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NETWORK  
KNOWLEDGE:  
IN BETWEEN  
THE COLLECTIVE  
OBLIVION AND  
HISTORICAL  
MEMORY

The task of information  
science in collecting and  
processing data and  
evidence of concentration  
camps and human rights  
in Europe at the beginning  
of the 21<sup>th</sup> century



## Introduction: historical events and denial of historical facts

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For an expert dealing with the theory of information science, a scientific approach to the subject of concentration camps and human rights in Europe on the eve of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is possible only after several requirements are met. These are: an organized body of knowledge on a subject (data, facts and evidences), available sources of data, credibility of data and accessible information on a subject.

Even a random selection of “facts” is sufficient to indicate and prove that attitudes and data on concentration camps are contradictory and information on them is not only inconsistent and incompatible but aggressively refuting.

Let us illustrate the inconsistency and contradiction with several examples. Examples are necessary in order to illustrate the need, not only for the data collection, but also for developing the data corpus network and organizing knowledge of conflicts, wars and concentration camps during the aggression on Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>1</sup>

### **Denial of the existence of concentration camps. •**

S. Milošević: “Are you aware of the fact that there were no concentration camps in Yugoslavia, that is, in Serbia, not only for Croats, but for no one. Neither for Croats, nor for Muslims – not for anyone”. (S. Milošević, *Vjesnik*,<sup>2</sup> October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2002, p. 10).

• “... when this propaganda about the existence of concentration camps in Serbia started, many foreign delegations, which were there on different occasions, came to me and asked me about concentration camps. To all of them, I have answered: ‘If you please, I have a helicopter on call, place your finger anywhere on the map of Serbia, there is nothing there’. And after two or three such answers, one of those delegations, the German one, asked to do it. They pointed at the mine in Aleksinac, they went there, and found...” (S. Milošević, *Vjesnik*,<sup>3</sup> October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2002, p. 10).

**Attitude towards the aggression against Croatia. •**

“It is not true that anyone from Serbia was taking away citizens from Vukovar to Serbia. It is not correct that any kind of Serbian policy has influenced the flaring up of conflicts in the Vukovar region... In any case, I can assert with all due responsibility that no Serbian government had any participation whatsoever in all this, nor did the Serbian government provoke any kind of ethnic conflicts in Vukovar...” (S. Milošević, *Vjesnik*, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2002, p. 10).

• In 1994, former British Prime Minister Edward Heath said that as long as it was not happening in his country, he or his government did not care if people want to kill each other. “British Prime Minister said what many other western politicians believe, as they have confirmed to me in private conversations”. (Richard Goldstone, the first Public Prosecutor at the International War Crimes Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, *Večernji list*, Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 29.).

• Did you, as the leading prosecutor, recognise and accept the fact that Serbia carried out aggression on Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and that Croats were defending their country?

“I knew little of the course of aggression and it was not my responsibility to define those terms or to study the strategy of war... It was not my duty to judge political ideas and reasons that have led to the war”. (Richard Goldstone, *Večernji list*, Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 29.).

**About indictments for crimes committed during the aggression on Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

• “... if I had enough data and evidence, I would have issued more indictments, including the ones against those who have committed crimes in Croatia. However, I had none and I could have not created them or invented them. At those times there were no real evidence for Milošević’s involvement in crimes, as incredible as it sounds today”. (Richard Goldstone, *Večernji list*, Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 29.).

• “... I am ashamed, I am telling you sincerely, when I see that Mladić and Karadžić are still walking free... Today, I can assert that in my time there was no political will to arrest them, and stories about the UNPROFOR being unable to do so, or unable to find them, are ridiculous”. (Richard Goldstone, *Večernji list*, Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 29.).

**About the sentences passed in national courts for war crimes in Croatia. •**

“During ten years of the prose-

cution statistics (1991–2001) for war crimes in Croatia, 1634 persons were prosecuted in national courts, 726 were sentenced, and 77 were released from any criminal charges”. (Report on work of the Public Prosecution, *Vjesnik*, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 5.).

**About persons sentenced after military-police actions *Bljesak (Flash)* and *Oluja (Storm)*** • “It is not entirely correct that there was no judicial reaction on events which followed after military-police actions *Bljesak (Flash)* and *Oluja (Storm)*. After the mentioned actions of the Croatian Army, 1492 persons were sentenced for murders, thefts and robberies committed after the mentioned actions of the Croatian Army”. (Report on work of the Public Prosecution, *Vjesnik*, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 7.).

• “State Attorney’s Office data on processing war crimes would be far more satisfying if there were no destruction of processes during the previous years. For example, in 2001 not even one criminal charge was brought for war crimes committed in actions of the Croatian Army in 1995.<sup>4</sup> (Report on work of the Public Prosecution, *Vjesnik*, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 7.).

**About charges brought by prisoners in concentration camps or the defective work of Public Prosecution in the Republic of Croatia.** • “Recent example of charges brought by several thousands of concentration camp detainees from Croatia against guards, watchmen and soldiers in command of those camping grounds<sup>5</sup> in Serbian prisons speak of the defective work of Public Prosecution in the republic of Croatia. ‘How to act on those charges when there are so many claims, and names of those who have committed crimes are inaccessible to Croatian courts and are mainly known by nick-names remembered by the imprisoned Croats’<sup>6</sup>”. (Report on work of the Public Prosecution, *Vjesnik*, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 5.).

**About the unlawfulness of the war crimes prosecutions** • “For many years perpetrators of war crimes were unlawfully prosecuted ... unlawfulness is obvious<sup>7</sup> from the superficial and poorly done police inquests, and a large number of defendants – most of them possibly not accessible to the Croatian administration of justice”<sup>8</sup>. (Report on work of the Public Prosecution, *Vjesnik*, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 7.).

