

BOSNIAN GENOCIDE

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Statement of Purpose:

As a result of the Serbians' beliefs that the Muslims were unworthy of residing in their country, atrocious tactics were used in order to eradicate the Muslims from existence.

Outline:

- I. To begin, "genocide" is seen differently by everyone involved and has specific steps.
 - A. Several definitions and descriptions exist for genocide.
 - B. Raphael Lemkin's interest in mass murder helped him develop the term "genocide."
 - C. In the end, genocide develops throughout a well-thought-out eight-stage process.

- II. In Bosnia, conflicting views created tension amongst its citizens.
 - A. Unfortunately, Josep Tito's Communist ideas and death lead Yugoslavia into more unstable times in the early 1980s.
 - B. Although a majority of Yugoslavia was inhabited by Serbians, the Republic of Bosnia within Yugoslavia consisted mostly of the Muslim culture.
 - C. The differing beliefs of the Muslim and Serbian societies led them to have false perceptions of each other.

- III. The eight stages of genocide pertain to the conflict in Bosnia.
 - A. While many Muslims believed nothing would come of what President Milosevic discussed about the superiority of the Serbians, others suspected differently in classification.
 - B. For symbolization, Serbians planned out specific tactics against the Islamic culture and religion.
 - C. During dehumanization, Bosnian Muslim women and children were intentionally brutalized.
 - D. Each plan to be utilized on the Muslims was carefully organized to cause the most chaos and destruction possible.
 - E. Most government-sponsored sources of media stated false accusations about the Islamic culture to put fear into Serbians and polarize the two groups even more.
 - F. In preparation, people were forced out their homes and were transported to other locations for the purposes of torture or extermination.
 - G. Countless amounts of Bosnian Muslims were murdered using

- ~~A~~ numerous methods after preparation.
- ~~B~~ People supported certain actions during the genocide, while some continue to deny one took place.

IV. Finally, genocide is a horrific event that needs intervention on a global scale.

- ~~A~~ The United Nations lost people in the Bosnian conflict, which helped initiate their eventual involvement.
- ~~B~~ Bosnia was totally devastated by Serbia's actions against them.
- ~~C~~ The United Nations Security Council took minimal actions against Those found guilty of genocidal actions.
- ~~D~~ After becoming aware that a country has a problem with genocide, it is the international community's responsibility to step in and help.

"We won't waste our bullets on them. They have no roof. There is sun and rain, cold nights, and beatings two times a day. We give them no food and no water. They will starve like animals." This quote is from a Serbian soldier speaking about the plans against the Bosnian Muslim captives he guarded (Yancey). ^{I.} To begin, "genocide" is seen differently by everyone involved and has specific steps. ^{II.} In Bosnia, conflicting views created tension amongst its citizens. ^{III.} The eight stages of genocide pertain to the conflict in Bosnia. ^{IV.} Finally, genocide is a horrific event that needs intervention on a global scale. ^{Statement of Purpose} As a result of the Serbians' beliefs that the Muslims were unworthy of residing in their country, atrocious tactics were used in order to eradicate the Muslims from existence.

I.A. Several definitions and descriptions exist for genocide. As a punishable crime, the United Nations describes genocide as "the intention to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious groups, as such" (Vollhardt). It is also "generally considered one of the worst crimes a government (meaning any ruling authority, including that of a guerilla group, a quasi state, a Soviet, a terrorist organization, or an occupation authority) can commit against its citizens or those it controls" (Rummel). For research purposes, the term "genocide" holds two different definitions. It is either "the intention to murder people because of their group membership, even if political or economic" or "any intentional government murder of unarmed and

helpless people for whatever reason.¹⁶ This second definition may be called "democide" (Rummel).⁴ These explanations show a basic foundation for the idea of "genocide".¹⁷¹⁸

