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Introduction

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The expensive and delicate process of nation-building – whereby a world power attempts to refashion a fledgling polity into a compliant, and ideally profitable vassal in which citizens share a sense of identity and allegiance – is not a new one. Indeed, during the course of George W. Bush’s presidential administration in Washington, the United States has undertaken nation-building endeavors in Afghanistan and Iraq, both of which are home to some of the most discordant and reluctantly coexistent ethnic and religious populations in modern history. In this regard, the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina – in both the current postwar period as well as the post-Ottoman period – serves as a potent example of limitations and opportunities in a society where the agendas of religious-ethnic groups are motivated by their own divergent political agendas.

In the summer of 1878, the geopolitically peripheral Ottoman territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina suddenly became the focus of European diplomatic attention. The Austrian occupation of the territories was accompanied by a series of internal and international political and ethnic crises that would ultimately lead to the outbreak of the First World War, and with it the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman and Russian Empires. This is not to say that the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina precipitated these cataclysmic events, but during this period, these previously ignored Balkan provinces were on one of the major fault lines along which adversarial states would confront one another – both directly and vicariously through indigenous religious-ethnic groups. Many analysts have come to regard the relatively short period of Austro-Hungarian administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina – which lasted from the occupation of the provinces in 1878 to the height of the First World War – as one of considerable progress and prosperity. Indeed communications, industry and the transportation network were all noticeably upgraded in the region, but the results of Austria-Hungary’s »modernization« campaign in Bosnia and Herzegovina were uneven at best.

Their administrative strategies failed to facilitate any real or lasting semblance of ethnic cohesion and the most significant development – for the local population at least – was the political awakening of the three largest ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Serbs, the Croats, and perhaps most notably, the Bosnian Muslims, now known as Bosniaks. The Austrian strategy of playing these divergent national groups off of one another to prevent the establishment of a cogent multiethnic challenge to Austrian hegemony, combined with four decades of development programs that failed to provide most Bosnians with significant improvements in the standard of living, actually served to expedite the radicalization of Serb, Muslim and Croat nationalist ideologies. It is evident now, as it most certainly was then that, particularly after the act of annexation in 1908, the Austrians had no chance of effectively suppressing Serb nationalism. The Serbs, who were motivated by a legacy of both real and imagined suffering and encouraged by the bravado of their patron state, were outraged by this audacious machination as it rendered the prospect of union with Serbia even more doubtful. Likewise, the Austrians had severely damaged – if not forfeited altogether – the conditional support of the Bosnian Muslims with the act of annexation, which absolved even the veneer of Ottoman suzerainty. To be sure, the Bosnian Muslim elites were significantly disaffected with the decrepit Ottoman government (which took little notice of the Muslims’ quagmire) as early as the 1870s, but annexation effectively removed them from the realm of Islam and placed them squarely in the center of European Christendom.

The Congress of Berlin and the Occupation

On June 13, 1878, the diplomatic representatives of the European powers convened for the *Congress of Berlin*. During the course of the often tense four-week convention, the participant states managed to divvy up the Balkan holdings of the ailing Ottoman Empire. The states of Serbia, Montenegro and Romania were recognized as independent (though none received the territorial expanse they had hoped for), the Russian-sponsored San Stefano Bulgaria was partitioned, and the Ottomans regained the insubordinate territories of Macedonia and Thrace. But



1 In addition to occupying Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Austrians were also allowed to occupy the Sanjak of Novi Pazar, a narrow strip of Ottoman territory separating the then independent states of Serbia and Montenegro.

2 Donia, Robert J. / Fine, John V.A.: *Bosnia & Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed*. New York: Columbia UP 1994, p. 96.

3 Sugar, Peter F.: *Industrialization of Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1878-1914*. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Pr. 1963, p. 20.

4 Malcolm, Noel: *Bosnia: A Short History*. New York: New York UP 1996, p. 137.

5 Kann, Robert A.: Trends Towards Colonialism in the Habsburg Empire, 1878-1918. The Case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1878-1914. In: Rowney, D.K. / Orchard, G.E. (Eds.): *Russian and Slavonic History*. Columbus/O.: Slavica Publishers 1977, pp. 164-80.

