic of US leadership in the world order. The documents argue that the country would only be viable through a long-lasting international intervention led, of course, by NATO and the United States. The equity between NATO and the US is explicit in the documents, and the US interests in the war were deeply connected to that. The US interest in ending the war was mainly to gain leadership in the post-Cold War context and to give NATO a post-Cold War meaning, recovering its reputation. Therefore, Bosnia was put into a "larger political context" of US leadership in the new world order. Ultimately, the intervention during the war remained in the post-Dayton context, with the OHR acting as an international actor with power over local politics.

The analysis dialogues with the literature reviewed on international intervention and the US intentions behind its actions in the Bosnian War. Parenti (2000) and Gibbs (2009) argued that the humanitarian framing of US intervention was nothing but a framing. The documents clearly show the interests behind US actions in the war – leadership in the world order. Moreover, they contradict Gow's (1997) perspective of a lack of will behind US intervention. There was, in fact, a certain level of political will, but not in favour of ending civilian suffering, ethnic cleansing, or ending the war. Instead, the documents show how political will favoured the intervention to strategically place the US in the world order.

Finally, the research's main goal and proposed innovation was to dialogue the analysis with the Decolonial theory. As explained in the second chapter, the Decolonial theory builds upon the World System Theory and Post-Colonialism analysis, both critical of Eurocentrism and developmentism. Still, each focuses on different determinants (economic

and cultural, respectively). Therefore, a Decolonial approach requires understanding the intertwining of political economy and culture in establishing global power relations. The reading of the documents has shown what is proposed by this theoretical framework: how the cultural interpretation of BiH and the Balkans, guided by ethno-racial principles, is connected to interventionist economies, guided by political intervention. Both are interconnected and related to a hierarchisation of superior/inferior, developed/underdeveloped, and civilised/barbaric peoples.

The focus on ethno-racial principles (not only by the CIA but also by the political elites involved in the War) shows how, even in the post-colonial context and in a region not colonised by Western powers (but still under the influence of Imperial powers like the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires), the power structure and global hierarchies created in the colonial era are still present in the contemporary world. The CIA's interpretation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Balkans through Balkanist and Civilisational discourses shows how BiH was during and after the war in a condition of coloniality – contemporary colonial situations without the mechanisms of colonial administration. Moreover, the analysis shows how Dayton's territorial and political structures can be read through the Decolonial framework of colonial patterns of power and coloniality since it reproduced ethnic divisions and international intervention in BiH.

A question that was not in the scope of this study and that remains is: what is next for Bosnia-Herzegovina (but also for Serbia, Montenegro, and the other countries in the Balkans)? A few insights can be taken from this analysis, focusing especially on the concept of border thinking suggested by Decolonial theories. This research did not aim to criticise democracy and democratisation efforts or defend authoritarian regimes. Instead, to criticise international intervention motivated by economic and political interests based on colonial interpretations of civilisation, barbarism, and development, like the CIA documents showed, disguised as humanitarianism efforts. It does not criticise international efforts to end war and genocide and to promote peace. However, it criticises the colonial patterns of power and coloniality related to and brought about by international intervention. What it proposes, based on Decolonial theorists, is a second decolonisation, a decolonisation of knowledge and being, that questions the mental operations and logical structures that Western modernity consists of. What is next for Bosnia-Herzegovina must be a redefinition of democracy, citizenship, human rights, humanity, and economic relations that are not based on Western modernity. Instead, this research proposes to think about these concepts based on indigenous and local perspectives and values beyond the narrow definitions imposed by European modernity.

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