The Strange Silence: Explaining the Absence of Monuments for Muslim Civilians Killed in Bosnia during the Second World War

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Explaining the Absence of Monuments for Muslim Civilians Killed in Bosnia during the Second World War

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Newly available documentation from the State Archive of Bosnia-Herzegovina indicates that the majority of sites where Muslim civilians were killed during the Second World War remained unmarked as late as the mid-1980s. The existing scholarship, most of which argues that Yugoslavia's communist regime sought to "de-ethnicize" the remembrance of all of the interethnic violence of the war, has failed to notice and explain this apparent bias against Muslim civilian war victims. This article seeks to answer the question of why so many sites in Bosnia-Herzegovina where Muslim civilians were killed remained unmarked after the war. It does so through the reconstruction and analysis of the wartime and postwar history of Kulen Vakuf, a small town located in northwestern Bosnia. The analysis of the dynamics of mass killing in the region reveals that the communist-led Partisan movement absorbed large numbers of Serbian insurgents who had murdered Muslims earlier in the war. The transformation of the perpetrators of the massacres into Partisans created a postwar context in which the authorities, to avoid implicating insurgents-turned-Partisans as war criminals, and the Muslim survivors, out of fear of retribution and a desire to move on, agreed to stay silent about the killings. The end result was the absence of monuments for the victims.

Keywords: *Bosnia-Herzegovina; silence; Muslims; monuments; mass killing*

I don't know how many of the Muslim people were killed. No one knows. No one ever made a list, no one on his own or with others ever collected such information, no one exaggerates or minimizes, quite simply—people stay silent.

—Živojin Gavrilović, 1991[1]

1. Introduction

On 20 June 1983, the official organization of Second World War veterans in Bosnia and Herzegovina, known to most by its acronym SUBNOR,[2] issued a classified directive to all of its municipal councils. They were to provide detailed answers to three questions: First, how many "Victims of Fascist Terror"[3] had been killed in

each municipality? Second, what were the nationalities of the victims? Third, had these sites of mass killing been marked with monuments?[4] By 1986, after a number of delays caused by the difficulty of obtaining precise answers to such questions more than forty years after the end of the war, the project was completed. Out of the 1,014 sites which had been identified where mass killings[5] of civilians had taken place, it was found that only about one-third had been marked with monuments.[6] In a number of cases, it was difficult, and sometimes impossible, to determine the nationality of the victims. Yet despite the incomplete nature of the data, one trend was clear: the sites where Muslim civilians had been murdered had the least number of monuments. In some areas, such as the Bosnian Krajina, eastern Bosnia, and Herzegovina, nearly every site remained unmarked.[7] "More than forty years after the war," the SUBNOR report stated, "people are still keeping quiet about the victims of Muslim nationality."[8] The report concluded that reason for this situation was a lack of political will and argued that something had to change: "We still don't have the political bravery to tell the truth to the people. It is time to tell people about the tens of thousands of Muslims who we lost in the first days of the war."[9]

Why were so few monuments built in these places where Muslim civilians were killed? How was a public silence about these war victims possible in a country whose communist leadership was explicitly committed to promoting the equality of all nationalities? The 1986 SUBNOR report does not provide answers to these questions. Unfortunately, neither does the existing scholarship on the remembrance of World War II victims in Yugoslavia. Most studies by foreign-based researchers argue that the communist regime sought to "de-ethnicize" the remembrance of all the inter-ethnic violence of the Second World War in Yugoslavia for a host of reasons: to cement the legitimacy of the new state, to promote the "Brotherhood and Unity" of all nationalities, to manage potentially explosive national relations, and to spread the blame for war crimes in an evenhanded way. This approach resulted in what some scholars have called "buried" and "suppressed" memories about the ethnically driven wartime mass killing.[10] Yet the 1986 SUBNOR report reveals that, when it came to building monuments where Muslim civilians were killed, the communist regime did not remember all war victims equally. The existing studies, which stress the "de-ethnicization" of all war remembrance, have failed to grasp the existence of inequalities in war remembrance according to nationality, particularly with regards to Muslim civilian war victims.

In contrast to the foreign scholarship, Bosniak (Muslim) scholars, as well as a handful of other researchers from the region, have confirmed the findings of the 1986 SUBNOR report in a number of studies published since 1990. Some have even claimed that the overall absence of monuments under the communist regime on sites where Muslim civilians were murdered was the result of an intentional governmental policy of discrimination.[11] But none of their studies provide an explanation for the emergence of this strange postwar silence. More recently, the Dutch anthropologist Ger Duijzings has suggested that the absence of monuments for Muslim civilian war

victims resulted from a perception that they were "on the wrong side" during the war.[12] But given that the overwhelming majority of these victims were on no side during the war, it is difficult to understand where this perception came from. In any case, Duijzings's work does not clarify this issue. All of the existing literature thus leaves a crucial but unanswered question: why was there a silence in postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina about Muslim civilians murdered during the Second World War?

This article seeks to answer this question. It does so through an investigation of the wartime and postwar history of Kulen Vakuf, a small town located on the Una River in northwestern Bosnia. The SUBNOR report mentions this place on several occasions, noting that as many as two thousand Muslim civilians—including men, women, and children—were murdered there in early September 1941. Yet by the mid-1980s, not only had no monument been built in remembrance of these victims, but none of them had ever been acknowledged as "Victims of Fascist Terror."[13] Why? This article begins with a reconstruction and analysis of the specific dynamics of mass killing in the Kulen Vakuf region during the summer and early autumn of 1941. The main task is to show that the communist-led Partisan resistance movement eventually absorbed large numbers of Serb insurgents who had participated earlier in the war in the mass killing of Muslim civilians. The second part of the article seeks to explain how this wartime dynamic led to the crystallization of a public culture of silence about these Muslim civilian war victims. The main argument is that the transformation during the war of many of the perpetrators into Partisans created a postwar context in which the authorities, to avoid implicating Partisans as war criminals, and the Muslim survivors, out of fear of retribution and a desire to move on, agreed to stay silent about the massacres.

2. Mass Killing in the Kulen Vakuf Region in 1941

On the eve of the Second World War, the municipality of Kulen Vakuf was composed of the Ljutoč valley and its surrounding hills and mountains. In the valley were the Muslim villages of Ćukovi, Orašac, and Klisa and the town of Kulen Vakuf, whose population of nearly 2,100 was mostly Muslim aside from around 125 Serbs and a handful of Croats. Surrounding those in the valley were many Serb and a few Croat villages. While political life in the kingdom of Yugoslavia was highly polarized along national lines due to unending disputes about host of different national questions, everyday relations among a majority of Serbs, Muslims, and Croats in the Kulen Vakuf region were generally positive.[14]

However, individuals with extremist views did exist, as exemplified by the contingent of Serb villagers who, in the wake of the government's declaration of agrarian reform in 1918, marched to Kulen Vakuf with the intention of slaughtering all of its Muslim inhabitants. Yet it was another group of Serbs, lead by the local Orthodox priest, who managed to stop them, demonstrating that a strong tradition of friendship

existed in the region across national lines.[15] Still, the government's agrarian reform did ultimately impoverish many Muslims in the region who had been land owners as a result of the Ottoman Empire's earlier patterns of conquest and settlement.[16] But their resentments, as well as those of local Croats who viewed the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav government as biased against them, did not manifest in acts of mass violence during the 1920s and 1930s.

This changed with the Nazi invasion of Yugoslavia on 6 April 1941. While much of the country's territory was divided up among the Axis powers, most of Bosnia and Herzegovina was incorporated into a new state called the Independent State of Croatia (Nezavisna Država Hrvatska, or NDH). Its fascist leadership, known as the Ustašas (Ustaše, or "Insurgents"), under the command of the Croat right-wing extremist Ante Pavelić, was committed to creating a state for Croats, and for them alone. As for the many Muslims who found themselves as citizens of the new state, the Ustašas considered them to be Croats of the Islamic faith and welcomed them into the new homeland for "the Croat nation." Aside from Jews and Roma, the main population that stood in the way of the Ustašas' vision of an ethnically pure Croat state was the Serbs, who composed nearly one-third of the population of the NDH. While many Croats and Muslims in the region were not supportive of the Ustašas' idea of a state only for Croats, others joined the new regime, either out of ideological conviction or pursuit of personal enrichment.[17]

In Kulen Vakuf, a Croat by the name of Miroslav Matijević was selected by the regional authorities to organize Ustaša units in the town, as well as throughout the Muslim villages in the Ljutoč valley and the neighboring Croat villages. Archival documents indicate that 51 men joined the Ustašas, of whom 32 were Muslims and 19 Croats.[18] In 1941, the population of Kulen Vakuf was around 2,100, of whom 1,975 were Muslims. In the rest of the Muslim villages in the Ljutoč valley the total number residents was around 3,700. To these 5,675 Muslims should be added around 500 or so Croats who lived in nearby villages. As a way of illustrating the limited popularity of the Ustašas in the Kulen Vakuf region, one need only observe that the 51 volunteers who joined Matijević made up less than 1 percent of the total population of Muslims and Croats.