6 McCagg, William O. Jr.: The Soviet Union and the Habsburg Empire: Problems of Comparison. In: Rudolph, Richard L. / Good, David F. (Eds.): *Nationalism and Empire: The Habsburg and the Soviet Union*. New York: St. Martin's Pr. 1992, p. 50f.

7 Sked, Alan: *The Decline & Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918*. London, New York: Longman 1989, p. 244.

perhaps the most significant outcome was the agreement of the powers to allow the Habsburg government to occupy the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹ When Gyula Andrassy, the foreign minister for the Habsburg monarchy, volunteered his government to serve as custodian of these two underdeveloped Balkan provinces, he (perhaps unwittingly) saddled his superiors with the unenviable task of maintaining the delicate balance of the potentially volatile ethnic communities living in these territories – a process that would require a great deal of both concession and restraint. The Habsburg governments in Vienna and Budapest were well aware that occupation would be a costly venture and they were ultimately faced with a host of complications during the process of modernization, but their direction ushered in thirty years of relative peace, as well as the construction of factories and public buildings, and the development of a rail network. Consequently the period of Habsburg administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina has received renewed interest in light of the recent conflict and the subsequent need for economic reconstruction there.

While under Habsburg supervision, Bosnia and Herzegovina were administered by the *Landesregierung* – a branch of the Joint Ministry of Finance (representative of both halves of the dualist system) established specifically for this task. Robert Donia suggests that administration of the territories was actually relegated to the Joint Ministry of Finance in order to avoid »constitutional struggle over which half of Austria-Hungary would gain territory at the expense of the other«,² but it is more commonly insinuated that *neither* half of the monarchy actually wanted the territory attached to theirs. The 1,5 mio. Slavs residing in the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina would tip the demographic balance in favor of the Slavs in both the Austrian and Hungarian halves of the monarchy. According to István von Burián, who later served as director of the *Landesregierung*, »[w]hen Andrassy accepted the mandate for occupying Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Congress of Berlin, he had the public opinion of practically the whole monarchy against him.«³ But two of Vienna's primary diplomatic concerns – the containment of Russian influence among Central European Slavs, and the minimization or nullification of Ottoman presence in the region – were directly linked to these otherwise inconsequential territories. Prior to Austria's occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia had (in accordance with the agreements with the Ottomans but in violation of other prior agreements with other European powers) fostered the establishment of a sizable – though ultimately short-lived – Bulgarian state. In an attempt to further impede Russian influence in the region, the wary Austrians responded by announcing their intention to occupy and possibly annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. Likewise, the emergence of a unified and powerful Germany to Austria's north left Bosnia and Herzegovina – to the empire's extreme south – as the only direction in which the monarchy could expand. But perhaps most importantly, Andrassy recognized the strategic significance of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had served the Ottomans as a buffer zone between an increasingly aggressive Serbia and the desirable ports of the Dalmatian coast. After Belgrade had succeeded in ousting the Ottomans from Serbia – and subsequently declaring war on the ailing empire in 1876 – the Austrians became particularly concerned about Serb designs on Bosnia. Noel Malcolm further asserts that if the Habsburgs had been »sure that the sultan could retain power indefinitely over the Bosnia, they would not have bothered.«⁴ Robert Kann adds that »in a financial sense the acquisition of the territories was considered not only no gain but a definite loss, a prediction which could be proved convincingly throughout the entire history of the occupation and annexation era. Occupation was considered the lesser of two evils. It would mean bad business economically but it might offer some relief against the threat of Balkan nationalism and Russian-inspired Pan Slavism.«⁵ At any rate, the political status of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the people who lived there, remained ambiguous within the empire. In William McCagg's comparative analysis of nationalism in the Habsburg and Soviet empires, he describes the territories as »satrapies« – units that were not considered integral parts of the civic state but that were not foreign either.«⁶

Only a small percentage of the land was arable and the agricultural structure in existence was in need of drastic reform. The new territories were industrially underdeveloped, and in terms of pre-existing resources, about the only assets Bosnia and Herzegovina could offer were its dense forests and a few scattered mines, but Alan Sked suggests that Franz Josef was »happy enough acquiring new territory; however poor it was. . .«⁷ Despite Franz Josef's enthusiasm, the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was met with extremely mixed results on the part of indigenous multiethnic population of Serbs, Muslims and Croats – especially in the initial phases.



