

**Msc Bojana Bojičić<sup>1</sup>**

*Union-Nikola Tesla University  
Faculty of Entrepreneurial Business  
and Real Estate Management  
Belgrade*

**Review**

*UDK 355.469.2:17  
DOI 10.7251/SOCEN1917093B  
Accepted: 22.12. 2019.*

## **Bombing and the death of ethics<sup>2</sup>**

Each bombing of an area, a city or the whole territory of a state, by some military forces, a state, the group of states or militaristic associations, represents a flagrant violation of ethical principles that has been built and pursued since the time of Hippocrates, Aristotle, Socrates, and Montesquieu, Rousseau, Kant, Spencer, Marx, Durkheim, Baudrillard, Budon, Ulrich Beck and Bauman. Any justification, “understanding”, overt or covert support of bombing, by those who do not directly participate in the bombing action (individuals and groups), is an unethical act and an immoral conduct of the same level and intensity as the bombing itself. Bombing is an extremely immoral act because people (civilians) cannot stay away, protect, or escape from it. Bombing often results in the complete destruction of people and material resources in the area, pollution, which presents the attack not only on present, but also on future generations of people living in the bombed area. In addition to humans and material resources, bombing kills the cultural and spiritual resources of the whole humanity, especially ethics, as a basic indicator of the spiritual health (or disease) of modern humanity.

The very inspiring and factually substantiated book by Braco Kovačević, entitled *The Ethics of Bombing and the Bombing of Ethics* speaks about the relationship between ethics and bombing, whose basic ideas we want to present in this text. The author questions the relationship between ethics and bombing on the example of the suffering of Serbia and Republika Srpska due to the attacks of NATO forces in the middle and the end of the last decade. The author notes that “two and a half decades have passed since the NATO air strikes on Republika Srpska and two decades since the attack on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)”, In both cases, “the apologists for the

---

<sup>1</sup> Teaching Assistant in Sociology, Business Ethics, Human Resource Management.  
e-mail: bojjicb16@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Braco Kovačević, *The Ethics of bombing and the Bombing of Ethics*, Banja Luka: European Defenseology Center for Scientific, Political, Economic, Social, Security, Sociological and Criminological Research. 2019

bombing emphasized that these military NATO interventions were merely aimed at “bringing” the Serbs to military negotiations, which is, of course, not true.”<sup>3</sup> To make the absurdity and irony even stronger, NATO bombardment code was denoted as “Merciful Angel” and declared “humanitarian intervention”. Surely, the performance of such a “humanitarian intervention” by the powerful nations of the West, can be described as state terrorism. Regardless of how it is labeled or defined, the “humanitarian intervention” in practice proved to be a war crime<sup>4</sup>, the author points out, relying on numerous similar views that have been expressed in media and in the literature that have analyzed the consequences of the aforementioned NATO bombing over the past twenty years.

In this book, the author Kovačević looks for the reasons behind this new strategy (bombing as a form of “humanitarian intervention”) led by NATO, or 29 countries<sup>5</sup>, members of this military organization. The author believes that it was a struggle to build a “New World Order”, led by the United States, followed by 28 other NATO members, to “order” all other countries in the world, and above all Russia and China and to impose on them its principles of political, economic, social and cultural development. In other words, the goal of NATO states was to put all other UN member states in a subordinate position. The author points out that the idea of a “New World Order” is very old, beginning with Plato’s discourse on the “ideal state”. Then it was present in Augustine’s concept of the “City of God”, then the Vatican’s, commitment to *Civitas Dei* as a “new evangelization” within which the world would be subjected to papal authority, to Pope Paul VI’s (1963-1978). encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, which supported the idea of “establishing a world authority (*publica auctoritatis universalis*), of course, predominantly Catholic.”<sup>6</sup>

The idea of a new world order is very old, but it has been re-actualized, emphasizes Kovačević, adding that the idea has always been relevant in various ways and that the conceptual framework of a “new world order” implies the establishment of a “supranational state” with “supranational sovereignty.” The “new world order” is based on the establishment of a “world government” and the power of a “world government” - (“governing elite”), consisting of bankers, journalists, intellectuals, politicians, diplomats and corporate elites. This “world government” also has various institutions of domination through which it exercises its global economic, political, military, diplomatic,

<sup>3</sup> Braco Kovačević Ibid, p.9

<sup>4</sup> Braco Kovačević Ibid, p.10

<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that the 27 NATO members are from Europe and only the US and Canada are outside Europe. Also, the United States has the biggest influence on the operation of NATO, but they also account for the largest share in the total cost of arms.

<sup>6</sup> Braco Kovačević Ibid, p.25

information and cultural power. Nevertheless, NATO is the main lever of the “world government”, with the assistance of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the International Court of Justice.

States that do not agree to “voluntarily” enter the new world order and obey its rules are subjected to “humanitarian intervention” and disciplined by NATO. The author points out that “the conduct of an intervention or the commencement of war is propaganda endeavored to justify ‘ethical’ and ‘humanitarian’ reasons”. Such was the case with Serbia and Montenegro, “By imposing their geopolitical interests as “universal values”, Western countries, the members of the NATO alliance, faked the case of *Račak* on 15 January 1999 and used it as crucial evidence and reason for bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. A similar scenario of faking facts and false reporting, misleading world opinion occurred earlier (in 1995) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as an excuse for the Republika Srpska bombing. “