Nevertheless, following the pattern of violence against Serbs that the regional Ustaša authorities set in motion during the second half of June 1941, this small group of men soon plunged the Kulen Vakuf region into a cycle of unprecedented mass killing.[19] During the end of June and early July, the local Ustašas entered Serb villages and arrested prominent Serbs, such as teachers, merchants, and the heads of leading families. None of them ever returned to their villages, and none of their bodies were ever found.[20] Then they started arresting many of the remaining male Serbs, whom they led back to Kulen Vakuf. After holding them in the town's primary school for a night or two, the Ustašas took them in small groups up the hill to the Orthodox church and slit their throats, later dumping their bodies in a nearby ditch.[21]

Exemplifying the tradition of interethnic friendship in the region, a number of the Muslims and Croats living in the Ljutoč valley found out about these arrests and killings and took steps to warn the Serbs to flee. These individuals managed to save a significant number of their Orthodox neighbors.[22] As a way of concealing future killings, the head Ustaša Matijević ordered that Serbs who were arrested were to be marched eight kilometers west of town towards a pit near the Croat village of Boričevac. From the middle of July 1941, the Boričevac pit became the central site where the Ustašas would engage in the mass killing of Serbs in the Kulen Vakuf region. A precise figure of the number of Serbs the Ustašas killed there, as well as at other sites, during June and July of 1941 is difficult to determine, but it seems likely to be about six hundred.[23]

Word of the extreme violence spread rapidly among the Serbs in the region. Some managed to flee to the forests as the Ustašas murdered their families and neighbors and set fire to their villages. Others somehow survived gunshots and blows from axes to walk half-conscious and bleeding out of the ditches and holes where the Ustašas had dumped them. They returned to their villages and told their relatives and neighbors what they had endured.[24] The survivors of the massacres reported that some of the Muslim Ustašas were familiar faces from Kulen Vakuf and the other Muslim villages in the Ljutoč valley. The notion thus began to spread that "the Turks" (i.e., the Muslims) of Kulen Vakuf were those responsible for all the killings, despite the fact that a sizable number of the local Ustašas were Croats. Kulen Vakuf quickly became known among the Serbs of the region as a town of Ustašas, a place where the murderers of their relatives and neighbors lived.[25]

The mass killings of Serbs the Ustašas carried out caused the Serb survivors to begin an insurgency at the end of July.[26] Shortly after the insurgents launched their first attacks on the Ustašas in the region, the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party Yugoslavia for Bosnia and Herzegovina issued a call on 27 July 1941 for a general uprising against what it called "the fascist occupier and its domestic collaborators." The handful of Serb communists in the greater Kulen Vakuf region then began trying to organize the peasant insurgents into a guerrilla army that was to fight for liberation and socialist revolution. They immediately encountered sizable difficulties. To begin with, their numbers among the Serb insurgents were exceptionally small, which drastically reduced their capacity to exert widespread influence. They often lacked the necessary authority with the peasant insurgents that other prominent local Serbs had—especially former gendarmes and soldiers of the Yugoslav army. While many of the Serb communists had roots in the villages of the region, most had spent significant periods of their lives in urban areas as workers or students, which is where they were exposed to the communist movement. As a result, they frequently lacked the crucial local connections and levels of trust and respect that noncommunist commanders enjoyed among the peasant insurgents. There was, therefore, a vast chasm between the communist leadership, which endeavored to take the reins of the

uprising, and the Serb peasant insurgents and their noncommunist commanders, who were capable of doing the actual fighting.[27]

Another point of tension between the would-be communist leadership and the Serb peasant insurgents was the issue of collaborating with Muslims and Croats. The communists hoped that fighters of all nationalities would join the uprising and fight together against fascism. But for many of the Serb insurgents, Muslims and Croats were not only unwelcome among their ranks; they were the main enemy. Many Serbs who took up arms even stated that they had joined the insurgents to fight against "the Turks." Some of these fighters appear to have had chauvinistic sentiments towards Croats, and especially Muslims, which predated the violence of the Second World War. For these insurgents, the uprising presented an opportunity to take revenge on the Muslims and Croats they saw as Ustašas and to settle older disputes with their neighbors of different nationalities and confessions.[28] From its inception, the insurgency was thus a complex mix of contradictory social groups that had different and often conflicting agendas. In the Kulen Vakuf region during the late days of July and early August 1941, the imperative to fight for survival in the face of Ustaša terror was the essential glue that bound all the insurgents together.[29]

Their attacks on several Croat villages during late July and early August vividly illustrated all of these contradictory aspects of the insurgency. Assaults on Boričevac, as well as on Vrtoče and Krnjeuša, resulted in the insurgents burning the villages to the ground and massacring every Croat they could find, including women and children.[30] These attacks also resulted in the insurgents acquiring a large number of weapons, which radically increased their effectiveness as a fighting force.[31] When the Ustašas in Kulen Vakuf requested reinforcements to deal with the insurgency, the Serb peasant fighters ambushed them before they could arrive, executed all the soldiers on the spot, and in the process acquired even more weapons.[32] The attacks demonstrated that the Serb insurgents were capable of engaging in mass killing that in method differed little from that of the Ustašas. The massacres also revealed how little control the small number of communists had over the revenge-seeking peasant fighters.

During the final week of August, the local Ustaša authorities realized that they would be incapable of defending Kulen Vakuf and the Muslims of the Ljutoč valley if the insurgents attacked. They decided that the only option was to abandon the region and flee with the entire Muslim population of the valley to the city to Bihać, located around fifty kilometers away.[33] But on 4 September 1941, the insurgents launched an assault on the Ljutoč valley and overran and burned the Muslim villages of Ćukovi and Orašac. Thousands of Muslim refugees streamed into Kulen Vakuf.[34] On the morning of 6 September, the Ustašas ordered the evacuation of the town and led a column of about fifty-six hundred mostly Muslim refugees out of the valley. As they approached the Serb villages of Prkosi and Ćovka, insurgents, hidden in the forests, opened fire. While some fought against the Ustašas at the head of the column, others turned their weapons on the unarmed refugees, killing perhaps as many

as five hundred.[35] The Ustašas returned fire and eventually managed to break through, bringing with them around thirty-one hundred of the refugees. The remaining two thousand fell into the hands of the insurgents. One group of fighters, who were not under the command of communists, divided up some of the prisoners but made no attempt to determine if any of the captured Muslims were Ustašas and guilty of any crime.[36] They took at least seventy men to a nearly pit, shot each in the head, and threw their bodies into the hole.[37] The arrival of the small number of communist commanders put a stop to these executions. They ordered that the rest of the Muslims be taken back to Kulen Vakuf, from which they would be escorted out of the valley the next day.[38]

Once they returned to the town, the insurgents divided the prisoners into three groups. They led around 900 women and children to a nearby meadow, while another 400 were held near the local police station. They took around 400 to 450 men and young boys to the center of town near the mosque.[39] Local communist commanders placed a group of insurgents in charge of guarding the Muslims. But many of these men viewed those they were now supposed to be protecting as little more than the relatives of the Ustašas who had murdered Serbs earlier in the summer.[40] The insurgents in Kulen Vakuf soon began to break into shops and homes, stealing whatever they could. Others opened up the many taverns and started drinking. Near the town's school, some found a poorly buried mass grave of Serbs whom the Ustašas had killed in late August. Joined by Serb peasants, who were streaming towards the town to both plunder it and take revenge on the Muslims, they pulled body after body out of the grave. This traumatic experience aroused in many insurgents and peasants a wild, uncontrollable desire for revenge and injected a strong element of chaos into the already highly unstable atmosphere.[41] As night fell, the Serbs began setting Muslim houses on fire, and soon the entire town was engulfed in flames.[42] Then, the drunken insurgent in charge of guarding the male Muslim prisoners, a former gendarme named Pero Đilas, apparently ordered that they all be taken to the nearby Serb village of Martin Brod.[43]

After having plundered the town and set it ablaze, the Serb fighters under his command, along with many furious peasants, turned their attention to the Muslim women and children. Using their farm tools and knives, insurgents, along with male and female peasants, attacked the unarmed Muslim women and children. They threw some into the Una River. Others they chased to its bank, and then watched as they threw themselves and their children into the rushing water rather than have their throats cut.[44] Other insurgents searched for Muslim women and children who had tried to hide in nearby cornfields. They murdered them on the spot, sometimes after raping the women.[45]

In the midst of the killing and raping, Serb communists and other insurgents and local peasants who opposed the mass murder of their Muslim neighbors tried desperately to save as many as possible. Some Serb insurgents physically stopped other Serbs from murdering Muslim women and children.[46] Some of those who felt

compelled to intervene did so because they owed their lives to certain Muslims who had saved them earlier in the summer from the Ustašas.[47] A number of insurgents managed to gather together several hundred Muslim women and children and led them to the old police station where they stood guard and refused to let any other revenge-seeking insurgents and peasants touch them.[48] But there were simply more Serbs seeking revenge than those ready to defend their Muslim neighbors. Moreover, those who sought to save Muslims quickly came into heated exchanges and sometimes exchanged blows with those who were intent on slaughtering them.[49] It appears that a majority of the insurgents, as well as the peasants who had come down from the hills, willingly participated in the massacres. These "furious masses" were, according to one insurgent commander, "looking for revenge at any price."[50]

As for the 400 to 450 Muslim men the insurgents had taken to Martin Brod, the insurgent commander Pero Đilas arrived and declared as he sat on his horse that all of the prisoners were Ustašas and they all should be killed.[51] Several communists and a few Serb peasants protested, but other insurgents ignored them. They bound the hands of their prisoners with wire and took them in small groups towards a large pit called Golubnjača, or "the Pigeon Cave." One by one they cut each man's throat at the entrance of the hole and dropped the bodies into the darkness.[52] In the end, of the approximately 5,600 Muslims and a handful of Croats who left Kulen Vakuf on 6 September 1941, about 3,100 arrived to the city of Bihać with their Ustaša escorts.[53] Of the remaining 2,500, it appears that Serb communists, noncommunist insurgents, and Serb peasants managed to save around 500, the vast majority of them women and children. The remaining 2,000 disappeared between 6 and 8 September. During this forty-eight-hour period, Serb insurgents and peasants—including both men and women—murdered these unarmed Muslim men, women, and children in multiple locations and in cold blood, usually not with firearms but with farm tools. Their bodies lay in deep pits, were strewn in meadows and cornfields, and were washed down the crystal clear waters of the Una River.[54]

Despite the shock and disgust of local communist commanders with the massacres in and around Kulen Vakuf, no investigation was ever conducted to determine who exactly was responsible for the killings, and no one was ever punished.[55] The position of the communists in the insurgency was far too weak in September 1941 to carry out what would have been a very sensitive inquiry. Doing so would have risked alienating large numbers of insurgents at a time when the communists lacked sufficient authority over them. The massacres of Muslims in and around Kulen Vakuf were not isolated instances of renegade and hate-filled insurgents ignoring their communist commanders and committing atrocities. They were part of a broader trend that unfolded during the first months of the insurgency in other regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina where Serb insurgents carried out mass killings of Muslim civilians. These massacres were just as ferocious in method as what happened in Kulen Vakuf, but less extensive in scale.[56] The weakness of the communist leadership over

the insurgents was therefore not limited merely to the Kulen Vakuf region; this was a problem that hindered the communists in a number of regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the summer and fall of 1941.