8 Donia, Robert: The Battle for Bosnia: Habsburg Military Strategy of 1878. In: Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine, Posebna Izdanja XLIII [Sarajevo] (1979), pp. 112-114.

9 Lampe, John R.: Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was a Country. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1996, p. 66.

10 Malcolm 1996, p. 139.

11 Lampe 1996, p. 67. According to the first Austrian census, which was conducted after the first full year of occupation, the population consisted of 42% Serbs, 38% Muslims, and 18% Croats. There was no ethnic majority, and considering the sizeable outflow of Muslims after the occupation, it is impossible to determine whether the Serbs or the Muslims enjoyed anything more than a marginal and fluctuating numerical advantage.

12 Friedman, Francine: The Bosnian Muslim: Denial of a Nation. Boulder: Westview Pr. 1996, p. 75.

13 Although the steadfastly independent kingdom of medieval Bosnia, was undeniably home to the ancestors of 19th century Bosnia's Muslim population, this period was not regarded as a suitable »golden age«, because Bosnia was an almost wholly Christian domain during this period.

14 Qutd. in Friedman 1996, p. 59f.

15 Ibid, 61.

On August 5, 1878, two weeks after the *Treaty of Berlin* was signed, an imperial force of 72.000 under the leadership of Croat-born General Josip Philipović von Phillipsberg marched into Herzegovina and entered Mostar. The Habsburg administration justified this invasion as necessary to effectively »liberate« these territories from Ottoman control. However Bosnia's Muslims, who constituted well over a third of the indigenous population, were somewhat distressed to see themselves »liberated« by Catholic Austria. Muslims in Sarajevo overthrew the enfeebled Ottoman administration, procured the city's stock of munitions, and embarked on an ambitious, but predictably cursory campaign of guerrilla warfare against their new occupiers.⁸ This fervent opposition surely came as no surprise to the Habsburg authorities, who were well aware of the privileged position held by Bosnia's almost exclusively Muslim landowning class (as was the rule throughout the Ottoman empire). After three weeks of fighting, Franz Josef's forces succeeded in occupying Sarajevo, but it would take another three months for the greatly expanded occupation force of 268.000 imperial troops⁹ (a full third of the monarchy's regular army) to subdue the uprising. This resistance might very well have been more vigorous and probably more effective had it not been for the considerable exodus of Bosnian Muslims who were adamantly opposed to living under »infidel« rule. Official Habsburg reports indicate that in the period between 1883 and 1905, some 32.625 left for Istanbul (with 4.042 returning) and an estimated 24.000 between 1907 and 1918. Noel Malcolm points out that these figures are somewhat misleading as they only indicate how many left the country after 1883, when Viennese officials were »alarmed« by the number of people fleeing to avoid conscription.¹⁰ It is only logical that the greatest migrations would occur in the period immediately after occupation began. John Lampe suggests that in the first three years of the occupation, no less than 200.000 Muslims fled.¹¹

Although the Muslim revolt was destined to fail against the numerically and technically superior Habsburg army (which, incidentally contained several Croat and Serb units), the demise of the rebellion is largely attributable to its own lack of cohesion. Because of the Bosnian Muslim leadership's direct relationship with the Muslim authorities in Istanbul – as opposed to the Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serb communities, which had the benefit of locally-based religious authorities – they were essentially cut off from their spiritual leadership and without effective local-level community organization. Unlike their neighbors the Greeks, Serbs, and Bulgarians, the Bosnian Muslims had not articulated nationalist or separatist ambitions during the period of Ottoman occupation, and with the coming of the Habsburgs, they were not only cut off from the predominantly Muslim Ottoman empire, but also from the other Slavic Muslim minorities in Macedonia, Montenegro, and the Sanjak region of Novi Pazar. Friedman asserts that because of the of Bosnian Muslims' traditionally congenial relationship with the Turks, during which they had been »willing participants on the side of Turkey in at least 132 military conflicts against Habsburg armies containing soldiers who were Croats, Montenegrins, Serbs, and Slovenes. This could only encourage a feeling of Bosnian Muslim distinctiveness from the rest of the South Slavic peoples.«¹² The Bosnian Muslims had never existed as an independent nation (nor had they existed as a people outside of the Ottoman empire for that matter), and as Donia suggests, the Bosnian Muslims were without the collective memory of a »golden age« to mobilize them.¹³ Consequently despite the Bosnian Muslims' fierce opposition to the Habsburg occupation force, their efforts to repulse the occupiers were short-lived and ultimately ineffectual.