I.B. Raphael Lemkin's interest in mass murder helped him develop the term

"genocide".¹⁹ He also had a difficult time grasping certain concepts about genocide. While in college,²⁰ he heard the story of a man whose family was killed in Turkey. This man decided to shoot and kill Mehmet Talaat, who was responsible for more than one million deaths.²¹ Unfortunately, he was charged with murder, even though Talaat had never received punishment for his actions.²² Lemkin was confused by this story and questioned his teacher.²³

"There is no law that allows it, was the reply.²⁴ The professor elaborated.²⁵ 'Consider the case of the farmer who owns a flock of chickens. He kills them and this is his business. If you interfere, you are trespassing'"²⁶ (January 23-24).⁵ Although Lemkin had been fascinated with the idea of mass murder since he was a boy, his teacher's response about Mehmet Talaat gave him a more avid interest in the subject.²⁷ He did tedious research in an attempt to find a law against this sort of event.²⁸ He ultimately wrote one himself because there weren't any previously recorded.²⁹ His law was informally rejected by the international community (January 23-25).³⁰ After studying the topic even more thoroughly, Lemkin also decided to name this horrible event himself.³¹ Following much deliberation, he

took "the Greek prefix, 'genos,' meaning 'tribe, group, or nation,' and combined it with the Latin word, 'cidium,' which means 'to kill.'" Lemkin had created the word "genocide" (January 29). All in all, Lemkin's persistence educated himself and others more thoroughly.

I.C. In the end, genocide develops throughout a well-thought-out eight-stage process. Although genocide is not linear, it slowly develops throughout eight steps. Each stage continues to operate the entire time and holds a certain distinguishing characteristic different from the others (Stanton). First, people are categorized into factions that are considered dissimilar to those in charge. These victims can consist of anyone and are classified as the target group (Stanton). Next is symbolization, where new names for races, a distinguishable manner of dressing, and the usage of a cross or a Star of David are all ways people tell others apart. If these unique traits and qualities are used in hatred against a group, it can have an extremely negative result. Even though symbolization of others is generally considered a normal human trait, when paired with dehumanization, genocides become more likely to occur (Stanton). Humans typically become revolted at the idea of others committing murderous acts. Because the victims are looked at as animals, insects, or vermin by the hate group, dehumanization during genocide bypasses this repulsion (Stanton). All plans during genocide are organized and well-thought-out. Militias are utilized to allow states to

deny they partook. Although the organization may be informal, people always ⁴⁸ ~~get~~ ^{are} trained in order to be ready for killing ¹² ~~(Stanton)~~ ⁴¹. The fourth stage is polarization, a way to separate each group in an area even more. Anyone who may be a threat to the extremist's plans is arrested and killed ¹³ ~~(Stanton)~~ ²¹. Victim groups are identified and segregated while wearing identification symbols during preparation. They ^{are placed} ~~get put~~ into ghettos, concentration camps, or famine-struck regions and are treated horrifically until their deaths ¹⁴ ~~(Stanton)~~ ⁵³. ~~To the killers,~~ genocide is considered extermination because of their belief that those murdered are less than human. In some cases, armed forces supplied by the government assist ⁵⁴ militias in their dreadful acts. Once this stage occurs, the event is practically impossible to stop ⁵⁵ ~~(Stanton)~~ ¹⁵ ⁵⁰. During the final stage, denial, in an attempt to hide evidence, the perpetrators will burn bodies and records, intimidate any witnesses, and blatantly lie about any crimes that were committed ¹⁶ ~~(Stanton)~~ ⁵⁷. Although genocide has many meanings for different people, it is still an organized, eight-stage process. ⁵⁸

II.A. Yugoslavia was a rocky country following World War II. ⁵⁹

~~Unfortunately, Josep Tito's Communist ideas and death lead Yugoslavia into more unstable times in the early 1980s.~~ Bosnia is a republic located in the country of Yugoslavia, which also contains Croatia and Serbia. Yugoslavia contained mass destruction that its ⁶⁰ people lived in after World War II ⁶¹

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 (Yancey 21).⁶² Josip Tito came the midst of this chaos with his Communist forces that already controlled the army and some local governments.⁶³

