

Quick links Politics and International Studies

Blanka Matkovic

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As a PhD Candidate in PaIS, I was supervised by [Dr Briony Jones](#) (University of Warwick) and [Dr Erzsebet Strausz](#) (CEU) while I was working on the thesis titled "[From Combatants to Civilians: Exploring and Re-thinking 'Normal Life' in Post-Conflict Croatia \(1995-2017\)](#)". My viva was held on 22 March 2021 with [Dr Julia Welland](#) as an internal examiner and [Professor Roger MacGinty](#) as an external examiner (Durham University). I finally completed my **PhD** in September 2021 (award confirmed by the Senate on 6 October 2021). Earlier I also completed an **MPhil degree** in the [Department of History](#) where I was studying the [war crimes and human rights violations committed by the Communist regime at the end and after the Second World War](#) and supervised by [Dr Christoph Mick](#). I defended my thesis in October 2015 with no corrections, and the examiners were [Dr Daniel Branch](#), the Head of Department of History (Warwick), and [Dr Alexander Korb](#), Associate Professor in Modern European History at the University of Leicester and the Deputy Director of the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. The thesis was published in the USA by [BrownWalker Press](#) and it is also available on [Amazon](#).

I have been a self-funded student since I came to Warwick and the only grants I have received were the [Frankopan Fund Grant](#) (2012/2013, 2014/2015, 2015/2016, 2016/2017) and the [CEELBAS Internship Grant](#) (2014) for which I am extremely grateful.

Photo: My fieldwork in Kocevski rog, Slovenia (2010). Kocevski rog is a location of several larger mass graves from 1945



Photo: My fieldwork in Huda Jama, Slovenia (2008) with a prominent field explorer Dragutin Safaric. Barbara Pit (Slovenian: Barbara rov) is a location of a mass grave from 1945



Before coming to Warwick, I obtained a **Master of Science degree in International Relations and National Security** at the [Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb](#), Croatia, defending the dissertation entitled "Irish Republican Army and the Struggle for United Ireland". The decision to enrol on that programme instead of history was based on the fact it was focused on the history of the 20th century, diplomacy, politics, security, and international law. Before that, I graduated **history** at the [Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) (also known as Faculty of Philosophy) in Zagreb defending the dissertation titled "[Socio-political Context of the Concordat between Holy See and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1935](#)" and **journalism** at the [Faculty of Political Science](#) with the dissertation which focused on the analysis of Tibetan-Chinese and Taiwanese-Chinese relations.

When I began my studies in History, I developed a special interest in war and security studies, including war crimes, human rights violations, political ideologies, nationalism, political violence, and terrorism, which have remained my areas of research to the very day. While I was doing a **Counselling skills** course at Warwick, I became curious about the problem of **dehumanisation** which happens in the war context, and possibly continues beyond that, particularly the way two parties in conflict see each other, and how the idea of their own identity is changing in the process. This leads to seeing the victims in the conflict as "non-humans" and it makes manipulation with their death, or even denying it, possible. My previous research in history was largely focused on the "hidden victims" of the totalitarian regimes, those whose deaths were denied as they never happened, or whose human rights were denied in different ways. Thus, my published works in history primarily focus on the **mass atrocities and human rights violations committed by the Yugoslav Communist regime during and after the Second World War** (which was also a topic of my MPhil thesis).

As a PhD student, I shifted my research to the **Homeland War in Croatia** (1991-1995), **the Greater-Serbia ideology** and propaganda that led to mass atrocities, for example, in Vukovar and Skabrnja in 1991, and Srebrenica in 1995, and **peace-building** in Croatia after the Homeland War, **normalisation of life** from the perspective of Croatian Army veterans who participated in my research and **the role of agency** while taking a multi-disciplinary approach to this topic and relying on the previous exploration of 'normal' in social anthropology, health studies, sociology and psychology.