**About the policy of forgetting about the war crimes.** In the period 1991–2002, 726 persons were sentenced for war crimes committed in the aggression on the Republic of Croatia (presumably most of them are Serbs). For crimes committed after military-police actions in 1995, twice as many persons were sentenced – 1492 (pre-

sumably most of them are Croats). All those persons were sentenced before the year 2000. In the annual report of the State Attorney's Office for 2001, it is stated that the destruction of processes had occurred because there were no criminal charges raised against any Croats in 2001, and that "perpetrators of war crimes were unlawfully prosecuted for many years".<sup>9</sup> That is why the Chief Public Attorney Mladen Bajić has issued the instruction to re-examine all subjects of war crimes committed during the aggression on Croatia, especially those with a large number of defendants, not to move for trials in absence, to withdraw warrants and to cease temporary arrests of defendants.

In other words, by following this train of thought, there would be no more trials for crimes committed during the aggression on Croatia, because, at the minimum, perpetrators would not be accessible, and besides, "such processes are a waste of time, court space and judicial money" (id., p. 5). Events and crimes committed in the aggression on Croatia are falling into oblivion. Deputy Public Prosecutors hold the same attitude towards the charges brought by several thousands concentration camp prisoners from Croatia, regarding protection of their civil rights. According to them, it would represent a "contribution to the defective work of Public Prosecution" (*Vjesnik*, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 5).

**About collecting data and organising evidence.** It can be read from the State Attorney's instruction and report that in the next period the State Attorney's Office will primarily be occupied in crimes committed in defence from the aggression. Even today there are twice as many such verdicts than verdicts regarding crimes committed in the aggression. What will be the legal image of the Homeland War several years from now?

The answer to this question can be found in the legal, political, international, historical, sociological, psychological and many other dimensions. For us, previous statements are only a motive for discussions on the role and responsibility of information science in collecting data and evidence of events and facts concerning the aggression, crimes, concentration camps and violation of human rights. Our starting point is the assumption that the factography and basic information on those (historical) events should be objective, available and capable of verification, even as subjects under various discussions. However, we are not interested in the very procedure of collecting data, but on determinants of the contemporary knowledge, interconnection of evidence and quality of information, in order to start collecting data and organizing evi-

dence – all that in such manner that they remain objective and correct, liable to verification and available to all parties, even to those in conflict.

### Collective memory and (historical) events

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Data on concentration camps under the Serbian control and on violation of human rights in those camps during the aggression on the Republic of Croatia were published by the United Nations Commission in 1995. According to the final report of the Commission, in the period 1991–1995, approximately 480 concentration camps under the Serbian control were founded, in which military and civil persons were interned. From the total of 480 concentration camps, information on around 300 of them came from neutral sources, while around 180 concentration camps were reported by the non-neutral sources, thus being marked as “uncorroborated”<sup>10</sup> by the Commission (J. Jurčević, 2000, p. 31).

More than 10,000 Croatian citizens have passed through different forms of imprisonment and transfers; 8,000 Croatian citizens were interned in concentration camps.<sup>11</sup> Prisoners were subjected to the worst kind of physical and mental tortures, many prisoners of both sexes were raped; according to the report of the *Croatian Government Commission for prisoners of war and missing persons*, 300 persons have lost their life in concentration camps, but according to records of the *Croatian Association of Former Prisoners in Serbian Concentration Camps*, a much larger number of prisoners have died in those camps (see to D. Rehak, 2000, pp. 3–4).

Since the beginning of the aggression on Croatia, a number of missing persons amounted to several thousands. After eleven years, the destiny of around 1400 people is still unknown. Most of them were imprisoned or interned in concentration camps. Consequently, the number of those who were killed in concentration camps will probably be considerably larger after the destiny of missing persons is ascertained.

From all above mentioned it can be concluded that data on concentration camps and violation of human rights are, on one hand, completely negated (S. Milošević) in scientific, expert, especially political and historical circles or are being suppressed and forgotten<sup>12</sup> about; and on the other hand, they are treated as the symbol (although incomplete or even imprecise) of values upon which the Croatian freedom, independence and sovereignty were attained.

Therefore, that same data corpus – on concentration camps and violation of human rights – belongs to different patterns of opinion and memory; not only that those data take different positions in separate patterns of memory, but also that the logic of the same patterns confirms, nullifies or transforms the factography.

Informational activity can not choose the user community it will serve to because members of particular communities will select those data sources that are confirming their beliefs.<sup>13</sup> However, information science can set epistemological standards regarding collecting, processing and distributing data. But, before considering this new *episteme*, let us review basic characteristics of collective memory paradigms, that is, of dominant paradigms concerning historical events in the former Yugoslavia, because they are responsible for (non) acceptance of facts on concentration camps and human rights violations during the aggression on Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### Basic characteristics of dominant collective memory patterns

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Contemporaries and participants in political and historical events involved in the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and wars waged on those territories do not have the same collective memory and do not share the same knowledge of the mentioned events. The most distinct patterns of memory and opinion are supported by confronted participants in those conflicts because each of them is protecting their own interests: the aggressor, the victim and the international community. Thus we are differing three, i.e., four patterns of collective memory, which can provisionally be named:

- a) “oblivion production”
- b) “identity production”
- c) “determined chaos production”
- d) “consent production”

**Oblivion production.** The above quoted Slobodan Milošević’s statement that there were no concentration camps in Serbia, or Serbian concentration camps in the Republic of Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is not just an occasional denial in court, but a consequence of a long-term political practice of political and historical submission. There are different forms of expansions through history: conquests, colonisation, protectorates etc. All those forms of submission were leaving certain nets on the occupied territory: nets of people, cultural and even political institutions. From all those forms of submission



a certain kind of multiculturalism is obvious, even if only the negative one;<sup>14</sup> therefore, at least a minimum readiness for the existence of subjugated society nets and readiness for the material and cultural (co)existence with subjugated societies and cultures, exists.