The appearance of the Chetniks during the same period added yet another element to the general crisis the communist leadership faced in trying to control the Serb insurgents and mold them into a guerrilla army. The Chetniks were loosely organized groups of Serb nationalist insurgents.[57] The Chetnik leadership saw the war as an opportunity to radically reconfigure the national composition of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As two Bosnian Serb Chetnik commanders said in 1941, "The sacred hour has come to cleanse forever all of the non-national elements and enemies of the Serb people."[58] The Chetnik stance on the fate of the Muslims was not left in question. "Muslims are remnants of Turks and Turks are the natural enemies of Serbs, and the war is about the need to tear evil from the root."[59] Throughout the second half of 1941, as well as during the winter and spring of 1942, Serb Chetniks unleashed a massive wave of violence, murdering thousands of unarmed Muslim men, women, and children. Some were driven by the long-term desire to destroy once and for all their Muslim neighbors, while others sought revenge for the killings that Muslim Ustašas had committed against Serbs earlier in the summer.[60] These killings unfolded in ways similar to the massacres in Kulen Vakuf. In many cases, both communist and Chetnik commanders were attempting to direct the Serb insurgents.[61] Communist commanders, who by late summer and early fall 1941 began to refer to their insurgent units as "Partisans," deplored and heavily criticized these acts of mass killing.[62] Nevertheless, they still continued collaborating with the Chetniks against the Ustašas until early November 1941, and some even for a while after.

Around this time the Partisan leadership began to distance itself more vigorously from the Chetniks, as the mass killings they continued to commit were destroying any chance of mobilizing Muslims into the Partisan movement. Chetnik commanders then ordered their forces to begin attacking the Partisans, whom they saw as their main rivals in the power struggle for a postwar Yugoslav state, and whom they deplored for championing a multinational Bosnia-Herzegovina. This started an open war between the two predominately Serb insurgent forces. The outbreak of the conflict prompted many Serb Partisans to switch sides towards the end of 1941 and join the Chetniks. They did so in order to continue with "the killing of Turks," the group many Serb insurgents still viewed as their main enemy.[63]

While the Partisan commanders were now engaged in fighting both the Ustašas and Chetniks, they increasingly turned their attention to carrying out intensive political work among their rank and file. Their main task was to stress as much as possible that Serbs, Muslims, and Croats needed to fight together to defeat the Axis occupiers and their domestic collaborators (i.e., the Ustašas and the Chetniks). The Partisan leadership repeated again and again to their predominately Serb fighters that these

were their real enemies, not "the Turks." Activists specifically stressed that all Muslims were not Ustašas, and they ordered their rank and file to begin protecting Muslim villages from the Chetniks.[64]

Into the beginning of 1942, the Chetnik leadership collaborated with both the Ustašas and the occupying authorities (i.e., the Germans and Italians) against the Partisans.[65] These decisions eroded their legitimacy in the eyes of many of their Serb fighters and caused the Partisans to gain more and more formerly Chetnik fighters. This brought into the Partisans large numbers of men who had spent the previous months murdering innocent Muslim men, women, and children. They joined many other insurgents, now considered to be Partisans, who had never fought with the Chetniks but had nevertheless originally joined the insurgency to take revenge on "the Turks." While the Partisan leadership commanded a growing number of fighters by mid-1942, sizable numbers of them—both former Chetniks and insurgents-turned-Partisans—were guilty of grave war crimes that they had committed against Muslims earlier in the war. This reality stood in stark contrast to the Partisan ideal of building a multinational guerrilla army of Serbs, Muslims, and Croats fighting together for socialist revolution.

The steady trickle of Chetniks into the Partisan ranks would soon become a flood as the Partisans gained the upper hand in the complex civil war that was unfolding. On 21 November 1944, the Partisan leadership made the decision to grant a general amnesty to all fighters who had been in Chetnik units.[66] Yet again, large numbers of men, who had previously gone to war to murder Muslims, poured into the Partisan ranks. Except in rare cases, the killings they committed earlier in the war of Muslims were forgotten.

In the Kulen Vakuf region, these general wartime dynamics played out in specific ways. By 1942, party members had managed to form a committee of the Communist Party for the region.[67] Local Partisan commanders did their best to stress to their rank and file that "the Turks" were not collectively guilty for the crimes of the Ustašas. And they ceaselessly emphasized the equality of Serbs, Muslims, and Croats and the need to fight together against the Axis occupiers and their domestic collaborators, the Ustašas and the Chetniks. This prompted a relatively small number of insurgents to abandon their Partisan units and seek out the Chetniks. Two of the insurgent commanders who were most responsible for the massacres of the Muslims from the Ljutoč valley in September 1941, Mane Rovkić and Pero Đilas, abandoned the fledging Partisan units in the Kulen Vakuf region and became Chetniks.[68]

But the departure for the Chetniks of a handful of insurgents from the Kulen Vakuf region who were directly involved in the massacres of Muslims did not mean that Partisan units in the area were suddenly cleansed of those who had murdered Muslims. The vast majority of the Serbs who had participated in the massacres of 6 to 8 September 1941 were still with the Partisans.[69] Rade Medić "Pitar," who had apparently raped and killed Muslim women in the cornfields, then thrown their children into the Una to drown, became a Partisan soldier.[70] A Serb insurgent who had

cut the throats of scores of Muslim men at the Golubnjača pit had become a Partisan captain.[71] And the insurgent named Mikajlo Pilipović, who apparently would comment to his comrades on how difficult it was to kill the Muslims Huso and Pašo Kosović because of their hard skulls, had become a Partisan colonel.[72] None of these men were held responsible for their role in the massacres.

The Partisan units in the Kulen Vakuf region by war's end were thus a complex mixture of predominately Serb fighters. Some had distinguished themselves heroically during the years 1941 to 1945, including men who had saved innocent Muslims during the massacres in September 1941. But many others had directly participated in the slaughter of two thousand of their Muslim neighbors. When the Partisans declared victory on 9 May 1945, it was this motley assortment of peasant fighters who would soon become the vast majority of the new leaders of the Ljutoč valley. Some were sincere supporters of the new multinational socialist state, while others carried dark secrets of having murdered their Muslim neighbors.

3. The Culture of Silence

In the Kulen Vakuf region after the war, neither the local communist authorities nor the predominately peasant population publicly discussed the September massacres of the Muslims. The dominant type of communication about the killings was silence. This should not be confused with "forgetting," which would imply the absence of historical knowledge and memory about the mass killings. Nearly everyone in the region knew what had taken place in the Ljutoč valley in September 1941. The events were simply too cataclysmic and traumatic to be quickly forgotten. What emerged during the postwar years was a result of a particular political and social context in which certain groups enforced a public silence about the massacres while other groups chose to be silent. The term *silence*, therefore, should be not be understood as simply the absence of communication about the events of 1941; rather, it was the conscious choice by people to not talk about the massacres, about which they had intimate knowledge, because of a certain constellation of factors that made it virtually impossible to publicly speak about them. This led during the initial years after the war to the formation of a public culture of silence about the massacres that crystallized in several distinct ways.[73]

The first and most basic element in this public culture of silence became visible immediately after the war when Muslim refugees began returning to the Ljutoč valley. The local authorities apparently prohibited them from exhuming and burying the bodies of their relatives and neighbors whom the Serb insurgents had murdered. While no specific directive exists in the archives that shows this to have been official governmental policy, Muslims in the region testify that looking for bodies was explicitly banned and that doing so would have been very risky and would have resulted in some form of punishment.[74]

The issue of the bodies of the Muslims was a politically sensitive one for the local authorities. Many of those who had carried out the killings, as well as their commanding officers, who had either participated in or opposed the killings, but were nonetheless in positions of authority when the massacres took place, had, for the most part, become Partisans during the war. After the war, many of these individuals occupied positions of authority in the postwar organs of local government. For example, in 1952 the municipality of Kulen Vakuf was formed, and its president was a former insurgent and Partisan named Jovo Reljić from Martin Brod.[75] He had apparently been present and perhaps even participated in deciding which among the Muslim men and boys were to be murdered at the Golubnjača pit.[76] Nikola Karanović, an insurgent commander from the village of Ćovka, and the man who had led the initial attack on the column of Ustašas and the Muslim refugees whom they were leading, had become a general in the Yugoslav People's Army.[77] Many others had become members of the Communist Party, and more than a few had become army officers. To exhume the bodies of the Muslims murdered in the September massacres, whose deaths these individuals, as well as many others, were directly and indirectly responsible for, would be to call into question their positions of authority in postwar society. Specifically, it would raise the issue as to whether such individuals had committed war crimes. Exhumations and burials of the Muslim victims from the Ljutoč valley were therefore forbidden.

The absence of bodies, which made burial and the practice of traditional death rituals nearly impossible, had a destructive impact on creating any kind of coherent culture of remembrance for the victims of the 1941 massacres. No body ensured that there would be no funeral, and no funeral meant that the traditional death rituals could not be practiced in the home as well as at the gravesite, which was also generally absent.[78] How could it have been possible to remember the dead when the dead had no physical presence? As the anthropologist Katherine Verdery has observed, "a body's materiality can be critical to its symbolic efficacy." It is a body's "corporeality," its "thereness," that gives it a special power as a means to making a claim, and especially its capacity to enable the living to make a claim for the remembrance of the dead.[79] The lack of any of the remains of the Muslims deprived the survivors of victims' bodies, which were the crucial physical symbols for the remembrance of them. This greatly impaired their capacity to engage in concrete acts of remembrance. The absence of bodies, which was a direct result of governmental policy, was therefore a fundamental cornerstone in the creation of a public culture of silence about the massacres.

A second element in the creation of the silence was that no postwar investigations of the killings took place, and therefore no trials were ever held for those responsible. During 1945 and 1946, the District Commission for Determining the Crimes of the Occupiers and Their Collaborators (*Okružna komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača*) ordered extensive investigations to be carried out of the crimes Croat and Muslim Ustašas had committed against Serbs in the Kulen Vakuf

region.[80] But no similar investigation was ever conducted into the mass killings of Muslims from the Ljutoč valley. The basic reason for this was that the vast majority of Serb insurgents who participated in the massacres had become Partisans during the course of the war. While a number had done their best to protect the Muslims from the revenge-seeking insurgents and peasants, others were directly and indirectly responsible for the massacres. Many of these individuals, like Rade Medić "Pitar" from Martin Brod, who had apparently raped and killed Muslim women in the cornfields in Kulen Vakuf before killing their children, had become party members either during the war or in the early postwar years.[81] Not infrequently, they had taken up positions in the local government, and some had risen to high-ranking positions in the Yugoslav People's Army. Investigating the massacres of the Muslims from the Ljtutoč valley would have meant investigating the war crimes these men had committed, men who were now among those who staffed the local government and military in the region. Carrying out such an investigation was politically impossible for the District Commission.