However, despite the belligerence of the Bosnian Muslims, the Austrians recognized the significance of their prominent position in Bosnian society, and thus took a number of precautions not to further upset the balance. Even before the occupation in 1878, officials in Vienna had instructed General Philipović von Phillipsberg that »besides the Catholic population, attention needs to be directed also to the Muslim population and to give it special protection all the more since the Muslims not only have the largest land ownership, but represent the relatively most progressive and most enlightened part of the population.«¹⁴ A year after the occupation, the *Habsburg-Ottoman Convention* of Novi Pazar again confirmed Ottoman sovereignty over the territories and purported to recognize the authority of the Ottoman sultan as the leader of the Muslim community. Certain provisions also allowed for the continued circulation of Ottoman currency and allowed some Turkish officials to remain at their posts until they were phased out in favor of Habsburg replacements.¹⁵ But on the whole, these »concessions« soon proved to be little more than political distractions and the Muslims remained largely discontented with the Austro-Hungarian occupation. There were numerous instances in which Mus-



16 Pinson, Mark: The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina Under Austro-Hungarian Rule, 1878-1918. In: Pinson, M. (Ed.): The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina: Their Historic Development from the Middle Ages to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia. Cambridge/MA: Harvard UP 1993, p. 99f.

17 Malcolm 1996, p. 141.

18 Lampe 1996, p. 66.

lim community leaders – including the likes of Ali Džabić, who had been appointed mufti of Mostar in 1884 by the Austrian administration – outwardly condemned what they considered to be »infidel« rule forbidden by the Koran.¹⁶

By contrast, the armies of the Catholic monarchy were openly welcomed by Bosnia's Croat population who anticipated unification with Croatia proper. It has even been suggested that the Croats, who comprised less than one-fifth of population in Bosnia and Herzegovina, presumed they would be assigned some sort of preeminent role as they shared the same faith as their new occupiers and because of their relationship to the more than two million Croats already residing within the empire. The extent to which this actually occurred remains the subject of debate. Malcolm contends that during the period of Habsburg rule, the Catholic Church proved to be »more active than it had been over previous thousand-odd years of Bosnian history«, pointing to the arrival of the Jesuits (the area was previously dominated by the Franciscans) and the construction of two seminaries and the gigantic cathedral in Sarajevo as evidence of this activity.¹⁷ But according to Lampe, the influx of Croats, many of whom were Habsburg officials, and the »newly aggressive Catholic hierarchy made Serb apprehension inevitable«.¹⁸

The Serbs, who undoubtedly would have preferred unification with the now independent Serbian state, were dismayed by their fate. After having involuntarily traded the rule of the Ottomans for that of the Habsburgs, the irredentist Serbs found themselves fighting similar battles. In 1881, the government declared its intention to enact an extensive program of military conscription in the territories. Early the next year, Serb activists from Mostar launched a diligent campaign of protest that began with a formal petitioning of the government but quickly escalated into a series of violent rebellions. The insurgent force of more than 1.000 armed men even managed to occupy sizable portions of Herzegovina before being suppressed in the summer of 1882. Isolated incidents involving small bands of these »robbers«, as the official reports called them, would continue for the next decade.