Vukovar is an example of another kind of aggression and unwillingness for multiculturalism in any form. The purpose of conquering Vukovar was to institute Vukovar as the *Serbian* town.<sup>15</sup> The purpose of conquering Vukovar was: to stand against the present society and to substitute it for the *counter-society*;<sup>16</sup> for the Serbian society, annulling all evidence of the cultural, political and historical existence of the old, previous society. Furthermore, the purpose of Serbian aggression on Croatia was to create space for the counter-society: by erasing the collective memory and evidence of the previous Croatian society.<sup>17</sup> This can be concluded from the data on ethnic cleansing<sup>18</sup> of occupied territories both in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as from data on culturocide - data confirming that only in 1991, 600 objects (cultural monuments) were destroyed in the aggression on Croatia (126 of them being of the national or the world importance), 46 museums and galleries, 9 archive buildings and 22 libraries were put out of function. As many as 332 historic settlements were bombed and destroyed.<sup>19</sup>

The counter-society is trying to explain its expansion with such statements as if there was never anything else in the territories of their expansion. Therefore, the task of the policy when serving to the counter-society is to produce the collective oblivion (to wipe out all traces, evidence and monuments of other social groups, nations and cultures). An image of the existence and permanent presence of the counter-society on conquered territories is created simultaneously with the collective oblivion and deletion of material evidence of "the others".

Counter-society can not admit its role in the annulment of (historical) evidence of the others and that is why they are justifying their aggression with the defence of their own national corpus. Counter-society is insisting only on the recollection of its own existence on territories on which it exists or is intending to expand on; the recollection taking the central place and role in realising the counter-society goals.

Oblivion production is a form of the counter-society memory: oblivion regarding the existence of other societies, and oblivion regarding the erasure of evidence of their existence. Everything opposed to such memory pattern is disputed: with the method of denial, marginalization, adoption (by falsification) or dispute.

In Serbian interpretation, Vukovar was the place of defence from the enemy, from the “ustasha”, place of victory. However, even after their “victory” in 1991, they were not naming their heroes or victims. Why? Due to the “oblivion production”; victory is inscribed in the history, but without winners, because their task was to erase all evidence of the existence of others. It is hard to celebrate the victory over the enemy, who does not exist any more and who never should have existed. Furthermore, defeat is also incorporated in the oblivion production form. Defeat is not admitted, even by refusing to learn the history of Vukovar<sup>20</sup> after 1990. That is why the historical memory pattern, created upon the “oblivion production”, is equally incorporating consequences of the victory and consequences of the war in the (un)awareness field. (Oblivion production is not only characteristic of those who have lost their expansionistic wars. *Oblivion production* is characteristic of all those historical and political systems based on values, or formerly based on now rejected values – rejected by the same societies that have exercised such policies or by the international society.)

**Identity production.** For the aggressor, Vukovar is the place of resurrection of the Serbian town and of freedom, at the expense of erasing and forgetting about the others. For defenders of Vukovar and the entire Croatian nation, Vukovar is the place and symbol of freedom and independence of the Croatian nation. However, memory patterns for one and the same historic event are completely different. In the hierarchy of significance in the creation of the contemporary Croatian history, function of the memory of the sacrifice of Vukovar – sacrifice of the town and sacrifice of defenders, stands at the highest place. That is exactly why the national identity is created upon the function of memory of the sacrifice and tragedy of Vukovar; national identity as the ideal of freedom of the entire nation and ideal of sovereignty as the right to decide on one’s own destiny.

Production of (national) identity upon the collective memory of the defence of Vukovar is being disputed with the thesis on the obsolescence of the idea of national liberty, that is, relativized by referring to the limited sovereignty in the globalised world. Some significant facts, essential for understanding of the (national) identity “production” are here being neglected. The Homeland War, including the defence of Vukovar, is a defensive war led by volunteers, therefore, individuals willingly defending their personal and national liberty. This statement is supported by suffering of civilians in Serbian concentration camps

and their humiliation and extermination not as members of political and military formations, but as persons, individuals who dared to stand up in defence of the idea of their own country and independence.<sup>21</sup>

Sacrificing one's own life was never a demand in the name of the "higher interests", rather a valuable attitude which every volunteer was ready to defend in the interest of their personal and national liberty. That is why the high price of freedom is implicitly postulating the *principle of the sanctity of life*. Life as the greatest value is the measure of the realised freedom. Sanctity of life is the universal value, which requires freedom as the social space in which it can be realised. Loss of the personal and national freedom would be the proof of the futility of losing one's life. That is why respect for one's own freedom and freedom of the other represents the social space of the sanctity of life.

Universality of sanctity is originating from Catholicism, but not as the religiously founded sanctity, but as the sanctity of life being the universal principle for the rational regulation of life. Personal and national liberty as the rationally organised space of the all-including life (co-existence and balanced relation between the man, society and nature) was defended and established in Vukovar and in Serbian concentration camps. Such metaphysical determinant of the "identity production" is a historical fact resulting from the memory of one's own history, but also of the personal sacrifice for social freedoms and free international activities.<sup>22</sup>

There is no human society, which exists without the memory. National identity determining form<sup>23</sup> is created upon the collective memory. "Identity production" is the form founded in the memory - memory of one's own sacred places, but not excluding the memory of "dark sides" of one's own history. "Dark sides" of history are denied by this form only if national identity is jeopardized, or, more precise, when the very form of the "identity production" is being annulled in the name of some other form.

