



BROOKLYN_BORN

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Do you remember Yugoslavia? Capital-Belgrade – controlled by Tito?

Friday, June 14, 2013

If yes, then you must be over age 40. 7 countries make up that territory now – Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Kosovo.

Unlike the “Velvet Divorce” of the Czech and Slovak Republics in 1992, the Balkan Peninsula experienced much violence and bloodshed.

Much is still visible.



There are many lovely areas in the region with wonderful, friendly people. I'll return to happier aspects of our trip tomorrow. Today though, my thoughts are about the strife endured by ordinary people during that time.

On this and our other visits to Europe we saw many memorials. Some were very old like those built in gratitude at the end of a plague. Some documented the horrors of WWI and WWII. Those are still within the memory of our oldest generations.

Sadly some memorials are more recent and actually within the memory of my grandchildren.

This now tranquil site was the scene of bombardment from across the Danube River.

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In a church courtyard, these side by side sculptures remember both Christian and Jewish victims with appropriate symbolism.



It's vital to remember, and memorials help us to do that, but it's more important to determine how to stop it from happening again.

Sparker JohnTJ1 posted a blog recently "Stop the Name Calling, Please"

www.sparkpeople.com/mypublic_journal_individual.asp?blog_id=5384215&comment_page=1

where he deplored the state of political discourse and commentary in our country today.

This divisiveness is greatly concerning to me also. I've often thought that associating ONLY with like minded people and surrounding ourselves ONLY with "people like us" while distancing ourselves from

those who are "different" can have serious consequences.

If we don't see each other as individuals, we can lump everyone together based on ethnicity, nationality, religion etc. If we continue such an isolated existence and do not tone down our rhetoric and seek some common ground, given enough time, could we not be "Balkanized" as well?

After the bombing at the Boston Marathon, the Czech Republic had to put out a press release to inform Americans that they are Czechs not Chechnyans and please stop the hate mail and threats.

Obviously, we should not ascribe the evil deeds of individuals indiscriminately to anyone who happens to share a common heritage. It would also help to study geography.

Note: Our cruise line took special care to bring onboard even-handed representatives of several countries involved in the violence to talk and take questions. As I've mentioned in earlier blogs, one's view of history is skewed by one's personal experience and perspective. Being ignorant of history also increases the likelihood of repeating it.

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CD13629552

It was good of the cruise to deal directly with political and social strife issues rather than to pretend they did not exist.
2918 days ago



GINIEMIE

I agree, if we don't pay mind to history, we will/are repeating it. The strife in each area is because-usually greed/resistance to another's greed and as you said generalizations. Mom even said that 20 years after WWII about the Germans, she of course was a Belgian and was a member of the resistance during that war.



2919 days ago



MERRYMARY42

loving your blogs, pictures and history lesson, I am learning alot
2921 days ago



SARAWALKS

Thank you for an insightful blog. I completely agree -- we are on our way to Balkanization and I fear we have no idea what our ignorance of each other may eventually lead to. Pray pray pray and speak out when necessary...but so often speech is misunderstood or ignored...but we can only speak when we must, despite the consequences.

2921 days ago



PHEBESS

Wonderful reminder of the cost of creating a nation - often the unnecessary cost.

And amazing that there are people in the US who confuse Chechnya and Czech Republic!!!! Our country's myopia never ceases to amaze me!
2921 days ago



WATERMELLEN

Great blog -- and really liked your link to JOHNTJ1 as well --

It's amazing how much progress we have made to a more human world. And: it's amazing how much there still is to be done. Treating individuals as human beings is so key.

Thanks for your comment on my obesity simple/complex blog . . . I operate in self delusion most of the time!

2921 days ago



**COCK-ROBIN**

A great and sad travelogue. Thanks for sharing.
2921 days ago

**BARDIC_GRRRL**

I remember, my parents went sailing around that region the summer before the violence erupted. They came back in love with Yugoslavia. What a waste!

Let us please remember, and not do that to ourselves!
2921 days ago

**CELIAMINER**

I confess to being geographically challenged (and I'm married to someone who majored in geography). I did not know how Yugoslavia was divided till I read your blog. This trip has been good for you and for the rest of us you are educating.
2921 days ago

**BELLACUDDLES**

When we lived in Turin, Italy, my dh's parents came over from Spokane, WA and we all went by car to Croatia.....wow that is an unbelievable site with the shrapnell pitting the houses, but the countryside was just gorgeous!! Thanks again for sharing!!
2921 days ago

**ANATASHIKI**

I sure do remember them , they were our best neighbors and Yugoslavia was the most prosper and developed communist country from the region.and the most free , at least it looked like that from our side. the fragments resulted are a pale shadow of what was there.
2921 days ago

**WADINGMOOSE**

I remember Yugoslavia and I'm not quite 40 yet :) They went through such a violent upheaval through those years. Sometimes we're so good at vilifying those who don't agree with us that we fail to see the bigger picture and remember that even though we see things differently we are all still human beings. And that we have the luxury to hurl insults at each other over what are really quite minor issues in the grand scheme of life, death and survival.

Just because someone is different than we are doesn't make them bad people. Just different.

In my experience, different is good. Not bad.
2921 days ago

**BOILHAM**

I sure remember Yugoslavia, I have lots of ham radio QSL cards (a postcard style contact confirmation) from there.

2921 days ago

**STRIVERONE**

Healthy thought is part of a healthy lifestyle. I appreciate seeing it here. Thank you.
2921 days ago

**CD6254520**

We get caught up in our own little worlds and forget there are people in many other parts of this world who endure suffering and prejudice every day of their lives

Thank you for sharing this

Much Love

John
2921 days ago

**JAHINTZY**

I'm enjoying reading about your trip, and the thoughts about how we consider the individuality of others vs creating mass judgement are poignant.
2922 days ago

**DR1939**

We spent two weeks in Croatia. We took some days trips to Bosnia-Herzegovina. I was surprised how much damage remained. In Budapest we walked by a government building that still had bullet holes from the '56 revolt. It was an eye-opening experience for us. I, too, was impressed by the public monuments.
2922 days ago

**SLIMMERJESSE**

Another bunch of wonderful photos. I so enjoy them. Thank you!
2922 days ago





WILSONWR

Sounds like a great cruise -- I like how they spend time on the historical aspects of the place you are visiting. That part of the world has definitely gone through some rough periods during the past 100 years.
2922 days ago



CHERALA

I do remember Yugoslavia and vaguely remember the name Tito... and yes I am over 40.

I sure do appreciate you sharing these photos of your trip and getting a chance to hear about these countries through your experiences!
2922 days ago



HELEN_BRU

I'm just catching up on your trip. I didn't get any notifications. My neighbour just returned from a similar trip down the Danube, including Prague, but most of the trip was by bus because of the floods. However, they were put up in 5 star hotels, served excellent meals and refunded 1/2 their fare. She said Prague was her favourite. She also saw Bratislava and Hungary. However she said Slovakia and Budapest were overrun by Romanians. I think she meant Romas. Do you know?

Thanks for sharing your trip. Pictures were wonderful.
2922 days ago



MAGGIEVAN

Yes, I remember. I think it is so sad what humans do to humans, some times. Thanks for sharing.
2922 days ago



Comment edited on: 6/14/2013 6:46:40 AM



ONEKIDSMOM

Yep, of an age when the division of Yugoslavia was "current events" not history... and yet... there is always more to learn. I totally agree that we need to see one another as individuals.

It is human nature to generalize. It can also be a gross mistake.



I've enjoyed your trip, looking over the shoulder of your blogs!
2922 days ago



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