The result of this decision was that the survivors of the massacres had no choice but to endure regular encounters in daily life during the postwar years with a number of the perpetrators. In some cases, they would repeatedly run into a person who had literally tried to kill them and their families. These encounters sometimes resulted in brief and surreal exchanges between the survivors and perpetrators of the massacres. One Muslim woman remembered how a Serb by the name of Nikola came to her house not long after the war. As an official with the local government, he was responsible for conducting a census of how many people lived in the region. She immediately recognized him as one of the Serbs who had murdered several members of her family. At her doorstep, he posed the matter-of-fact question, "How many people are there in this house?" She responded, "You should know . . . you slaughtered them!"[82] Not long after the war, Mujo Dervišević, the sole survivor of the massacre of the Muslim men and boys at the Golubnjača pit, had a similar experience when he encountered the man who had stood poised to slit his throat just before he managed to escape.

> The war was over . . . so I employed myself in construction. I'm mixing the mortar, and I look down the road. I see some captain [in the Yugoslav People's Army] who's smiling, walking in my direction. He yells out, "Hello Mujo!" And then he offers me his hand. I'm looking and looking. . . . "Why are you offering me that hand!? Did you forget that you wanted to use that hand to kill me and push me into the pit?![83] Yesterday you wanted to kill me and now 'hello!' I don't need your 'hello.'"[84]

In such cases, these survivors showed themselves to be capable of directly engaging with those who had murdered or attempted to murder their relatives.

Most of the time, however, encounters between perpetrators and survivors unfolded in silence. One elderly Muslim woman who lived in Kulen Vakuf would on occasion run into the Serb woman who had tried to kill her by beating her with a

stick. Both would walk past each other without saying a word.[85] Muslim men would sometimes go the many taverns in Kulen Vakuf and see Serbs who had participated in the massacres drinking. They sat down at tables, ordered wine or brandy for themselves, and drank without saying a word to those who had killed their relatives and neighbors.[86] Other Muslim men worked on the railroad in Kulen Vakuf with Serbs who murdered Muslims during the September massacres. Sead Kadić's father worked each day with the Serb who had slaughtered his father. He never said a word to the man about what had happened during the war.[87] Sometimes Muslims would see property that had belonged to them or their relatives before the war in the possession of Serbs, indicating that the Serbs in question had participated in the killings or had plundered the houses and bodies of the dead. Several years after the war a former Serb insurgent by the name of Jovo Medić came into a tailor shop in Kulen Vakuf owned by a Muslim man. The son of the owner was named Mahmut, and the insurgents had murdered him in the September massacres. When Medić arrived to pick up his pants, the owner of the shop recognized the watch he was wearing on his wrist. It had belonged to his son Mahmut. He said nothing but began to cry while staring at the watch. Medić quickly left the shop without taking his pants and never returned.[88]

In general, what was remarkable about the majority of these encounters between survivors and perpetrators was that they took place in silence. Seeing such individuals not only walking freely, but also in a number of cases holding positions of political authority, communicated that those guilty for the massacres would never be held accountable. These individuals, by virtue of their positions of authority and status as former Partisans, occupied a place in postwar society that essentially insulated them from any kind of punishment for their war crimes. This made it clear to the Muslims of the Ljutoč valley that speaking out about the massacres was not only out of the question but also potentially dangerous, as the perpetrators of the killings had the power to punish those who might question their authority. The absence of any investigation of the September 1941 massacres, and the constant encounters between unpunished perpetrators and generally silent survivors, were thus crucial aspects in the creation of the public silence that crystallized after the war.

A third element in the formation of the silence was the widespread notion among Serbs in the region that Kulen Vakuf was an *ustaško mjesto*, that is, an "Ustaša place." This stereotype first emerged during the summer of 1941 when Serbs observed that several of the Ustašas who had participated in the mass killings of Serbs in the region had come from Kulen Vakuf. The idea then quickly spread that all of the Muslims of Kulen Vakuf were somehow Ustašas, despite the fact that less than 1 percent of the Muslims from that town, as well as from the rest of the Muslim villages in the Ljutoč valley, had volunteered to join the Ustaša units in the region.[89]

The notion of Kulen Vakuf as an "Ustaša place" continued to resonate after the war ended. While completing their compulsory service in the Yugoslav People's Army, young Muslim men from Kulen Vakuf learned about the reputation their

region had among some Serb officers.[90] Apparently, more than a few high-level political figures in Bosnia and Herzegovina believed very strongly that certain regions in the republic were "Ustaša," and several felt that Kulen Vakuf was among them.[91] In the town itself, a Serb tavern owner by the name of Nikola Filipović felt the same way, as exemplified in his comment towards the end of 1958 when in a drunken state he yelled out to everyone who was sitting and drinking, "All you Muslims from Vakuf are Ustašas, and I know you from 1941."[92] This attitude was not limited to the taverns. Some Serb members of the League of Communists were reported to have complained that it was difficult to enlarge the membership of their organization beyond fellow Serbs because "the Muslims are Ustašas."[93]

The widespread notion of Kulen Vakuf as an "Ustaša place" had grave consequences with regards to the postwar perception of the massacres that the Muslims of the Ljutoč valley endured in September 1941. If they were believed to have been Ustašas, then whatever happened to them during the war could be justified as a legitimate response to dealing with the enemy. Seen this way, the massacres did not constitute war crimes because the victims were seen as Ustašas, and therefore as the enemy. By characterizing Kulen Vakuf as an "Ustaša place," Serbs in the region ensured that the massacres would be subsumed into the category of losses "the enemy" suffered, losses the regime had no interest in even counting.[94] Indeed, the category the communist regime created after the war for official civilian war victims, "Victims of Fascist Terror" (*žrtve fašističkog terora*), the designation of which provided the families of such victims with material benefits, was never assigned to the victims of the massacres in and around Kulen Vakuf.[95] This portrayal of the region as an "Ustaša place" placed a veil of silence over its Muslim inhabitants when it came to talking about the massacres and further contributed to creating a public culture of silence about the mass killings.

A fourth element at work in the formation of the silence germinated in the survivors. The traumas they had experienced and a widespread sense of fear among them that the massacres might be repeated one day contributed to a desire among many survivors to not speak about the events of 6 to 8 September 1941. For some survivors, the traumas they experienced continuously intruded into and interrupted their postwar lives. This condition manifested in a number of survivors through repeated nightmares about the mass killings, which reflected the deep traumas they had endured. Bećo Šiljdedić, whom insurgents had shot in the head and dumped into a pit with around seventy of his neighbors, was one such individual. He had managed to crawl out of the pit and survived the mass killings, but the horror of what he experienced on 6 September 1941 never left him. Nearly every night he would have intense nightmares about the massacres, usually waking up several times, sweating profusely and feeling feverish after having dreamed about some aspect of the killings.[96] Others apparently would have such vivid and disturbing nightmares that the trauma of what they experienced during the massacres would manifest through physical symptoms. Some reported that large clumps of their hair would sometimes

fall out after they awoke from particularly horrifying nightmares.[97] The difficulty of simply recovering from, and living with, their ongoing traumas greatly impaired the capacity of many survivors to feel comfortable speaking about what they had lived through.

More than a few survivors were so traumatized by what they had seen and endured during the massacres that they resolved to never speak about what had happened. For some, there appears to have been a superstitious element behind their decision. They believed that speaking about the massacres would somehow lead to their repetition in the future. Maintaining total silence, therefore, was an absolute necessity in order to protect their children.[98] For others, their silence about the killings was rooted in a desire to not pass on their traumas to their children, whom they felt should not have to live burdened by such terrible stories. They did not want their children to grow up hating others because of the massacres, and they were afraid that stories of the killings would somehow weigh down their sons and daughters, sentencing them to a life of constantly living in the past.[99]

Other survivors were justifiably afraid that if they told their stories publicly they would be in danger of suffering from some kind of repressive measures from the predominantly Serb authorities.[100] Some believed that the local police force, which was composed almost exclusively of Serbs, would arrest any Muslim who spoke about the September 1941 massacres.[101] This specific fear was related to a more general sense among Muslims in the region that they could easily be sent to jail if a single Serb spoke out against them, usually by claiming that they had been Ustašas during the war.[102] Such a sensibility was most likely rooted in the case of the handful of Muslims who were supposedly falsely accused immediately after the war of having been Ustašas who murdered Serbs in 1941. Several Muslims apparently served sizable jail sentences after having been found guilty of killing certain Serbs, even though some of Serbs in question were still alive.[103]

Other Muslims feared some of their Serb neighbors because of what they sometimes heard them say after hours of drinking in taverns. On occasion, some Serbs would let loose with aggressive words about their desire to take revenge on Muslims one day for the killings the Ustašas committed against Serbs during the war. Two examples from the wider region can illustrate why Muslims had at least some basis for this fear. Nikola Cvjetićanin, who was born in 1941 in the village of Lohovo (located near Ripač, around forty kilometers north of Kulen Vakuf), was heard in a tavern sometime in 1962 saying, “If I stay alive, I will avenge my parents. I’m not rolling up my sleeves for nothing. I pray to God that none of the Turks will say anything to me, because I’ll show them who slaughtered my parents, I’ll fuck their Turkish mothers.”[104] On other occasions, the unveiling of monuments dedicated to the remembrance of Serbs the Ustašas had murdered during the war served as the catalyst for calls for revenge against Muslims. Gojko Petrović, who was born in 1926 in the village of Ćojluk (located in the region of Bosanska Krupa, northeast of Kulen Vakuf), attended such an event in 1962. After it ended, he yelled to some

Muslims who were standing nearby, "I'll fuck your Turkish mothers, you are all Ustašas, you'll remember whose mothers you killed in 1941." He then started singing a song that glorified Serbs and denigrated Muslims.[105] The existence of individuals, while small in number, who would make such threats produced fear among Muslims and contributed to a sense that it was dangerous to publicly speak about the killings.

The traumas the survivors experienced in September 1941, and lived with during the postwar years, along with the various fears they had—either real or imagined—contributed to an overarching sense among many that it was impossible to speak publicly about the massacres. "None of us dared say anything about it," was a response which most survivors and their descendents gave when asked whether or not people spoke publicly about the massacres after the war.[106] For many, talking publicly about the killings would only conjure up terrible memories and, moreover, held the potential to bring about more trouble from their Serb neighbors. Neither result was desirable for many of the survivors. The traumas and fears the survivors struggled with in the postwar years were thus yet another crucial element at work in the formation of a public culture of silence.