Although the Yugoslavs were becoming angry about having to give up family land and getting low pay from the new Soviet-style, socialist economic

system, Tito still decided to make another daring move.⁶⁴ He asked for economic help from the U.S. and Western Europe, which improved conditions

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 (Yancey 21-23).⁶⁵ However, following Tito's death, Yugoslavia had a wavering stability rocked by labor strikes, food shortages, and disputes between

republics that blamed the problems of the country upon each other (Yancey¹⁹

³²).⁶⁶ "By the late 1980s, the image of Yugoslavia as a nation of strong, independent people peacefully coexisting under the banner of Communism had faded.⁶⁷ The power of the Communists collapsed in 1990, opening the door for

a variety of political parties free elections, and new leadership.⁶⁸ Citizens in most republics were eager to embrace democracy with all the freedom and responsibility that went along with it" (Yancey²⁰ 33).⁶⁹ These events led to

many problems between the differing ethnic groups within Bosnia.⁷⁰

II.B. Although a majority of Yugoslavia was inhabited by Serbians, the Republic of Bosnia within Yugoslavia consisted mostly of the Muslim culture.⁷¹ The Serbs held more than one-third of the population in Yugoslavia, which made them the largest ethnic group there.⁷² They were also extremely proud of their heritage, but ^{they were} got put in an uproar by their new president,

Milosevic. He instigated their anger with reminders of any tyranny from the past (Yancey 33). Muslims also living in Bosnia generally enjoyed modern comforts, such as electricity and going to the theater. There were still mosques available at this time for them to worship in and indicated how the Ottoman Empire had influenced the Balkans (Yancey 9). However, "multicultural Bosnia, sitting in the center of the Balkans, was caught in the middle of tensions and ambitions that motivated its neighbors" (Yancey 37). Cultural and religious contrasts in small communities, such as Bosnia, can lead to apprehension and hostility between ethnic groups.

II.C. The differing beliefs of the Muslim and Serbian societies led them to have false perceptions of each other. Bosnian Muslims stayed loyal to their Islamic heritage, even while surrounded by Serbians and Croatians (Yancey 28). Croatians held onto Roman Catholicism, and Serbians were members of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Although both of these groups targeted the Muslims, they also turned against each other as well (Yancey 28). When problems began to arise with Yugoslavia, "as one Serb journalist explained in 1993, 'the average Serb honestly believes it's Serbia that's under attack'" (Yancey 34). Serbians held onto the idea of nationalism in this time of trouble, as it is paranoia. It is the easy way out, fear and envy, a surrender of individual voices, and thrives on or by denial (Grant 126-127). Even though

all Yugoslavs lived in peace at one time, misleading ideas about the different cultures put fear and paranoia into the minds of the Serbian people.

III.A. While many Muslims believed nothing would come of what President Milosevic discussed about the superiority of the Serbians, others suspected differently in classification. President Milosevic continued to discuss Serb superiority along with his wish for boundaries to be redrawn so that all other parts of Yugoslavia joined Serbia. Bosnia was in the center of fighting between its neighbors whose tensions were caused by Milosevic. Finally, "war began in Bosnia just days after they declared their independence from Yugoslavia..." (Yancey 34-38). The intellectuals of the Bosnian Muslims believed their country wouldn't join the surrounding country's warfare. However, the Sestovic family suspected differently. Not only did they get excluded from meetings and have nationalist songs sung to them, but the Sestovic's son also saw Serbs gathering weapons. This signaled to them that something would soon happen (Yancey 37). Not only did Milosevic's word about Serbian superiority single out people, but Muslims were called "Islamic Fundamentalists" and every Croat was labeled "Ustase" (Grant 284). Milosevic was the initial instigator of problems between Serbians and Bosnian Muslims.