**Determined chaos production.** Oblivion production and identity production are two often opposed patterns of collective memory. However, in the contemporary world there is also the third party in the conflict: the international community. It often does not take sides of one of the conflicted parties, because it also represents the conglomerate of different interests. That is why it uses its own collective memory form, determined by the central agent and external factors of the international community.<sup>24</sup>

What is the determined chaos in international relations? It is a disorder, "borders of which are being deter-

mined ... after borders are being set, disorder that is being created stays within those borders, becoming *controlled*, that is, *manageable*" (D. Domazet, 2002, pp. 282–283). Determined chaos is a space of international games, space controlled in advance, in order to keep the disorder within the set borders. Control over such disorder can not be realised without the memory control. Central carrier (general staff) of the international community, with the consent of external factors, is determining dimensions of chaos, as well as criteria for *Memory control and management*. The result of managing the memory in the determined disorder is *selective memory and establishment of the double standard logic*. Why? Because the form of determined chaos production can be applied only on the limited disorder space. By controlling the memory, external factors, that is, "crisis managers" and "chaos producers" are protected from the expansion of chaos and responsibility for disorder production.

Today, most of American intellectuals will admit: "In the beginning of the nineties, USA gave its consent to Milošević to use, if necessary, weapons, in order to protect Yugoslavia".<sup>25</sup> However, selective memory, or, more precisely, managing of the memory, makes it impossible to call the international community to account for issuing the resolution on the embargo imposed on the import of weapons in the former Yugoslavia.<sup>26</sup> This resolution was not only the political message to Milošević, but also the effective mean for depriving the victim of its right to defence.<sup>27</sup>

Selective memory has established the criteria for the selective justice. Namely, United Nations Security Council has adopted the instruction for The Hague War Crimes Tribunal operating, according to which everyone is equally guilty, and differences in their guilt will be distinguished by the number of indictments and severity of sentences.<sup>28</sup> Evaluations like: "I consider The Hague Tribunal to be a political court and it is good that it would be terminated after the 2008, because it was established only to ease the conscience of the international community, which did nothing to stop the bloodshed in the former Yugoslavia",<sup>29</sup> are for daily use and will not be included in the "determined chaos production" form. According to the criteria of memory control, established by the "determined chaos production", there is simply no space for the quoted attitudes and they remain unremembered.

The fact that the controlled and selective memory is resulting in different criteria for those inside of the bordered chaos, and those outside the borders of the conflict,

is far more important. Thus, the fundamental idea of liberty and sanctity of sacrifice, i.e. life, becomes something completely unimportant and invaluable for the determined chaos managers. Selective memory does not allow the comparison and co-existence of those values and values of the chaos managers.<sup>30</sup> That is why it is possible that victims of the defensive war can be on trial for crimes committed in defence, unlike the oppressors for their crimes. Historical facts are thus completely overturned and virtual truths are constructed. It can be realised in processes, in which memory is being controlled and managed.

**Consent production.** *Consent production* is the collective memory form, which imposes, or to be precise, indoctrinates, the governing form of opinion. According to Noam Chomsky, “consent production” is the new mastery of democracy. In developed democratic countries, nations can most efficiently be controlled by controlling their thoughts. Thoughts can lead towards actions and that is why they should be kept at bay. Chomsky considers the media, together with the educational system, universities and colleges, to have the crucial role in the indoctrination system. Indoctrination system is the one that teaches us how to act, what to think and represent (N. Chomsky, 2002).

From the informational activities point of view, media is the *memory figure*. Media as the memory figure have the task of establishing and maintaining the governing doctrine in a particular social community. When democracy is reduced to banalisation of liberty, it becomes the art of “consent production”.<sup>31</sup> Central mechanisms of the consent production are propaganda and the public relations industry (N. Chomsky, 2002, pp. 16-17).

To the form, purpose of which is to produce consent, replication of memory becomes the task: message from the source must be transferred and accepted (without evaluation) at the destination. All propaganda and public relations industry techniques are directed to elimination of obstacles in reception of the sent message: a) message must be accepted as the instruction and form of behaviour; b) message must not be exposed to evaluation, or, more accurately, principles and values according to which the message was created must not be questionable, nor can the evaluation of the sender be questioned; c) message should be accepted as the receiver’s own opinion, in order to be memorised without re-evaluation.

## Historical events and evidence

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Knowledge of events and historical evidence is not possible without memory. Memory is the most important element by which we are forming our knowledge of present and past times, in which things were changing. Memory is the time sequence experience; memory represents consciousness of changes in times, and of the fact that every change implies the continuity of something.<sup>32</sup>

We have pointed out that there are different patterns of memory, created by different knowledge. But, what are we remembering? What is retained as the evidence of events?

Events are happening in time, and with time they become historical events, that is, they are falling into history. Evidence of (historical) events are being lost through time. What is left to us as the evidence of past events?