Ethnicity and Economic Development

After overpowering initial resistance, the Habsburg administration embarked on what appears to have been the monarchy's chief priority for the occupation, modernization – specifically in the industrial sector – at a pace and level previously unseen in Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to Michael Palariat, the occupiers »saw their task as a »civilizing mission« and the Bosnian economy as clay to be worked according to their prescriptions [...] by Central European standards the Bosnian economy was backward at the end of the period of Ottoman rule, but we should be wary of exaggerated claims in this respect, because the Austrians made much of the former barbarism in which the country was sunk, since this strengthened the legitimacy of their occupation.«¹⁹ He adds that a preexisting but crude infrastructure constructed by the Ottomans actually »facilitated the work undertaken subsequently by the Habsburg administrators«.²⁰

Efforts to modernize were certainly impressive, and the pace at which they occurred was almost more stunning. Within the first thirty years of occupation, the government financed the construction of more than a thousand miles of narrow and broad gauge track (which was bound exclusively to the Hungarian half of the monarchy), as well as paved a similar distance of previously non-existent and dirt roads.²¹ Of course Austria's primary motivation for developing the rugged landscape in this fashion was to meet the transportation needs of its military, but this campaign of modernization led to an unprecedented growth in Bosnia's industrial and commercial sectors as well. An abundance of raw materials, such as the minimally harvested pine forests and significant mineral deposits (which had been surveyed extensively but not exploited by the Ottomans) were exploited as rapidly as possible. Sugar notes that some 15.000 tons of iron ore were extracted near Prijedor in 1882 alone.²² The Habsburg agenda also precipitated the construction or revitalization of a number of factories and mills to process the area's resources. Massive tobacco processing plants were opened in Sarajevo and Mostar in 1880, and the steel mills established in Zenica in 1892 were also considerably prosperous – in fact, they remained among the most productive until the outbreak of civil war in 1992. These endeavors did prove to be something of a boon for the *Landesregierung*, which earned a reputation for nationalizing preexisting private ventures and insisting on the direct administration of new ones.

19 Palariat, Michael: The Habsburg Industrial Achievement in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1878-1914: An Economic Spurt that Succeeded? In: Austrian History Yearbook 24 (1993), p. 136f.

20 Ibid.

21 Sugar 1963, p. 79.

22 Ibid., p. 106.



23 Lampe 1996, p. 80.

24 Ibid.

25 Sugar 1963, p. 57.

26 Pinson 1993, p. 94f.

27 Tomasevich, Jozo: Peasants, Politics and Economic Change in Yugoslavia. Stanford: Stanford UP 1955, pp. 96-107.

28 Salim Čerić, Muslimani srpskohrvatskog jezika. Sarajevo: Svjetlost 1968, p. 169f.

29 Palariat, Michael: The Balkan Economies, c. 1800-1914: Evolution Without Development. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1997, p. 205.

30 Friedman 1996, 63.

31 Palariat 1997, p. 211.

32 Lampe, John R. / Jackson, Marvin R.: Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations. Bloomington: Indiana UP 1982, p. 284.

33 Friedman 1996, p. 62. According to the 1910 Austrian census of the territories, 87% of the population worked in the agricultural sector.

34 Lampe 1996, p. 66.

35 Durham, Edith: Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle. London: Allen & Unwin 1920, p. 154.

In spite of these early successes, Habsburg industrial efforts soon faced formidable obstacles directly attributable to their own lack of foresight and consideration. By 1910, ethnic favoritism had made its way into the industrial sector. Serbs were routinely passed over as potential employees in favor of newly arrived Croats who now constituted a noticeably disproportionate percentage of the work force.²³ As the occupation wore on, profit margins narrowed. Revenues which had increased annually by 15% throughout the 1890's, had dwindled to just 3% from 1906 to 1913.²⁴ Most critics generally fault the administration's lack of effort to form dependable trade relations and attract foreign investments as the basis for the failure to achieve sustained economic growth. Others, such as Sugar, suggest that the 1903 change in administration also heralded a change in priorities, and the modernization crusade was subsequently sidelined.²⁵

Financial and ethnic issues were even more apparent in the agricultural sector, in which more than 80 percent of the population was employed. According to the census of 1885, landowners comprised just over 2% of the total population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and another 29,75% were categorized as »free peasants«, nearly all of whom were Muslims. But by far the largest demographic group was the essentially land-bound Christian sharecroppers or *kmetovi* which accounted for a full 50% of the population.²⁶ As was the case throughout the Ottoman domains, there were primarily two types of estates in the territories; *agaliks* and *begliks*. On the first, the peasants had the legal right (albeit extremely limited) to use the land for their own gain, but on the far more common *begliks*, the land, and in effect those who worked, were the property of the landlord.²⁷

The fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina were in such desperate need of agricultural reform was by no means a surprise to the Austro-Hungarian administration, in fact, Gyula Andrassy had promised the *Congress of Berlin* that agrarian reform would be among the Dual Monarchy's priorities in the region.²⁸ Nonetheless, it was apparent from the outset of the occupation that the Habsburg administration planned to retain the Ottoman millet system, whereby Christian peasants were subject to a range of levies and service obligations to their Muslim landlords.