III.B. For symbolization, Serbians planned out specific tactics against the Islamic culture and religion. All of the events that occurred in Bosnia since

April 1992 are considered "the barbaric assault on the cultural heritage of the land" (Grant/75). "In ethnic warfare, the enemy doesn't wear a uniform or carry a gun. Everyone is the enemy" (Ali 44). "...every Catholic Church is a Croat sniper's nest. Every mosque harbors fanatic Muslim fundamentalists determined to inflict genocide on the heroic Serb people" (Ali 48). Serb troops forced Muslims to eat pork, which is against their religious beliefs, and also desecrated mosques with dead pigs lain in them or by allowing pigs to walk around in the building (Carmichael). Ideas to be used against the Muslims were greatly centered around their religion.

III.C. During dehumanization, Bosnian Muslim women and children were intentionally brutalized. They became humiliated when made to touch or eat something, such as any swine products, that their religion found revolting. In another case, everything in a man's house was removed and a stake with a pig's head impaled on it was placed in his window (Carmichael). Rape also became an extremely common tactic. Wars since the beginning of time have used rape as a kind of payback to soldiers for their work in battle. In Bosnia, it was used as a specific ploy of torment and torture against the Muslims. Serbs were ordered to, not only because the females were traumatized by it, but Muslim men feel guilty for their inability to protect their family. It was also shameful and degrading to the Islamic culture (Yancey/48). Not only was rape used against the Muslim culture, it was also

meticulously planned out by the military to impregnate as many women as possible (³⁵Strupinskiene¹¹³). In the center of the town, Foca, Serbian military police set up a rape camp named Partizan¹¹⁴. About fifty women were held there for two months and one woman was raped in front of the other captives. Another went through torment and torture six times in one night (³⁶Gutman¹¹⁵ 157). Rape became one of the most widely used tactics of the Serbs against Muslim women and children, while men were commonly exposed to and humiliated with swine products.¹¹⁷

III.D. Each plan to be utilized on the Muslims was carefully organized to cause the most chaos and destruction possible.¹¹⁸ President Slobodan Milosevic, a Nationalist, became President of the Republic of Serbia after Tito and inspired his citizens to vote for a Socialist government.¹¹⁹ He wanted Yugoslavia's six republics to remain united as one country.¹²⁰ Therefore, Milosevic had troops enter the independent Kosovo and Vojvodina to make forced extensions of Serbia (³⁷Yancey¹²¹ 33). Bosnia had two million refugees caused by Serbia's aggressive attempts to unite the republics in just six months. The Serbians considered this part of "ethnic cleansing" (³⁸Yancey¹²² 38-39). In a specific case,¹²³ heavily armed Serbian men traveled from city to city in order to liberate those who were predominantly Muslim.¹²⁴ They set up roadblocks and walked through the streets with grenade launchers and automatic pistols.¹²⁵ Both electricity and water supplies were cut off and dead

bodies lay all over the streets with no proper burial (Malcolm 236). To conclude, Milosevic held a key role in changing the Serbians' beliefs to be against the Muslims.

III.E. Most government-sponsored sources of media stated false accusations about the Islamic culture to put fear into Serbians and polarize the two groups even more. After Tito joined the Partisan group, their slogan for war became "Death to Fascism, Freedom to the People." Although during Tito's time it stayed accurate, when Milosevic became president, the statement was misleading since many citizens wouldn't actually obtain freedom (Yancey 19). In order to show Serbians those who supposedly wronged them in past events, Milosevic encouraged the development of fictitious stories. It was a classification against members of the neighboring republics (Yancey 33). "For instance, government-sponsored brochures were illustrated with old photographs of severed heads and referred to Croat atrocities during World War II. There were many false, violent threats towards Serbian residents given within news reports. Some television and radio stations controlled by the government stated Bosnian Muslims wanted to create an Islamic Republic by driving out the Serbians (Yancey 33-34). Each deceitful story angered the Serbians and sent them into a self-protection mode.

