

Review of the book **Toward a Model of Restorative Social Justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina** by Laurence Armand French. Publisher: Faculty of Security Sciences, University of Banja Luka, 2018.

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The value not only of this work by Professor Laurence French, but also of his overall activity related to our region, is reflected, first of all, in his good faith. This may sound somewhat trivial or even scientifically irrelevant – but that is precisely the quality that has been missing – and is still missing – regarding the approach to the civil war in the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) taken by Western factors – ranging from government officials, state servants and diplomats to journalists, humanitarian workers (with and without quotation marks), public intellectuals, and members of the academic community.

If we agree that the essential basis for any intellectual, academic, and scientific activity is the search for the truth, then one of the necessary prerequisites, other than the sovereign command of data and general context of events – is good faith. Over the last three decades, we have witnessed how the largest and/or most powerful media, intellectual, humanitarian and academic capacities can be misused for bad purposes if they succumb to politicization or abuse for the purpose of achieving publicly declared and/or hidden pragmatic, real political goals. And their abuse was inevitable in the context of external aggressive pretensions to these regions, that is, the absence of good faith and the will to look at the given problem objectively, from various, often complex, aspects, in an unbiased way.

Specifically, in the case of the former Yugoslavia, if the then “international community” dominated by the Western powers and led by the United States had demonstrated “good faith”, that is, an aspiration to save the SFRY from bloody disintegration or, if it was not possible to prevent disintegration, to direct it toward the most peaceful solution, the bloody war that affected a significant part of the former joint state, primarily the former Socialist Republics of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and then, due to the NATO’s war of aggression, the newly established Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – the conflict would not have taken place or it would have been of lower intensity, with substantially fewer casualties and post-war trauma.