Theoreticians of the historical knowledge, i.e. of the knowledge of history, consider that only four categories of things from the past can be reflected on, which are ensuring material evidence of past events. Material evidence of the past can thus be divided into four following categories: natural, intentional, communicational and processional.<sup>33</sup>

- a) *Natural evidence* need not be especially explained. It concerns all natural heritage and changes in nature created by natural processes.
- b) *Changes of natural objects* are material evidence created by changes in nature and natural products made by human work. Humans have adjusted them to their needs and purposes and they have thus become artifacts: cultivated fields, cleared woods, bridges over rivers, houses, bottles of wine, tools and weapons, etc.; artifacts, continuity of which is the witness of times they are originating from, can be regarded as *intentional material evidence*.<sup>34</sup>
- c) *Communicational objects* are a special kind of artifacts, that is, artificial creations, which are forming our almost entire knowledge of the past. Communicational objects are all those, purpose of which is to transfer some kind of messages, emotional or rational (from poems, paintings, sculptures, coinage and medals to texts). It is obvious that value of these communicational objects is different for the evaluation of (historical) events, because some of them were intended for the direct communication in times of their origin, while others were formed for the future.<sup>35</sup>

d) *Processional evidence* are disclosing the continuity of what comes from the past to the present, and is not hidden as much in the very object, as in the process, the procedure. Namely, if we wish to understand the process, we must go to the past, in order to understand its origin and function. Social processes are often the consequence of the heritage of the past: titles, nominations, protocol, education, role of the Greek and Latin language in education etc.

Previous four categories of objects may continue to exist and move away from the past, and can thus be used in formation of evidence of the past events. But what can not survive and continue to exist as evidence of past times and events?

First of all, people – men and women. They may be witnesses of particular events as long as the generation of participants in those events lives.

Secondly, events can not survive. Life is a continuous series of events, which can be divided into smaller parts of one process, but are still definite. Occurrences, incidents, events can be parts of some social, political, historical processes (like trends, movements or even current situations), but are still definite in time.

Furthermore, natural occurrences can not live for a long time either. Nor can most of the artifacts; and it is even more crushing that non-material facts, like terms, beliefs, customs, mentality, religions, even languages – are losing their traces in the past.<sup>36</sup>

### Structure of evidence

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Let us remind you again of the motif of our treatise: how to organise memory, i.e. evidence of social and historical events, to be more precise, of concentration camps and violation of human rights. Experiences of the science of history are warning us that: a) occurrences, events, behaviour and actions can not outlive their participants, and are falling in the past; b) neither can participants in the events outlive their time.

We have pointed out that the existing patterns of memory (oblivion production, identity production, determined chaos production and consent production) are basically not functioning on the collected evidence of participants in human rights violations and in events in concentration camps. Actions of participants in those events, their motives, intentions and goals may remain only a personal experience and memory of our generation, if evidence for future times are not ensured. And fu-



ture may be changed if we let these events fall into oblivion.

Memory is based in evidence. Evidence is what remains and survives in time, and evidence can outlive participants in events, as well as events. But, what is evidence and how is it structured?

Meaning of the word *evidence* is the following: “information or explanation, purpose of which is to establish the truth regarding certain fact; totality of reasons, which facilitate the establishment of truthfulness of certain statement, and existence or inexistence of certain act or action” (V. Anić, 1998, p. 176).

*To prove* means to “establish the truth on the basis of facts; to deduce the evidence from facts and relations between them” (V. Anić, 1998, p. 176).

Semantic description of the word evidence already points to factors, which are determining the evidence:

- “*information or explanation*” – can be anything by its nature,
- “*fact*” indicates the existence of certain act or action,
- *judgment*, which confirms the “truthfulness of certain statement”,
- *process*, which forms the evidence by relating information, facts and judgments on certain act or action.

Semantic logic of interpreting components of the evidence is also followed by historians (M. Stanford, 1995, pp. 61-75). Evidence are “information or explanations”; they are expressed in forms of sentences, which are proving the truthfulness of facts. By its form, evidence is a deposition, which attempts to establish certain fact.<sup>37</sup>

Evidence is a deposition of facts; it must be “clear” and “obvious” which is the fact in question, regardless of what does that fact prove. That is why facts must first be established, in order to deduct right conclusions. If facts are not correctly and clearly established, every conclusion based on unclear or imprecise facts may be incorrect.

Use of evidence presupposes the correct understanding of processes, of actions as processes, which are to be confirmed by deducing evidence. Actions are evaluated by correct interpretation and relation of facts, and by correct interpretation of changes, i.e. of the time sequence of events.

After the facts are evaluated and processes understood, the user (historian, scientist, judge, etc.) must make the decision on the adequacy of evidence. User must answer the question of sufficiency of that fact – what is it adequate for, what can be proven by it. Evidence can not be



sufficient or adequate only “for us”, for a certain social group, nor is it sufficient for itself and by itself.<sup>38</sup>

Evidence must meet the standards of collecting, criteria of deposition and evaluation of the knowledge corpus it wishes to incorporate in, and of that user community, to which the fact on certain events and actions must be proved. That is why the process of proving is constantly open and remains a permanent task.<sup>39</sup>

### Networked knowledge and evidence

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Purpose of evidence is to establish the facts and truthfulness of facts regarding certain events and actions. Evidence becomes a part of a certain knowledge corpus. Knowledge can be personal or public, oral or written, etc. *Availability* of knowledge or the possibility of its dispersion depends on the way in which knowledge is *presented* and organised. Therefore, availability and dispersion of evidence depend on the organisation and system of knowledge. Presumption that the cognitive function, that is, the truthfulness of facts and strength of arguments is crucial for accessibility of evidence, is incorrect. Availability and disposability of a certain kind of evidence may be crucial factors in relation to some other kind of evidence, which can be based upon better arguments and more precise facts, but if they are not available and disposable, they remain unknown.

Personal knowledge and experiences may provide for convincing evidence, due to their possibility to form the basic knowledge of particular events or actions. The problem regarding personal knowledge is that it is limited, both in time and space, by the life of an individual and the social group it originates from and is exchanged in.