I am also interested in some other topics although I do not have time to dedicate myself to that kind of research. As a person who was born with multiple disabilities, I am particularly interested in **the Nazi persecution of individuals with disabilities** (such as autistic and visually impaired people) and the mass atrocities committed by the same people who later played a prominent role in mass crimes committed against Jewish people. My approach to this research of mass crimes and victimology is rooted in this personal experience and understanding that if I was born in a different time, I would've been exterminated only because I was born as I. As a result, in my research I dig very deep to find out as much as possible about each victim, to tell their personal stories, to show what the world lost and how our future could've been better if they were not brutally murdered. Apart from that, I am fascinated by **forensic science, including forensic archaeology and anthropology combined with genocide investigation**. Thus, after finishing my studies at Warwick, I am planning to dedicate some time to that field starting by attending a **one-year programme in Conflict archaeology and heritage at the University of Cambridge**.

Although my focus is on mass crimes against Croatian people, sometimes I am approached by individuals who have information about the fate of other individuals or I come across such data which I am happy to share with researchers who are experts in those topics.

I am a co-founder and **the president of the Croatian Society of Historians Dr Rudolf Horvat (Zagreb)** as well as web designer and administrator for our website <http://croatiarediviva.com/>. We are a small society whose research is focused on modern Croatian history and politics, particularly communist repression and human rights violations in the last months of the Second World War and during the post-war period (1945-1990). This was also a focus of the research I conducted in the Croatian and Slovenian archives between 2006 and 2012 when I was also working on the **project of the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb and the Croatian State Attorney** (2008-2011). Apart from numerous academic papers, our society also published several books which were **partially funded by the Croatian Department for Army veterans and local authorities** due to our contribution to a better understanding of modern Croatian history (1945 onwards).

My research interests, and even my degrees, published work and personal details, have been continuously manipulated or falsified on the US and Croatian Wikipedia which, due to the nature of my work (war and post-war crimes) exposed me to a lot of bullying and harassment on social media which had to be reported to the police. Meanwhile, both Wikipedia pages were removed by admins and at my request.

Education

2021-2022, Diploma in Archaeology: Conflict Archaeology and Heritage, Institute of Continuing Education (ICE), University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

2015-2021, PhD in Politics and International Studies (PaIS), University of Warwick, United Kingdom

2018, Irish studies summer school, History and Heritage: Conflict transformation and social justice, Queen's University Belfast, United Kingdom

2012-2015, MPhil in History, Department of History, University of Warwick, United Kingdom

2013-2014, Counselling Skills, Professional Development Certificate, Centre for Lifelong Learning, University of Warwick, United Kingdom

2001-2003/2011-2012, MSc in International relations and national security, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, Croatia

1996-2001, Master of Journalism, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, Croatia

1994-2000, Master of History, Department of History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Research interests:

political and military history (20th century) modern history of South-Eastern Europe World War II and post-war period, particularly 1945-1990 war crimes and human rights violations genocide and violence (So far I haven't been researching or writing about the Holocaust, and the focus of my work has been on the Croatian people within Croatia and Slovenia. Inspired by the destiny of some American movie directors of Jewish origin and their influence on the American movie production in the late 1940s and the early 1950s, my research interests are shifting towards the broader topic of violence, migrations, diaspora, and its cultural and political connections with a new homeland.) displaced persons migrations and diaspora (particularly Croats in Canada, the USA and Latin America) totalitarianism (as a person with a disability, I am particularly interested in how totalitarian regimes "dealt" with people with disabilities, including Nazi treatment of disabled people who were the first victims of that regime) political ideologies international relations national security terrorism and counterterrorism (Northern Ireland) peacebuilding and conflict resolution (Northern Ireland, Colombia, Croatia) dealing with the past and memory (Northern Ireland, Eastern, and South-Eastern Europe)

		<p>Croatia and Slovenia at the End and After the Second World War (1944-1945): Mass Crimes and Human Rights Violations Committed by the Communist Regime</p>
<p>Dr Blanka Matkovic B.Matkovic@warwick.ac.uk THE LATEST BOOK:</p>		<p>LINKS: Academia.edu ResearchGate LinkedIn Croatia Rediviva Research Project</p>

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Komentarji

Dragutin Pieteta Safaric

OVU SLIKU SAM VE NEGDJE VIDIO. Reci koja je to lokacija ? L.P.

Odgovori

Blanka M. Matkovic

Dragutin Pieteta Safaric Ko evski rog 2010. godine

Odgovori

Blanka M. Matkovic

Dragutin Pieteta Safaric evo nas i na ovoj mojoj