The author raises the question of the purpose of such a strategy of public opinion preparation for “humanitarian intervention”, i.e. bombing a country, then offers the answer that it is because of propaganda semantic discourse on “moral obligation”, “ethical reasons” and “the will of God”. In this way then numerous wars are justified that are initiated, encouraged and run by some of the members of the NATO alliance (usually US or England), in order to, as the ultimate effect of propaganda, “carry out the bombing of a country or territory and in that way (essentially) create mass genocide, “but all this was justified by media propaganda as a necessary “ethical” and “humanitarian” intervention. The author points out a particularly interesting statement that the Western NATO countries, in cases like this, “act as *adeus Absconditus* (remote God, insensitive to human suffering).” In doing so, they also show the hypocrisy of their political science. Behind the discourses on ‘ethics’, ‘humanitarianism’, ‘the spread of democracy’, and ‘human rights’, there is, in fact, a universalist and imperialist motive for the conquest of the whole world. The author Kovačević supported this attitude by numerous examples in international relations and especially in the case of Kosovo and Metohija (1999), which clearly shows that the “violation of human rights is a matter of interpretation, and that the ‘double standards’ are often present in the processes of interpretation of the events which, of course, depends on the actors who participate in it. Thus, the management of a universal principle (in this case, human rights), actually ends in the moral relativism of interpretation” and the introduction of “double standards” as a universal principle.

The author suggests that a decisive role in the global construction of “new world order” belongs to *media* and *military intervention*.” The concept of a *new world order* is prepared and justified for media, and it is imposed by wars

and military interventions. "Semantic terror is "created, produced and spread in the media war as the terror of a message, or *lies*." Politics via media has a propaganda impact on *public opinion* in order to obtain enforcement of its ideological, political, economic, military and other activities, objectives and interests."<sup>7</sup>

In this sense, the propaganda power of television was seen in the wars that marked the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty first centuries, such as the removal of Saddam Hossein, "Arab Spring" (2011), "Civil war in Ukraine" and the war in Syria. The author particularly emphasizes an example where, through "a strong media spin, the Serbs become the sole culprits of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and, as such, must be punished. Sanctions, embargoes and blockades, international controls, various forms of harassment and humiliation were introduced. In the tremendously strong diplomatic, political, military and media pressure of the actors of the war in the Republika Srpska and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Serbs were demonized and satanized so as to restrict any possibility of truly exercising the right to self-determination and political constitution of their own statehood."

The unethical practices in "humanitarian interventions", carried out by the NATO alliance bombing. The author illustrated on the example of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1999), recalling that this "humanitarian action" had major consequences: "7 industrial and economic facilities and 11 energy plants were demolished and destroyed. As well as 38 bridges, 28 radio and TV repeaters, 470 km of roads, 595 km of tracks. More over, 19 hospitals, 20 health centers, 18 kindergartens, 69 primary and secondary schools, 29 monasteries and 35 churches were damaged. The bombing also involved the attack on the foreign country territory - the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. War damage in the FR Yugoslavia was estimated at \$100 billion, which was a huge amount for a small developing country. After the destruction of economic and production capacities, over 600,000 people were left without jobs and 2.5 million were left without the source of finance. It was a real *economic crime*."<sup>8</sup>

The total consequences of such a "humanitarian intervention" in the FR Yugoslavia, as Kovačević rightly puts it, can be classified as *war crimes*, given the consequences of the bombing, as well as the fact that the bombing tested the operation of new destructive weapons (especially with "depleted uranium") on the civilian population. "The aggression of NATO forces against the FR Yugoslavia was a non-liberal war proclaimed as a 'humanitarian intervention', with the alleged aim of defending the 'human rights' of Albanians in Kosovo."

<sup>7</sup> Braco Kovačević Ibid, p.127-135

<sup>8</sup> Braco Kovačević Ibid, p.169-173

Another detail that Kovačević states in his work deserves to be highlighted. “In the case of the bombing of Serbia (FR Y), Clinton and Blair were pointing out that the purpose of it was not to lose the credibility of the international community. The truth is that, among other goals, one of them was related to the economic regression of Serbia and the Serbian people so that they could not play any significant role in the Balkans. “However, the author emphasizes, “bombing was not undertaken, as it is wrongly thought, because of the Kosovo Albanians, but for other reasons. The war against Serbia (and Montenegro) had some other reasons that conflict with the economic and political interests of the oligarchy of neoliberal capitalism. After the bombing, NATO and the US seized 10,887 square kilometers (12.3%) of the territory (Kosovo and Metohija) from Serbia. Of course, in addition to the territory, the intention was to seize other significant resources.”<sup>9</sup>

In this book, the author points out and analyzes several other important aspects that reveal the true (hidden) reasons for the “humanitarian intervention” in the FR Yugoslavia in 1999. First, it is the environmental aspect (“the creation of *nuclear dumps* by launching expired missiles, as well as the destruction of material assets and the environment”). Second, bombing represented an *economic war* (all that was the basis of economic, social and environmental development of a country was destroyed). Third, “*politically speaking*, the bombing of Serbia and the war against it, constituted strong support for the Albanian separatist movement in Kosovo and Metohija in the state of Serbia, aimed at *disintegrating territorial integrity* and *overthrowing the sovereignty* of a sovereign state “Fourth, “from a *legal point of view*, NATO’s intervention against the FR Yugoslavia was - *aggression*. The Security Council did not decide on the bombing, but the decision was made by NATO member states, although that decision had no basis in international law”. In doing so, an unethical act by NATO alliance countries violated international law and it has not recovered ever since.

Seen from an *ethical* point of view, the author underlines in the final part of the book, “that military intervention of NATO against a sovereign state and its people represented (and it will always represent) - observation of B.B) a crime - a *war crime*”

Based on the author’s views, we can conclude that where NATO bombs (and every other bomb) fall, there is no ethics, it is the first to die, nor there are human rights or humanism of any kind. The book *The Ethics of Bombing and the Bombing of Ethics* is a serious, innovative, discursive and scientifically valuable work that can be used by both scientific and even more, by educated audience.

<sup>9</sup> Braco Kovačević Ibid, p.52-58