A final, fifth element at work in the formation of the silence could also be found among the survivors of the massacres, as well as their children. The small but growing number of Muslims in the Kulen Vakuf region who joined the Communist Party in years after the war, the vast majority of whom had lost relatives and neighbors in the mass killings, were generally strongly opposed to publicly speaking about the horrific events of September 1941. Most were intensely focused on rebuilding the Ljutoč valley after the devastation of the war years and felt that "touching things from the past" could contribute nothing to the enormous task of material reconstruction.[107] Muslims in the regional Communist Party in the city of Bihać set the tone for this view, stressing that the main objective was to push for the maximum economic development of the Ljutoč valley and to leave the question of wartime history for some better time, when passions would not be so high.[108] Some with ties to members of the Communist Party in Bihać remember that the atmosphere of "keeping quiet" about the events of September 1941 in Kulen Vakuf among Party members was rooted in a deep fear of what might ensue if a public discussion took place. There appears to have been a real sense of apprehension about what might happen if questions about the massacres started to be discussed in the open, or if some kind of investigation began into the killings.[109] It seems that most Muslim communists in the Ljutoč valley considered speaking publicly about the massacres to be a potentially dangerous activity, as many of the Serbs responsible for the killings still lived in the villages that surrounded the valley. Talking about the massacres, they believed, or visiting the sites where the killings took place, like the Golubnjača pit, which was located near the Serb village of Martin Brod, would have been highly provocative acts. There was fear that such activities would have a destabilizing effect on national relations in the region. For these Muslims, emphasizing the "Brotherhood

and Unity" of Serbs and Muslims—not dwelling on massacres that Serbs had committed against Muslims—was what needed to be done.[110] The vigor with which they promoted this agenda can be seen in the comments of a daughter of a survivor of the September massacres who described the political atmosphere in the initial years after the war in this way: "It was Brotherhood and Unity and 'goodbye,' that's it. Everyone is equal, everyone is the same and that's the end of it. What happened is what happened and that's it."[111] The force with which Muslim members of the League of Communists stressed these sentiments after the war was yet another element which functioned in the creation of a public culture of silence.

The prohibition of exhuming and burying the bodies of the victims; the absence of any trials of those responsible for the killings and the resulting regular encounters between survivors and perpetrators; the pervasive sense among Serbs that Kulen Vakuf, and the rest of the Ljutoč valley, was an "Ustaša place"; the deep traumas and fears which the survivors lived with; and the zeal with which Muslim communists promoted the ideology of "Brotherhood and Unity"—all of these elements were crucial to the formation of a public culture of silence about the September 1941 massacres. Taken together, they created in the postwar years an atmosphere in which, despite the widespread knowledge of the mass killings, everyone learned to keep quiet about them.

4. Conclusion

To return to the main question that emerges from the 1986 SUBNOR report: why were so many places in Bosnia and Herzegovina where Muslim civilians had been killed during the Second World War unmarked with monuments? Most of the existing literature is of little use in answering this question because it portrays the communist regime as attempting to "de-ethnicize" the remembrance of all of the interethnic violence of the Second World War in Yugoslavia. As a result, the striking inequality in war remembrance for Muslim civilian victims has remained largely hidden from view or, in the rare case when mentioned, poorly explained. The discussion presented here, which analyzes the specific dynamics of wartime violence in the Kulen Vakuf region to explain the emergence of the postwar silence about the Muslim civilian victims, aims to surmount these weaknesses in the existing scholarship. Communist remembrance policy for civilian victims was not simply based on the regime's desire to promote the equality of all nationalities, and to manage potentially explosive national relations, as the existing literature has claimed. This article demonstrates that the specific way in which the Partisan movement developed—namely, its eventual absorption of large numbers of Serb insurgents who had murdered Muslim civilians earlier in the war—was a crucial factor in determining the postwar silence about Muslim war victims. In short, the transformation of these

insurgents into Partisans made it a political necessity to maintain silence about their war crimes after 1945. In the Kulen Vakuf region, this was the main reason why more than forty years after the war the SUBNOR report noted that none of the victims had been officially recognized and no monument had been built in memory of them.

The local communist authorities created the silence about these victims in a myriad of ways, from prohibiting the exhumation and burial of their remains, to avoiding an investigation by the war crimes commission into the massacres. These policies contributed to further cementing the wartime notion that the Kulen Vakuf region was an "Ustaša place" and that those who the insurgents had murdered were Ustašas or their relatives. All of these elements formed the basis of the public culture of silence about these Muslim victims that the communist regime was responsible for creating. As for the Muslim survivors, not being allowed to bury their relatives and neighbors, and being forced to encounter the perpetrators of the massacres on a regular basis, communicated to them that public silence was the only acceptable form of communication about the killings. Further contributing to the silence were their deep traumas and fears rooted in their experiences of surviving the massacres. This compelled many to believe that speaking publicly about the mass killings would only conjure up horrible memories and, moreover, held the potential to cause problems with the authorities and their Serb neighbors. Other survivors, who eventually joined the Communist Party, felt that discussing the massacres would contribute nothing positive to the cultivation of "Brotherhood and Unity" and economic development. For them, promoting positive national relations in the present and rebuilding their war-torn region was what needed to be done—not "touching things from the past." These were the key ways in which the survivors of massacres contributed to the formation of the public culture of silence.

In the end, the analysis of the dynamics of wartime mass killing in the Kulen Vakuf region and the postwar silence about the Muslim civilian victims brings into sharp focus a deep contradiction in the communist regime's approach to war remembrance. The communist-led Partisans were indeed a multinational resistance movement fighting for the establishment of a multinational socialist state. Yet due to its structural weaknesses during the first years of the war, the Partisan movement eventually absorbed into its ranks large numbers of Serb insurgents who had murdered Muslim civilians. The postwar communist regime's imperative to protect the legacy of the Partisans, and the desire of former insurgents to avoid implicating themselves as war criminals, meant that silence would prevail after the war about these killings. This dynamic resulted in a paradox: the communist regime's war remembrance policies, which in theory were officially aimed to be nonethnic, were in practice profoundly skewed along ethnic lines, and specifically against Muslims. The communist objective of promoting national equality and "Brotherhood and Unity" through war remembrance was thus destined to remain elusive.

Notes

1. Živojin Gavrilović, *Borba*, 2-3 March 1991, cited in Mehmedalija Bojić, *Historija Bosne i Bošnjaka VII-XX vijek* (Sarajevo: TKD Šahinpašić, 2001), 212.

2. SUBNOR stood for Savez udruženja boraca Narodnooslobodilačkog rata (The Union of the Association of Fighters of the People's Liberation War).

3. "Victims of Fascist Terror" (*žrtve fašističkog terora*) was a postwar communist-created category for civilian war victims. It was assigned to those who were killed as noncombatants, either at the hands of the German or Italian armies or the various factions the communist authorities grouped under the rubric "domestic traitors" (*domaći izdajnici*) (e.g., the Chetniks, Ustašas, etc.). See Arhiv Bosne i Hercegovine (ABiH), Fond Republički odbor Saveza udruženja boraca Narodnooslobodilačkog rata Bosne i Hercegovine (SUBNOR BiH), Uputstvo za prikupljanje podataka o poginulim i preživjelim borcima Narodnooslobodilačkog rata od 1941-1945 i poginulim žrtvama fašističkog terora, undated document, 9–16.

4. ABiH, Fond SUBNOR BiH, Republički odbor, Pov. Broj: 05-7/83, 20 June 1983, 1–2. It should be noted that the two most powerful political organs in the republic, the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Predsjedništvo Socijalističke Republike Bosne i Hercegovine*) and the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Centralni komitet Saveza komunista Bosne i Hercegovine*), were the initiators of this project. On their involvement, see ibid., Pregled stratišta i žrtava terora u Bosni i Hercegovini, September 1985, 1.

5. The definition of a site of mass killing appears to have been somewhat subjective, with municipalities often employing their own criteria. The municipality of Bihać, for example, defined a site of mass killing as a place where at least ten people were killed. See ibid., Opštinski odbor (OO) SUBNOR Bihać, Predmet: Podaci o stratištima žrtvama fašističkog terora i žrtava rata na području opštine Bihać, 12 April 1985, 1.

6. Ibid., Osvrt na pregled stratišta i žrtava fašističkog terora i njihove obilježenosti u Bosni i Hercegovini, November 1986, 4.

7. Ibid., Pregled stratišta i žrtava terora u Bosni i Hercegovini, September 1985, 2, 4–5.

8. Ibid., Obrazloženje tabele, undated document, most likely June 1985, 6.

9. Ibid.

10. For the works that advance this view, see Bette Denich, "Dismembering Yugoslavia: Nationalist Ideologies and the Symbolic Revival of Genocide," *American Ethnologist* 21:2 (1994): 367, 370, 372, 381, 383; Robert Hayden, "Recounting the Dead. The Rediscovery and Redefinition of Wartime Massacres in Late- and Post-Communist Yugoslavia," in Rubie S. Watson, ed., *Memory, History, and Opposition under State Socialism* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1994), 173; Wolfgang Höpken, "War, Memory, and Education in a Fragmented Society: The Case of Yugoslavia," *East European Politics and Societies* 13:1 (Winter 1999): 200, 204, 210; Mate Tokić, "Framing and Reframing the Past: Ethnic Relations, Political Legitimacy and the Legacy of the Second World War in Socialist Yugoslavia" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2007), 2–11; and Heike Karge, "Mediated Remembrance: Local Practices of Remembering the Second World War in Tito's Yugoslavia," *European Review of History—Revue européenne d'histoire* 16:1 (February 2009): 54.

11. For the most important works on the mass killing of Muslims during the Second World War in Yugoslavia (some of which are essentially document collections), see Vladimir Dedijer and Antun Miletić, *Genocid nad Muslimanima, 1941-1945: zbornik dokumenata i svjedočenja* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1990); Semso Tucaković, *Srpski zločini nad Bošnjacima-Muslimanima: 1941-1945* (Sarajevo: El-Kalem, 1995); Safet Bandžović, *Ratna tragedija Muslimana* (Novi Pazar: Sandžački odbor za zaštitu ljudskih prava i sloboda—Udruženje pisaca Sandžaka, 1993); and Smail Čekić, *Genocid nad Bošnjacima u Drugom svjetskom ratu: dokumenti* (Sarajevo: Udruženje Muslimana za antigenocidne aktivnosti, 1996).

12. Ger Duijzings, "Commemorating Srebrenica: Histories of Violence and the Politics of Memory in Eastern Bosnia," in Xavier Bougarel, Elissa Helms, and Ger Duijings, eds., *The New Bosanian Mosaic.*

Identities, Memories and Moral Claims in a Post-War Society (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 148.