Personal knowledge is not permanent. Personal knowledge is being *expressed*. It is therefore, the result of the cognitive function. Personal knowledge is also being *presented*, exchanged with the others (and created in communication with others). It is therefore the result of the communicational function. Durability of such knowledge is dependable on the personal memory of subject of cognition, and is being *proved* by the deposition of the (cognitive) subject: deposition and presentation of their presence during events and actions.

**About the perpetuity of knowledge.** Condition under which the deposition and presentation of the witness (cognitive subject) may become the evidence is to ensure the form of perpetuity of the deposition and presentation. What ensures the perpetual form of the deposition and

presentation is the record of the “information”, record of the “explanation” on some permanent media.

Message recorded on some media is denominated as document in the informational and documental activities. Document ensures the form of perpetuity to depositions and presentations of facts, events and actions, and such form makes depositions (presentations, messages, explanations) the evidence.

We have explained the functions that are influencing the structure of knowledge elsewhere (M. Tudman, 1990). We have started from the thesis that knowledge can be expressed by speech (or text) in form of sentences. However, knowledge is formed by three functions: cognitive, communicational and memory function. If one and the same corpus of sentences were observed from different points of view, it would thus be studied as depositions, presentations or evidence. It depends on whether the interest lies in the cognition, communication or the dimension of time (i.e. memory).

The fact that the certain message is written in the document and exists in the *perpetual* form has a series of consequences for the structure and organisation of knowledge. Let us mention just several of them. Knowledge recorded in the document is permanent and becomes independent on its author, the emitter of the message. Document becomes the “communicational object”, which endures in time, and remains for the future. Document is also socially movable and its presentation becomes available in the space to different social groups. *Availability* of the document impacts the structure of the public knowledge, because presentation of knowledge is distributed and exchanged among a larger number of users.

*Replicability* of the deposition facilitates its (re)integration in the new cognitive unities.<sup>40</sup>

For the issue of our interest, i.e. organisation of memory and evidence of concentration camps and human rights, three criteria are significant:

- a) **perpetuity of documents** - which ensures permanent keeping of evidence of events and actions.
- b) **availability of documents** - which ensures their distribution and exchange among a larger number of users.
- c) **replicability of documents** - which ensures their repeated use, by the same or new users.

Permanency, availability and replicability are the crucial characteristics for formation of the collective memory. Collective memory is the creative and dynamic process, determinants of which are these exact characteristics of communicational objects.

**About the availability of knowledge.** Availability of documents is conditioned by the form of the media and technology by which they are prepared and processed. There is a usual division in two basic groups of the media: analogue and digital media, and congruently analogue and digital documents. We will here be in favour of the following division:<sup>41</sup>

- a) the one-way passive media, or the *W-media*
- b) two-way *interactive media* or the *WW-media*
- c) networked interactive media or the *WWW-media*

Today, the Internet is the example of the WWW – networked interactive media. By many things it is a multi-way corpus of the networked knowledge. **Life cycle** of the information on the Internet is determined by the following phases: **creation, storage, retrieval, updating.**<sup>42</sup> This makes the presentation, organisation, distribution and usage of this type of knowledge completely different than in the passive media (the *W-media*) or the interactive media (*WW-media*). In the passive media, the author himself is responsible for the presentation, interpretation and evaluation of knowledge. In the *WW* interactive media, author is still responsible for the presentation, but mediators<sup>43</sup> and users are participating in the interpretation and evaluation. In the *WW-media*, informational, that is, INDOC systems<sup>44</sup> are the mediators between the author (emitter) of the information and the user. These are two-way interactive systems, but in such manner that authors of the information and users are interacting with the system, but are not directly communicating with the returned relation.

In *WWW-media*, character of the authorship and source of information is changed. **Author's reference**<sup>45</sup> is objectively determined by the author, corporative author and sponsor of the WEB page, and indirectly also by the Internet service provider. **Information source** is no longer just a person, institution or a document, but the Internet, provider, the WEB page.

In *WWW-media*, a series of new mediators is participating in the creation of knowledge. This expands the number of participants, who are determining the authorship and the information source. Their constant presence in communication and interaction with users have changed the very nature of communication. New information source is the one, which is actively present on the Internet, because it generates and updates its information. Sponsors and authors of the WEB page are interested in presentation of the information, on the behalf of the author, as well as on the behalf of the information source.

**Knowledge corpus** in WWW systems is open, by the number of participants in its creation, as well as by the range and quality of the presented contents. Knowledge corpus in a WWW-media is constantly renewed and is maintained and updated not just by “senders”, but also by users or mediators of the WWW-media.

## Instead of the conclusion

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*W-media*, the passive analogue media, are usually divided into primary and secondary documents. Primary documents are those, which contain the original subject matter. Primary documents include evidence of events and facts, and testimonies of their truthfulness. Source, author and sender of the information are usually one person. Terminology of the informational science is imprecise when it wishes to describe the original document, original material – just because it is not always possible to separate the source, author and sender of the information. However, original documents are a reliable form of memory and can ensure the retrospective insight into the past, and the protection of the past in present times.

If, however, we wish to present values, cognitions and evidence from the past as a part of the national and cultural identity in all three-time dimensions – past, presence and future – then we have to turn to prospective memory patterns. *Retrospective memory patterns* are those, which aim to protect the existing tradition and keep documents from the past and about the past. *Prospective memory patterns* project the past and presence into the future. For that we need a completely different type of documents and their organisation. We require the networked knowledge, which is constantly renewed by itself.<sup>46</sup>

That is why the WWW-media are not a choice – they are a necessity. WWW-media are organising knowledge in different bases and according to different rules. For example – information source is divided into a series of new participants:<sup>47</sup> information source, author of the information, sender of the information, sponsor, service provider etc. However, the user also becomes the author, because roles of users and authors in the networked media have become exchangeable. That is why the networked knowledge has no fixed author, clear borders, beginning or the end.