III.F. In preparation, people were forced out their homes and were transported to other locations for the purposes of torture or

extermination.¹³⁷ When people were forced to leave their homes and possessions, they had to walk to make-do camps or were transported to distant locations by bus or train. Freight cars on trains would sometimes hold refugees for several days without any access to food, water, fresh air, or proper toilets.¹³⁸ Many people died in these journeys, especially children, and their bodies were just dumped alongside the road (Yancey 41).¹³⁹ At one point, "Serbs loaded Muslim men onto trucks and drove them to a killing ground where they were shots.¹⁴⁰ The bodies were buried in mass graves" (Grant 44).¹⁴¹ To their advantage, the Serbians had a decent supply of weaponry. Key firearms and ammunition factories lay in ethnically Serb areas of Bosnia and Serbia itself possessed stockpiles from their past military.¹⁴² The Middle East also supplied the Yugoslav army with an additional fourteen thousand tons of armaments that Serbs could use to their advantage (Malcolm 243).¹⁴³ In summary, while the Muslims were suffering, the Serbs had many things happening in their favor.¹⁴⁴

III. G. Countless amounts of Bosnian Muslims were murdered using numerous methods after preparation.¹⁴⁵ In Bosnia, more than one-hundred-fifty-thousand deaths happened, over two millions people were ousted from their residences to become refugees, and many towns were torched while places of worship were blown up (Grant 252).¹⁴⁶ In some cases, "Prisoners were often stabbed and beaten to death.¹⁴⁷ Some were burned alive.¹⁴⁸ Hundreds were shot, then

their bodies were carelessly dumped into ravines or rivers" ⁴⁶ (Yancey)

42). Located just ten miles from the Serbian border, lay the town of ¹⁵¹ Srebrenica. ¹⁵² In July 1995, eight thousand Muslim men and boys were mass murdered. It was meant as a "safe area" for the Bosnians, but the United Nations guards protecting it were gunned down. ¹⁵³ Srebrenica became an open target for the enemy ⁴⁷ (Lischer). ¹⁵⁴ The Bosnian genocide contained the deaths of thousands of innocent men, women, and children. ¹⁵⁵

III.H. ¹⁵⁶ People supported certain actions during the genocide, while some continue to deny one took place. ¹⁵⁷ In an attempt to obtain peace, the world promised Serbians land at the beginning of the conflict. They should have known it wouldn't stop the war by looking back at Hitler's actions during the Holocaust when appeased. ¹⁵⁸ The Serbs took advantage of their situation and continued to take down Bosnia ⁴⁸ (Yancey/45). ¹⁵⁹ Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic held some of the power in the town of Foca. ¹⁶⁰ He, along with a few other close aides, organized the military assault against Foca, which also included concentration camps and the destruction of mosques along with additional signs of Muslim culture. ¹⁶¹ However, Karadzic denied knowledge of these events and more than eighteen rapes, which he said, "was not organized but done by psychopaths" ⁴⁹ (Gutman/158). ¹⁶² Many Muslim women are still upset that others believe that what happened to the women during the war could have been avoided. ¹⁶³ "Everyone who is with us now (other refugees) does not ¹⁶⁴

believe we were forced,' explained Sevlata Ajanovic, who was raped repeatedly after being captured by Serbs in 1992. 'And they think, we are going with them (the Serbs) again. We can't imagine marriage as a normal thing. We know that the man will always be suspicious'" (Yancey 43-44). Current Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic denied that the mass genocide of Srebrenica ever occurred. United States Chairman Chris Smith says, "I condemn President Nikolic's denial...I've been to Srebrenica and seen some of the coffins of those killed...For a head of state to do such a thing is reprehensible..." (Smith). In summary, by analyzing the situations in Bosnia, it is possible to see that people should not doubt whether or not genocide took place.