13. ABiH, Fond SUBNOR BiH, Pregled stratišta i žrtava terora u Bosni i Hercegovini, September 1985, 5; OO SUBNOR Bihać, Predmet: Podaci o stratištima žrtvama fašističkog terora i žrtava rata na području opštine Bihać, 12 April 1985, 1; Napomene uz Pregled stratišta i žrtava fašističkog terora, June 1985, 6; Referat Mirka Vranić, undated document, 1; Osvrt na pregled stratišta i žrtava fašističkog terora i njihove obilježenosti u Bosni i Hercegovini, November 1986, 9.

14. Esad Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, (unpublished manuscript, 2008), 39; Jovica Keča, "Ustanički dani u okolini Kulen Vakufu," in *Bosanski Petrovac u NOB. Zbornik sjećanja. Knjiga IV* (Bosanski Petrovac: Opštinski odbor SUBNOR Bosanski Petrovac, 1974), 199–200.

15. Ibid., 32.

16. Ibid., 34; and Derviš Kurtagić, *Zapisi o Kulen-Vakufu* (Bihać: Kurtagić, 2005), 10–11.

17. Dušan Lukač, *Ustanak u Bosanskoj Krajini* (Beograd: Vojnoizdavački zavod, 1967), 63, 67.

18. It is likely that the number was slightly higher, as no names of men from the village of Ćukovi appear in the documents, and only a few from Klisa. On the names and villages of origin of the Ustašas in the Kulen Vakuf region, see Arhiv Jugoslavije (AJ), Fond 110, Državna komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomogača (DKUZ), kut. 817, Okružni sud Bihać, Pojedinačne optužnice i presude, 1946, dos. br. 817-320, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Burzić, Avde, 27 May 1946; ibid., dos. br. 817-376, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Kadić Bege, 23 September 1946; ibid., dos. br. 817-403, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Kozlice Agana, 12 October 1946; ibid., dos. br. 817-421, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Kulenović Mahmuta, 26 August 1946; ibid., dos. br. 817-469, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Pehlivanović Ibrahim, 30 May 1946; ibid., dos. br. 817-534, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Sušnjar-Vukalić Mujaga, 15 October 1946; kut. 531, dos. broj. 5361, Zapisnik br. 14, Mjesni odbor: Vrtoče, 31 July 1946; ibid., Zapisnik br. 10, Mjesni odbor: Kalati, 5 August 1946; Zapisnik br. 20, Mjesni odbor: Rajinovci, 7 August 1946; Zapisnik br. 21, Mjesni odbor: Veliki Stjenjani, 8 August 1946; Zapisnik br. 22, Mjesni odbor: Kulen Vakuf, 9 August 1946; ABiH, Fond Zemaljska komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njegovih pomagača (ZKUZBiH), kut. 91, Zapisnik br. 22, Mjesni odbor: Malo Očijevo, 9 August 1946; ibid., kut. 68, Srez Bosanski Petrovac, Zapisnik br. 18, Mjesni odbor: Prkosi, 4 August 1946; kut. 14, Srez Bihać, Zapisnik br. 21, Mjesni odbor: Veliki Stjenjani, 8 August 1946.

19. On the beginnings of the Ustaša violence in the wider region, see AJ, Fond 110, DKUZ, kut. 493, dos. br. 4944, Zapisnik sastavljen pred Zemaljskom komisijom za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njegovih pomogača u Bihaću srez Bihać okrug Bihać, Čurić Živko, 3 February 1945, 2.

20. Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 44. Some argue that the violence against Serbs started as early as late May and then increased in frequency during June 1941. See, for example, Milan Majstorović, "Kulen Vakuf opština u NOR-u," in *Bosanski Petrovac u NOB. Zbornik sjećanja. Knjiga III* (Bosanski Petrovac: Opštinski odbor SUBNOR Bosanski Petrovac, 1974), 376.

21. The precise number of dead is not known, but it appears that at least 100 to 150 were murdered in this way. See AJ, Fond 110, DKUZ, kut. 531, dos. br. 5361, Zapisnik br. 22, Mjesni odbor: Kulen Vakuf, 9 August 1946, 1–5.

22. In Kulen Vakuf alone, Muslims saved 59 of the 106 Serb residents of the town. See Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 48–50. On Muslims saving Serbs from the Ustašas in and around Kulen Vakuf, see also Abas Mušeta, *Kulen Vakuf. Tragedija od 10.04 do 06-18.09 1941 godine,* (unpublished manuscript, 2004), 36.

23. AJ, Fond 110, DKUZ, kut. 531, dos. br. 5361, Zapisnik br. 10, Mjesni odbor: Kalati, 5 August 1946, 1-2; ibid., kut., 531, dos. br. 5361, Zapisnik br. 22, Mjesni odbor: Kulen Vakuf, 9 August 1946, 1-5; ABiH, Fond ZKUZBiH, kut. 88, Zapisnik sastavljen kod Sreskog suda u Drvaru, 12 December 1945, 1; ibid., Zapisnik sastavljen u kancelariji okružnog organa ZFM-KOM-e za okrug Drvar, Saslušanje Vladimira Tankošića po masovnom ubistvu u selu Boričevac dana 24.VII.1941, 28 March 1945, 1–2; AJ, Fond 110, DKUZ, kut. 531, dos. br. 5361, Zapisnik br. 20, Mjesni odbor: Rajinovci, 7 August 1946, 1-3;

ibid., Zapisnik br. 21, Mjesni odbor: Veliki Stjenjani, 1; ABiH, Fond ZKUZBiH, kut. 91, Zapisnik br. 22, Mjesni odbor: Malo Očijevo, 9 August 1946, 1.

24. Nikola Plećaš-Nitonja, *Požar u Krajini* (Chicago: Plećaš-Nitonja, 1975), 78–80.

25. Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 54; Milan Vukmanović, *Ustaški zločini na području Bihaća u ljeto 1941. godine* (Banjaluka: Institut za istoriju u Banjaluci, 1987), 130.

26. Pero Pilipović, "Borba Cvjetnićana na petrovačkom području," in *Bosanski Petrovac u NOB. Zbornik sjećanja. Knjiga I* (Bosanski Petrovac: Opštinski odbor SUBNOR, 1974), 585.

27. On the contradictory social bases of the insurgency and the key problems that nearly caused the failure of the communist movement during the first year of the war, see Rasim Hurem, *Kriza Narodooslobodilačkog pokreta u Bosni i Hercegovini krajem 1941. i početkom 1942. godine* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1972), 33–71.

28. It seems possible to hypothesize that among this fraction of the insurgents were those who were heirs to the Serbs, at least in political outlook, who came to Kulen Vakuf in 1918 with the intention of slaughtering all the town's Muslim inhabitants. On Serb insurgents who believed that Muslims and Croats were their main enemies, see Milan Majstorović and Mićo Medić, "Doljani u narodnom ustanku," in *Ustanak naroda Jugoslavije 1941, Zbornik. Knjiga 5* (Beograd: Vojno delo, 1964), 461; and Lukač, *Ustanak u Bosanskoj Krajini*, 93, 103, 190–91. For the argument that some Serb insurgents were driven by their desire to settle scores with Muslims based on conflicts from the prewar period, see Hurem, *Kriza Narodooslobodilačkog pokreta u Bosni i Hercegovini krajem 1941. i početkom 1942. godine*, 40.

29. Sajo Grbić, "Prve akcije u opštinama Lipa i Ripač," in *Ustanak naroda Jugoslavije 1941, knjiga četvrta* (Beograd: Vojno delo, 1964), 774.

30. The total number of victims in these massacres may have been as high as four hundred. On the burning of Boričevac by the insurgents, see *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda, tom IV, knjiga I, Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Beograd: Vojno-istoriski institut Jugoslovenke Armije, 1951), br. 106, Naređenje Štaba prvog bataljona "Sloboda" od 8. septembra 1941. god. Komandama četvrtog odreda, odreda u Boboljuskama, Velikom i Malom Cvjetniću i Osredcima za raspored snaga, 8 September 1941, 237. For information on the massacres at Vrtoče and Krnjeuša the Ustašas produced, see *Odmetnička zvjerstva i pustošenja u Nezavisnoj državi Hrvatskoj u prvim mjesecima života Hrvatske Narodne Države* (Zagreb: Ministarstvo vanjskih poslova NDH, 1942), 38–42. On these killings see also Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 65.

31. Bibanović, Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena, 82.

32. Ibid., 76; and Pilipović, "Borba Cvjetnićana na petrovačkom području," 593.

33. Ibid., 90–91.

34. On the insurgent attack on the Ljutoč valley on 4 September 1941, see Gojko Polovina, *Svjedočenje. Prva godina ustanka u Lici* (Beograd: Izdavačka radna organizacija "Rad," 1988), 85; Đoko Jovanić, *Ratna sjećanja* (Beograd: Vojnoizdavački i novinski centar, 1988), 124; Abdulah Sarajlić and Dragutin Strunjaš, "Prvi dani ustanka u Drvaru i okolini," in *Godišnjak istorijskog društva Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo: Godina II, 1950), 15; *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda, tom V, knjiga I, Borbe u Hrvatskoj 1941. god.* (Beograd: Vojno-istoriski institute Jugoslovenske Armije, 1952), br. 42, "Izvještaj štaba gerilskih odreda za Liku koncem rujna 1941. god. Štabu drvarske brigade o vojno-političkoj situaciji, undated, but appears to have been written on or about 15 September 1941, 132; Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 86–87; and Lukač, *Ustanak u Bosanskoj Krajini*, 181.

35. Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 97. For an Ustaša source on this phase of the massacre, which provides partial statistics on total number of victims, see Komanda 3. Žandarmerijske pukovnije Banja Luka o pokolju Muslimanima Kulen Vakufa, 12. rujna 1941, in Tucakovic, *Srpski zločini nad Bošnjacima-Muslimanima*, 194–96. See also Pilipović, "Borba Cvjetnićana na petrovačkom području," 601, who argues that around three hundred Muslims were killed. Communist sources indicated that "the enemy lost so many that it was impossible to determine the exact number of dead and wounded." See *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda, tom IV, knjiga 1,*

Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini, br. 114, Izvještaj Štaba partizanskih odreda u Brdu Oraškom drvarske brigade od 9. septembra 1941. god. o borbama za oslobođenje Kulen Vakufa, 9 September 1941, 253–54.