The WWW-media arises as the logical selection of the prospective memory of the Croatian cultural and national identity. Evidence of victims of the Homeland War, concentration camps and human rights violation can become

permanent values of all generations, only if they will be permanently memorized and available on the WWW-media.

History can no longer be written and documented, neither can knowledge of that history be organised in the traditional way. The end of writing history in the traditional way appears, because the WWW-media gives a chance to every individual, group or institution to prove their contribution to the historic events, and their interpretation of the same.

It is a the duty of the information science, or more precisely, of the qualified scientific and expert institutions (like the *Information Sciences Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb*) to create a project of the *Multimedia Memorial Centre of the Homeland War*; a long-term national project, which would present all material destructions and human sufferings in the Homeland War, but also all political, diplomatic and military actions and operations – responsibility of all participants for what has happened and did not happen, in order to make that Centre in the form of the networked knowledge and prospective memory, a permanent source of protection and promotion of national values, but also an open offering and presentation of those values, facts and truths to the entire international community, with no limitations.

## FOOTNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> We are offering several examples in order to point out the need for organisation of evidence and data on the basic facts. Purpose of these examples is not to suggest the multitude of possible attitudes.
- <sup>2</sup> Phonogram, Second day of President Mesić's testifying in The Hague: Confrontation with Milošević.
- <sup>3</sup> Phonogram, Second day of President Mesić's testifying in The Hague: Confrontation with Milošević.
- <sup>4</sup> As pointed out by the Deputy Public Prosecutors Pulišelić and S. Zadnik.
- <sup>5</sup> Vlado Rajić, journalist for the newspaper *Vjesnik* refers to concentration camps, in which people were tortured and killed as – camping grounds!
- <sup>6</sup> Slavko Zadnik, Deputy Public Prosecutor (*Vjesnik*, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 5).
- <sup>7</sup> According to Deputy Public Prosecutors Petar Pulišelić and Slavko Zadnik (*Vjesnik*, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 7).
- <sup>8</sup> It seems that *Vjesnik* does not question the existence of war criminals, but considers their prosecution in such a large number and them being inaccessible, and with such superficial police inquests, to be *unlawful*.
- <sup>9</sup> *Vjesnik*, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 7.

- <sup>10</sup> According to the same source, around 330 concentration camps (200 corroborated and 130 uncorroborated) were located in Bosnia and Herzegovina, approximately 80 (30 + 50) in occupied Croatian territories, and around 70 (40 + 30) in Serbia (60) and Montenegro (10). This report confirms that the Serbian concentration camp system was located in three countries (Serbia/Montenegro, occupied territories in Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina) and that in fact, it represented a unity, considering that the Serbian military aggression was also a unified project (according to J. Jurčević, pp. 31–32). See D. Domazet (2002), D. Marijan (2000) for information about unified plans for aggression on Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and about the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as the same battlefield.
- <sup>11</sup> Their stay in concentration camps was ranging from several days to two or more years.
- <sup>12</sup> In *Letopis (Year Book)* of the Serbian cultural society “Prosvjeta”, Zagreb, 2002, vol. 7, theses on the Republic of Croatia, reconciliation etc. being fascist and Nazi ideas, on the right to the independent state as the project of ethnic cleansing, on Croatian President Franjo Tuđman, as a criminal, etc., are being revived, but there is no mention of the Serbian aggression, crimes committed etc. Entire political construction and historical reconstruction are created exclusively on the “dark sides” of the Homeland War (see: Boris Rašeta, Boris Budin: “O identitetu mislim sve najgore”, *Letopis*, 2002, vol. 7, pp. 327–350).
- <sup>13</sup> According to Kuhn, scientific facts and theories are not “categorically separable”; scientific communities, that is, scientists, are creating theories based on their beliefs, and congruently, are observing facts in the same light (i.e. beliefs, theories and facts are mutually conditional). That is why knowledge and facts resulting from contradictory paradigms are not co-measurable (see T. Kuhn, 2002; M. Tuđman, 1993).
- <sup>14</sup> For example, the apartheid is a form, in which multiculturalism is denied, but not physically annulled.
- <sup>15</sup> See D. Marijan, “Bitka za Vukovar” (*Scrinia Slavonica* 2 (2002) pp. 367–402). This article also includes information on the national composition of population, from which it is obvious that among 84,189 citizens of Vukovar, 31,445 of them were Serbs.
- <sup>16</sup> We are borrowing this term from I. Rogić (2002, manuscript).
- <sup>17</sup> Yugoslav National Army and paramilitary formations “liberated” Vukovar in November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1991, leaving space for Croats in the same “liberated” Vukovar only in concentration camps, and definitely not in the cultural and political life of the town.
- <sup>18</sup> See A. Rebić (2002, pp. 149–152), including data on 700,000 exiles and refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina already in the summer of 1991. Purpose of the great-Serbian occupation of Croatian territories was to carry out ethnic cleansing, and those territories were indeed ethnically cleansed: 282,000 Croats were exiled. Return of the exiles to their homes is still not completed today.
- <sup>19</sup> According to J. Jurčević, p. 31.
- <sup>20</sup> According to the Erdut Agreement, Serbs in the Croatian region of *Podunavlje* until the year 2002 had the right not to have history of creation of the Croatian state as the subject in their education programmes.