IV. A. The United Nations lost people in the Bosnian conflict, which helped initiate their eventual involvement. The international community did not become involved with the Bosnian conflict until a massacre was committed in Srebrenica. This is only because this act was considered genocide, and they had a duty to fulfill in preventing it. According to logic of this kind, any other crimes of the war were lower intensity (Becirevic). United Nations members became especially inspired to step in because some of their own people were killed in Srebrenica. Otherwise, they still might have allowed for these horrific events to go on (Lischer). In May 1995, the United Nations brokered a ceasefire after the fighting had already started slowing down the

past few weeks ⁵⁴ (Yancey/93). ¹⁷⁸ Although the United Nations hadn't been affected by the genocide before, they should have stepped in to assist the Muslims at an earlier time. ¹⁷⁹

IV.B. Bosnia was totally devastated by Serbia's actions against them. ¹⁸⁰ "Homes, businesses, hospitals, and houses are crippled. Communication systems are cut" ⁵⁵ (Yancey/92). ¹⁸¹ "The people are devastated...An estimated two hundred thousand have died since fighting began in 1991. ¹⁸² Twice that many have been maimed and injured. ¹⁸³ More than two million people—almost half the prewar population of Bosnia have been forced out of their homes...Those who survive are emotionally scarred. ¹⁸⁴ Many carry the seed of revenge that could have tragic consequences in the future" ⁵⁶ (Yancey/93). ¹⁸⁵ During the genocide, intentional organized rape by Serbian forces was done to "wipe out the enemy and to create unbearable conditions for future mothers and children." ¹⁸⁶ Unfortunately, their plan worked and many women gave birth to what were called "war babies". ¹⁸⁷ Some scholars have done research into the subject, but none have found reasonable information on it ⁵⁷ (Strupinskiene). ¹⁸⁸ In a catastrophic situation, the Serbs left Bosnia in complete ruins for its Muslim occupants. ¹⁸⁹

IV.C. The United Nations Security Council took minimal actions against those found guilty of genocidal actions. ¹⁹⁰ Prompted by the U. S. Secretary of State's ideas about war crimes, the UN Security Council investigated for

evidence against the events that occurred in Bosnia. They had an overwhelming amount of information and witnesses to show that a bulk of crimes committed were commanded by Milosevic and Karadzic (Yancey

94). The International Court of Justice investigated into the case of Bosnia concerning application of the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" against Serbia. They decided there was evidence that they had "...violated obligations to prevent genocide...", but hadn't committed genocide (Palassis). Dusan Tadic was the first of very few Bosnian Serbs to be put on trial starting in May 1995. He was charged "with ordering the murder, rape, and torture of Bosnian Muslims in the Omarska prison camp" (Yancey/94). Although the acts done by the Serbians were atrocious, there was not much punishment against them.

IV.D. After becoming aware that a country has a problem with genocide, it is the international community's responsibility to step in and help. Even though having knowledge about an event as horrific as genocide and doing nothing may seem awful, there are some reasonable arguments behind it. "The political situations in which genocides happen are complicated, and military intervention can make the situation worse." "The use of force should be avoided in international affairs, whatever the cause." Also, "If major powers sent in their armies every time a country offended against human rights, it would lead to endless wars" (Grant/41). Experts say that the world

has the ability to prevent genocide by staying aware of the warning signs; for example, propaganda against a minority group or isolation of a potential target group (Grant 58). "Governments must do everything they can to encourage a basic respect for human rights and the rights of minorities" (Grant 58). To summarize, Bosnia was greatly affected by their genocide; however, it shows the necessity of countries assisting each other.

In conclusion, genocide always develops through eight stages, but it differs in each situation. President Milosevic's statements against the Muslims lead many Serbians to feel threatened. They decided to take matters in their own hands with organized, well-thought preparations that became the steps of genocide. The international community did not step in until after a lot of suffering and destruction, but the Bosnian genocide still taught the world lessons about the importance of respecting people of different ethnicities, religions, and gender. Because of the Serbians fear in the Bosnian Muslims retaliation, they committed horrific acts to annihilate them. It also still affects many people after twenty years as Edib Palalic explains. "Everyone thinks it's great that the war is over. But we Bosnians often say we have yet to survive the peace. This peace" (Terry 15).

Great job!

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