36. Lukač, *Ustanak u Bosanskoj Krajini*, 192.

37. For an account by the only man who survived this massacre, see Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 97–98.

38. Ibid., 98–99.

39. Ibid., 100.

40. Jovo Reljić, "Martin Brod 1941. godine," in *Drvar, 1941-1945. Sječanja učesnika, knjiga 2* (Drvar: Skupština opštine Drvar, 1972), 403.

41. *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda, tom V, knjiga 1, Borbe u Hrvatskoj 1941. god.*, br. 42, "Izvještaj Štaba gerilskih odreda za Liku koncem rujna 1941. god. Štabu drvarske brigade o vojno-političkoj situaciji," undated but appears to have been written on or about 15 September 1941, 134.

42. On the burning of Kulen Vakuf, see *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda, tom IV, knjiga 1 Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini*, br. 106, Naređenje Štaba prvog bataljana "Sloboda" od 8. septembra 1941. god. Komandama četvrtog odreda, odreda u Boboljuskama, Velikom i Malom Cvjetniću i Osredcima za raspored snaga, 8 September 1941, 237; ibid., br. 114, Izvještaj Štaba partizanskih odreda u Brdu Oraškom drvarske brigade od 9. septembra 1941. god. o borbama za oslobođenje Kulen Vakufa, 9 September 1941, 254.

43. Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 103.

44. For a testimony by a survivor of these massacres, see ibid., 101.

45. Kurtagić, *Zapisi o Kulen Vakufu*, 32; interview with Derviš Kurtagić on 9 November 2006 and 26 October 2008 in Kulen Vakuf. On the raping of Muslim women, especially very young girls, see Mušeta, *Kulen Vakuf*, 48.

46. Interview with Đula Seferović on 13 October 2008 in Ostrovica.

47. Ibrahim Kajan, "Pakao Vakuf Golubnjača," *Ogledalo*, Godina 1, Broj 2, prosinac/decembar 1990, 26.

48. Interview with Ale Galijašević on 12 October 2008 in Kulen Vakuf.

49. As the insurgent commander Nikola Karanović remembered, "We tried to bring about some order and to protect the people, at least the women and children, but it was very difficult to do. The danger existed that fighting would soon break out among the insurgents, as those who opposed the taking of revenge were called traitors of the Serb people." See Nikola Karanović, "Sadjejstvo sa ličkim ustanicima," in *Drvar, 1941-1945. Sječanja učesnika, knjiga 2.* (Drvar: Skupština opštine Drvar, 1972), 413.

50. Ibid.

51. Esad Bibanovic, "Kulenvakufski komunisti u radničkom pokretu i ustanku," in *Bihac u novijoj istoriji (1918-1945) Tom I* (Banjaluka: Institut za istoriju, 1987), 452. See also the testimony of Hana Štrkljević in Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 102.

52. For the testimony of the only man who surrived the killings at Golubnjača, see Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 103–4; and Kajan, "Pakao Vakuf Golubnjača," 27.

53. Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 107. Bibanović found an Ustaša document in the Museum of the Una-Sana Canton (in Bihać) in which the Ministry of the Croat Homeguards (*Ministarstvo hrvatskog domobranstva*) reported that the Ustašas left Kulen Vakuf due to the "unbearable pressure of the insurgents," and arrived in Ripač with around three thousand residents from the villages of the Ljutoč valley.

54. For the only document that contains a partial list of the victims, see Husejn Altić, "Bivši Kulen Vakuf," in *Narodna uzdanica Književni zbornik za godinu 1943*, god. XI (Sarajevo: Narodna uzdanica, 1942), 15–18. Some of the victims are listed by first and last names, while only the family names (in the plural) for many others are listed, indicating that whole families were killed. In total, there are 128 names. It is thus impossible to get an accurate sense of precisely how many victims the author had in mind. He only says that there were more than 1,000 victims.

55. The communist leadership in the town of Drvar, shocked and dismayed by the events of 6-8 September 1941, issued a stern and angry response to local commanders in the Kulen Vakuf region:

> We received your exhaustive report about the battles around Kulen Vakuf and Dulidba and about the results of those battles. The history of Boričevac has been repeated. Our units—which went into battle with the will and excitement to fight for the freedom of their lands, their towns and villages—are burning those same towns and villages. These same units, which have fought against the bloody terror of Pavelić's bands (i.e., the Ustašas) . . . have shown themselves to be weak in preventing irresponsible elements from plundering and burning Kulen Vakuf.
>
> We trust that every one of our respectable guerillas will condemn the burning and plunder of Kulen Vakuf, and the killing of innocent men, women and children. We also trust that in our future battles our respectable guerillas will prevent these crimes at all costs.

See *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda, tom IV, knjiga 1, Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini*, br. 106, Naređenje Štaba prvog bataljana "Sloboda" od 8. septembra 1941. god. Komandama četvrog odreda u Boboljuskama, Velikom i Malom Cvjetniću i Osredcima za raspored snaga, 8 September 1941, 237.

56. For example, Serb insurgents murdered between forty and fifty Muslims in Avtovac, perhaps as many as four to seven hundred in the Bileća region in Herzegovina, and an undermined but apparently sizable number in Kalinovnik, Kladanj, and Berkovići, to cite but a handful of cases. See ABiH, Fond SUBNOR BiH RO, Pregled stratišta i žrtava terora u Bosni i Hercegovini, September 1985, 4–5; Tucaković, *Srpski zločini nad Bošnjacima-Muslimanima*, 24–25; *Odmetnička zvjerstva i pustošenja u Nezavisnoj državi Hrvatskoj u prvim mjesecima života Hrvatske Narodne Države*, 86; On the killings in the Bileća region, see also Tahir Pervan, *Čavkarica. Vrata pakla* (Sarajevo: Zonex ex Libris, 2006).

57. The Chetnik movement had a long tradition in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the number of local organizations was on the rise in the years leading up to the Second World War. On the history of the Chetniks in Bosnia-Herzegovina before the war, see Nusret Šehić, *Četništvo u Bosni i Hercegovini, 1918-1941. Politička uloga i oblici djelatnost četničkih udruženja* (Sarajevo: Akademija nauke i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine, 1971).

58. Tucaković, *Srpski zločini nad Bošnjacima-Muslimanima*, 38.

59. Ibid.

60. Between December 1941 and January 1942, the Chetniks murdered more than two thousand Muslims in the Drina Valley in eastern Bosnia, with the vast majority of killings carried out in the towns of Foča and Goražde. On these killings, see Dedijer and Miletic, *Genocid nad Muslimanima*, 61–160. On Chetnik war crimes in Foča, see Faruk Muftić, *Foča. Ponovljeni zločin* (Sarajevo: "DES," 2001), 36–177.

61. Tucaković, *Srpski zločini nad Bošnjacima-Muslimanima*, 24–28.

62. Lukač, *Ustanak u Bosanskoj Krajini*, 155–56. According to Lukač, it appears that a number of units decided on the name "Partisans" by 21 August 1941.

63. There were numerous instances towards the end of the 1941 and in the beginning of 1942 in which entire units of Partisans simply left in the middle of the night and went over to join the Chetniks. Tucaković, *Srpski zločini nad Bošnjacima-Muslimanima*, 32–33. On the split between the Partisans and the Chetniks in the wider region in which the Kulen Vakuf region was located, see Dušan Lukač, "Četnička izdaja u Bosanskoj Krajini 1941. godine i u prvoj polovini 1942. godine," *Zbornik krajiških muzeja. Banja Luka, Bihać, Drvar, Jajce, Prijedor*, I, 1962.

64. Hurem, *Kriza Narodooslobodilačkog pokreta u Bosni i Hercegovini krajem 1941. i početkom 1942. godine*, 95.

65. On Chetnik collaboration with both the Ustašas and Axis armies, see ibid., 206–10 and 214–25.

66. On this decision, see "Odluka opštoj amnestiji lica koja su u četničkim jedinicama Draže Mihajlovića učestvovala ili ih pomagala ili su učestvovala u jedinicama hrvatskog i slovenačkog domobranstva," br. 69, 21 November 1944, in *Službeni list Državne Federativne Republike Jugoslavije*, br. 1, 1 February 1945, 6, cited in Muftić, *Foča*, 178.

67. Milan Majstorović, "Kulen Vakuf opština u NOR-u," in *Bosanski Petrovac u NOB. Knjiga III* (Bosanski Petrovac: Opštinski odbor SUBNOR Bosanski Petrovac, 1974), 379.

68. On Mane Rovkić's deeds as a Chetnik, see ABiH, Fond ZKUZBiH, kut. 91, Zapisnik br. 22, Mjesni odbor: Malo Očijevo, 9 August 1946, 2; ibid., kut. 68, Srez Bosanski Petrovac, Zapisnik br. 18, Mjesni odbor: Prkosi, 4 August 1946, 3. On the fate of Pero Đilas, see Reljić, "Martin Brod 1941. godine," 404–5; Polovina, *Svedočenje*, 92–93; Pero Pilipović, "Istina o jednom zločinu," in *Bosanski Petrovac u NOB. Zbornik sjećanja. Knjiga II* (Bosanski Petrovac: Opštinski odbor SUBNOR Bosanski Petrovac, 1974), 605; *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda, tom V, knjiga 1, Borbe u Hrvatskoj 1941. god.*, br. 42, "Izvještaj Štaba gerilskih odreda za Liku koncem rujna 1941. god. Štabu drvarske brigade o vojno-političkoj situaciji," undated but appears to have been written on or about 15 September 1941, 134. Several others who had directly participated in the killing of Muslims between 6-8 September, such as Stevo Rađenović, Boško Rašeta, and Jovo Keča, eventually joined them. On these individuals, see Danilo Damjanović-Danić, "Pad Kulen Vakufa," in *Bosanski Petrovac u NOB. Zbornik sjećanja. Knjiga I* (Bosanski Petrovac: Opštinski odbor SUBNOR Bosanski Petrovac, 1974), 667.

69. Derviš Kurtagić, a Muslim from Kulen Vakuf who joined the Partisans in 1941, tells a story in his memoirs about what the Partisan commander Nikola Karanović apparently said when he came across a group of Muslims from the Ljutoč valley that had recently joined the Partisans. He pointed to them and then called out to his Serb fighters, "Hey, there are our enemies!" The Muslim Partisans yelled back, asking why he called them "enemies" when they were with the Partisans. Karanović apparently answered, "Because those who killed your dearest are in our ranks and you can't love us." See Kurtagić, *Zapisi o Kulen Vakufu*, 36.