- <sup>21</sup> People were abused in concentration camps because they have voted for the Croatian option and the independent state; this was a much greater “sin” than being the member or belonging to certain political and military formations (see testimonies in D. Rehak, 2000).
- <sup>22</sup> Idea of the national liberty was one of the basic causes for social changes in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. When great nations were able to create their national states and started establishing imperial empires, it was obvious that they were in no position to allow the colonised nations to intercede for national liberty as for the fundamental value. That is why the idea of the national liberty is substituted for the idea of human rights and the even more indefinite idea of democracy. In new circumstances, democracy does not start from the sanctity of life as the universal principle, but is reduced to techniques of banalising life.
- <sup>23</sup> See Ž. Vujić, 2002, manuscript.
- <sup>24</sup> We are using the form of presentation of determined chaos participants, according to D. Domazet (2002), p. 290.
- <sup>25</sup> Robert Greenberg, “Na Balkanu jezik i država idu zajedno”, *Večernji list*, Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2002, p. 29.
- <sup>26</sup> Resolution 713 VS UN on the complete embargo on the import of weapons in Yugoslavia, was issued in September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1991. Attack on Vukovar started August 25<sup>th</sup>, 1991. Serbian-Montenegrin aggression on the Dubrovnik area started seven days after the resolution 713 was issued, and 14 days later, on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1991, airplanes of the Yugoslav National Army bombed the residence of the Croatian President Franjo Tuđman.
- <sup>27</sup> See M. Thatcher: *Statecraft*, 2002, pp. 298–299.
- <sup>28</sup> Z. Tomac, presentation at the round table “National security”, Association for promoting Croatian identity and prosperity, Zagreb, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2002.
- <sup>29</sup> R. Greenberg, id.
- <sup>30</sup> Idea of liberty is one of the fundamental values of all democratic countries. However, considering that those countries have realised their national liberty during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, and waged colonial wars afterwards, idea of national liberty was pushed aside. Nevertheless, after the Second World War, around 50 new countries were created and 800 millions people were liberated from the great colonial empires (Great Britain, France, Netherlands, Belgium). No one has ever described the process of breakage of multinational countries as the sequence of democratic procedures of globalisation and creation of new countries after the Second World War: from the breakage of the colonial empires to the breakage of the totalitarian communist systems. Process of integration was conducted parallelly with the mentioned one: creation of the European Union is a long lasting process initiated in the fifties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, preceded by many associations and integrations. However, these processes were conditioned by the selective memory: forgetting about the “dark sides” of history of great European forces, which have created their strength and force on the colonisation and exploitation of the less developed nations. These nations, in the period of their liberation, were not allowed to celebrate their liberty, so that interests of possible losers would not be jeopardized. In order to realise all that, selective memory mechanisms had to be established, as well as functioning of the double-standard logic.



- <sup>31</sup> This is originally Walter Lippman's phrase from the twenties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (according to N. Chomsky, 2002, p. 18).
- <sup>32</sup> M. Stanford, 1995, p. 49.
- <sup>33</sup> This division is completely adopted from M. Stanford (1995), pp. 46-48.
- <sup>34</sup> Vukovar and its surroundings were the war operations area. Changes in landscape due to war actions can remain the natural evidence of these historic events.
- <sup>35</sup> Problem of communicational objects value requires a separate analysis; we are here interested in the typology of those objects, rather than in the value of some concrete evidence. Naturally, in the case of war and conflicts of the low and medium intensity we should count on the increased range of information, misinformation and erroneous information.
- <sup>36</sup> M. Stanford states that several thousand languages were lost, more than four or five thousands spoken today (pp. 49-50).
- <sup>37</sup> Difference between the deposition as the evidence, and document as the evidence will be reflected on hereafter.
- <sup>38</sup> According to M. Stanford, id., p. 64.
- <sup>39</sup> In this context, etymology of the word *punishment* is also interesting. Word punishment (*kazna*) in the Croatian language has the same etymological origin as the verb *to prove* (*dokazati*): *dokazati, kazati, kazan, kazna* (see: A. Gluhak, 1993).
- <sup>40</sup> About the perpetuity, replicability and availability as determinants of the sign and knowledge, see: M. Tuđman (1983).
- <sup>41</sup> The following division is adopted from M. Tuđman: "Informacijska znanost; znanost o obavijestima, pogrešnim obavijestima i protu-obavijestima", 2002, in print.
- <sup>42</sup> According to V. Floridi (1996).
- <sup>43</sup> By mediators we are referring to the informational systems, data bases and banks, all that information-documentation infrastructure, which participates in the process, from collecting, storing and processing to the use of the information.
- <sup>44</sup> INDOC system is used as the generic name for all kinds of information-documentation-communication systems, which are intermediating in the information processing procedures.
- <sup>45</sup> Usual definitions are: **Author's reference** - reference created by the name of an individual author or name of the corporative author, reference of a certain document in a data bank created by the name of the author. **Information source** - part of the information system, which is credited with the creation of the information. Place in which the user can receive certain information and satisfy his informational requirements. This place can be a person, institution or a document (M. Tuđman, 1990, pp. 164, 184).
- <sup>46</sup> Naturally, it does not renew itself, but there are no more controllers, which can prevent the knowledge from renewing, or obstruct research of the new evidence and their incorporation into the existing knowledge corpus.
- <sup>47</sup> We have previously pointed to that being the reason of possible errors - accidental or intentional, and the fact that the WWW-media are producing a much larger number of erroneous information and anti-information (M. Tuđman, 2002, manuscript).



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