70. Ibid., 32.

71. Testimony of Mujo Dervišević in Kajan, "Pakao Vakuf Golubnjača," 27.

72. Halil Puškar, *Krajiški Pečat* (Istanbul, Turkey: s.n., 1996), 96.

73. On the notion of silence as a form of communication, and the how it often becomes dominant in the aftermath of tramatic events when no social and political framework exists to support alternative modes of communication, see Ruth Wajnryb, *The Silence. How Tragedy Shapes Talk* (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2001), 96.

74. Interview with Derviš Kurtagić on 9 November 2006 in Kulen Vakuf; Sead Kadić on 3 November 2008 in Bihać; Derviš Dervišević on 1 and 5 October 2008 in Klisa; Maho Vazović on 24 September 2008 in Kulen Vakuf; and Ale Galijašević on 12 October 2008 in Kulen Vakuf.

75. ABiH, Fond CK SK BiH, kut. 37, Predlog zakona o podjeli teritorije Narodne republike Bosne i Hercegovine na srezove, gradove i opštine, 1952, 6.

76. Interview with Derviš Kurtagić on 26 October 2008 in Kulen Vakuf. For basic biographical information on Jovo Reljić, see Arhiv Unsko-sanskog kantona (AUSK), Sreski komitet (SK) Saveza komunista (SK) Bosne i Hercegovine (BiH) Bihać, kut. 172, biografski podaci, Jovo Reljić, 14 February 1959, 2.

77. For a brief biographical sketch of Nikola Karanović, see *Krajina: list Saveza socijalističkog radnog naroda bihačkog sreza*, "Likovi boraca iz revolucije. Nikola Karanović," 1 June 1961, 5.

78. Some Muslims did erect *nišani*, or gravestones, for their victims even though they had no bodies to bury in the ground underneath them. The inscriptions they carved on them illuminated the postwar political context in which silence about the massacres was mandatory. One referred to the victim as simply "Killed in 1941." Those who did the killing and the location of the victim's death remained unknown. Another hinted at the impossibility of gathering the remains of the victims: "Killed in 1941. For His Unknown Body." Photographs taken of gravestones in the Muslim cemeteries in Kulen Vakuf and Klisa during September and October 2008.

79. Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies. Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 27–28.

80. On the District Commission's work in investigating Ustaša war crimes against Serbs in the Kulen Vakuf region, see AJ, Fond 110 DKUZ, kut. 817, Okružni sud Bihać, Pojedinačne optužnice i presude, 1946, dos. br. 817-320, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Burzić Avde, 27 May 1946; dos. br. 817-376, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Kadić Bege, 23 September 1946; dos. br. 817-403, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Kozlice Agana, 12 October 1946; dos. br. 817-421, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Kulenović Mahmut, 26 August 1946; dos. br. 817-469, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Pehlivanović Ibrahim, 30 May 1946; dos. br. 817-534, Javno tužioštvo za Okrug Bihać, Krivični predmet protiv Sušnjar-Vukalić Mujaga, 15 October 1946; Ibid., kut. 531, dos. br. 5361, Zapisnik br. 14, Mjesni odbor: Vrtoče, 31 July 1946; Zapisnik br. 10, Mjesni odbor: Kalati, 5 August 1946; Zapisnik br. 20, Mjesni odbor: Rajinovci, 7 August 1946; Zapisnik br. 21, Mjesni odbor: Veliki Stjenjani, 8 August 1946; Zapisnik br. 22, Mjesni odbor: Kulen Vakuf, 9 August 1946; ABiH, Fond ZKUZBiH, kut 91, Zapisnik br. 22, Mjesni odbor: Malo Očijevo, 9 August 1946; kut. 68, Srez Bosanski Petrovac, Zapisnik br. 18, Mjesni odbor: Prkosi, 4 August 1946; kut. 14, Srez Bihać, Zapisnik br. 21, Mjesni odbor: Veliki Stjenjani, 8 August 1946; kut. 91, Zapisnik sastavljen kod NOO-a Martin Brod, October, 1944; kut. 88, Zapisnik sastavljen kod Sreskog suda u Drvaru, 12 December 1945; Zapisnik sastavljen u kancelariji okružnog organa ZFM-KOM-e za okrug Drvar, Saslušanje Vladimira Tankosića po masovnim ubistvu u selu Boričevac dana 24.VII.1941, 28 March 1945.

81. Kurtagić, *Zapisi o Kulen Vakufu*, 32. Interview with Derviš Kurtagić on 9 November 2006 and 26 October 2008 in Kulen Vakuf. For a handful of details about Rade Pitar's life as a Partisan veteran in Martin Brod after the war, see *Krajina*, "U Martin Brodu grade spomen dom omladine i boraca. Svjedočanstva o doprinosu NOR-u," 26 May 1978, 4.

82. Interview with Bećo Pehlivanović on 3 October 2008 in Bihać.

83. Testimony of Mujo Dervišević in Kajan, "Pakao Vakuf Golubnjača," 27.

84. Interview with Đula Seferović on 3 and 13 October and 2008 in Ostrovica.

85. Interview with anyonmous informant on 24 September 2008.

86. Interview with Adem Dervišević on 6 October 2008 in Klisa.

87. Interview with Sead Kadić on 3 November 2008 in Bihać.

88. Kurtagić, *Zapisi o Kulen Vakufu*, 47.

89. On how seeing Muslims from Kulen Vakuf who participated in the killing of Serbs contributed to an overarching sense among Serbs that all Muslims in the region were Ustašas, see Bibanović, *Svjedočanstvo jednog vremena*, 54; and Vukmanović, *Ustaški zločini na području Bihaća u ljeto 1941. godine*, 130. For the files that contain the names of the fifty one men who joined the Ustašas, see note 18.

90. Interview with Adil Kulenović on 7 November 2006 in Sarajevo.

91. Interview with Jusuf Zjakić on 5 December 2008 in Bihać. On the attitude among some high-level members of the League of Communists of Bosnia and Herzegovina that certain regions and villages of the republic were "Ustaša" or alternatively "Chetnik," see ABiH, Fond CK SK BiH, kut. 9, Neke pojave i problemi u međunacionalnim i vjerskim odnosima u Bosni i Hercegovini, Strogo povjerljivo, 1959, 17; ibid., kut. 37, Organizaciono-politička komisija CK SK BiH, Analiza o raznim vidovima neprijateljske aktivnosti i djelovanja stihije i konzervatizma u današnjim uslovima, Strogo povjerljivo, November 1961, 29.

92. AUSK, Fond SK SK BiH Bihać, kut. 161, OK SK BiH Kulen Vakuf, Informacija o oblicima ispoljavanja šovinizma u opštini Kulen Vakuf, 28 December 1958, 1-2.

93. ABiH, Fond CK SK BiH, kut. 7, Izvještaj o radu na brojnom jačanju organizacija Saveza komunista na opštinama Bihać, Bosanska Krupa, i Kulen Vakuf, 15 June 1959, 41.

94. Instructions for the census of the war dead that was to be carried out in 1950 explicitly stated that those to be counted were fighters killed in the ranks of the Partisans and all civilians of Yugoslavia who were killed during the war (from 6 April 1941 until 10 May 1945) by the occupier and domestic traitors (e.g., Ustašas, Chetniks, etc.). The Muslims from the Ljutoč valley, who had been murdered by Serb insurgents who later became Partisans, did not fit into any of these categories and therefore could

not be counted among the official war dead. On the 1950 census, see ABiH, Fond SUBNOR BiH, Zemaljski odbor Saveza boraca NOR-a BiH, Popis ljudskih žrtava fašističkog terora NOR-a u našoj republici, 28 November 1949.

95. On the lack of acknowledgment of the Muslim victims of the September 1941 massacres in and around Kulen Vakuf as "Victims of Fascist Terror," see ABiH, Fond SUBNOR BiH, Pregled stratišta i žrtava terora u Bosni i Hercegovini, September 1985, 5; OO SUBNOR Bihać, Predmet: Podaci o stratištima žrtvama fašističkog terora i žrtava rata na području opštine Bihać, 12 April 1985, 1; Napomene uz Pregled stratišta i žrtava fašističkog terora, June 1985, 6; Referat Mirka Vranić, undated document, 1; Osvrt na pregled stratišta i žrtava fašističkog terora i njihove obilježenosti u Bosni i Hercegovini, November 1986, 9.

96. Puškar, *Krajiški Pečat*, 97.

97. Interview with Reuf Anadolac on 24 September 2008 in Kulen Vakuf.

98. Interview with Sead Kadić on 3 November 2008 in Bihać.

99. Interview with anonymous informant on 10 October 2008 in Kulen Vakuf; Ale Galijašević on 12 October 2008.

100. Interview with Mustafa Dervišević on 11 October 2008 in Klisa.

101. Interview with Derviš Dervišević on 5 October 2008 in Klisa.

102. Interview with Mehmed Štrkljević on 28 September 2008 in Kulen Vakuf.

103. For example, Avdo Burzić was found guilty of having been an Ustaša and of having committed war crimes on the basis of a testimony given by a Serb named Branko Kovačević. Burzić served somewhere between eleven and nineteen years of his prison sentence before being granted early release. When he returned to Kulen Vakuf, he apparently went into one of the local taverns and encountered a Serb from the nearby village of Kalati. Surprised to see Burzić, he asked, "Avdo, where've you been all these years!?" Burzić replied, "I was in jail because someone said I killed you during the war." Interview with Ale Galijašević on 12 October 2008 in Kulen Vakuf; Sead Kadić on 3 November 2008 in Bihać.

104. AUSK, Fond SK SK BiH Bihać, kut. 184, Informacija o šovinističkim pojavama na terenu sreza Bihać, 19 October 1962, 6.

105. Ibid.

106. Interview with Mustafa Dervišević and extended family on 11 October 2008 in Klisa; Maho Vazović on 24 September 2008 in Kulen Vakuf; Bećo Pehlivanović on 3 October 2008 in Bihać; Ale Galijašević on 12 October 2008 in Kulen Vakuf; Đula Seferović on 13 October 2008 in Ostrovica.

107. Interview with Ibrahim Lepirica on 27 September 2008 in Kulen Vakuf.

108. Interview with Jusuf Zjakić on 5 December 2008 in Bihać.

109. Interview with Sadeta Ibrahimpašić on 29 September 2008 in Bihać.

110. Interview with Ibrahim Lepirica on 27 September 2008 in Kulen Vakuf.

111. Interview with Đula Seferović on 13 October 2008 in Ostrovica.

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