The new administration's decision to leave the feudal agrarian system, which was based on the exploitative Ottoman *Safer* law of 1859, essentially unchanged was an obvious attempt to pacify the restive Muslim population.²⁹ However, Francine Friedman adds that »it was in the interest of Austria Hungary to perpetuate feudalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina so the area could be more easily exploited«,³⁰ and thus the religious-based agrarian hierarchy was retained, albeit with formal regulations.

Between 1886 and 1904, the arable land area in the territories was increased by more than 12%, and the rural population – which included a significant proportion of invited »colonists« from elsewhere in the Habsburg domains – expanded by more than 32%.³¹ Consequently, agrarian output rose significantly as well, but the cumbersome expense of the occupation of the territories was to be paid for by the Bosnians themselves. The Habsburg occupation was therefore accompanied by a noticeably increased burden on the *kmetovi*, who were now not only liable for the payments to the their landlord, but also expected to pay significant state and local taxes as well, which prompted the Austrian authorities to assist Muslim landowners in the collection of overdue payments.³²

There were, however, a number of token land reforms; one in 1911 allowed the predominately Serb *kmetovi* to purchase their freedom and even the land they on which they worked, but this was as infeasible here as it was anywhere else where variations of this system flourished, and even after more than thirty years of Habsburg administration, more than 80% of Bosnia's population was still working in the agrarian sector.³³ Ethnic-based resentment only intensified as the cost of modernization increased. Lampe contends that »modernizing initiatives demanded higher tax revenues [...] the resulting tax burden continued to fall most heavily on Serb and Croat peasants still tied to sharecropping for Muslim landlords.«³⁴ Ironically, in many cases the effective agricultural and breeding techniques as well as the advanced equipment and superior livestock supplied by the costly modernization effort were rejected or at best misunderstood by local farmers. In Edith Durham's oft-cited Victorian travelogue on the region, she recalls the frustrations of one Austrian official who lamented, »[w]e have spent no end in money [...] trying to improve the livestock: bulls, stallions, rams, boars of the finest breed. We sent a splendid boar last year to a village in the charge of a man who was supposed to be reliable, and when Christmas came, he killed, roasted it, and asked all the village to a feast.«³⁵



36 Malcolm 1996, p. 143.

37 Sugar 1963, p. 8.

The Habsburg administration resorted to recruitment of farmers from elsewhere within the empire to resettle in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which led to a dramatic influx of foreigners. Malcolm notes that in 1880, there were 16,000 Germans and Hungarians living in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By 1910, that figure had risen to 107,000.³⁶ Population boomed in Bosnia's urban centers as well. Sarajevo tripled in population during the period of Habsburg administration, and the city's bureaucracy swelled from just 120 officials under Ottoman administration, to more than 9,533 in 1908.³⁷ This influx of newcomers – not just from elsewhere in Bosnia, but from throughout the Habsburg empire – transformed Sarajevo from a primarily Muslim city to a uniquely multi-confessional one.

38 Palariat 1993, p. 137.

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39 Sugar 1963, p. 28.

The mix of bureaucracy and cultural intermingling is largely the handiwork of Benjámín von Kállay, the Director of the *Landesregierung* for much of the occupation. Palariat describes Kállay as having been »an extremely energetic administrator, who maintained throughout his term a strong, almost passionate, commitment to what he construed as Austria-Hungary's mission – and moral duty – to civilize the province.«³⁸ He extolled the fabricated concept of *bošnjaštvo* (»Bosnianism«), a theoretically inclusive and unified Bosnian identity designed to supplant the distinct allegiances of the various nationalities in what Sugar describes as an attempt to inspire the »feeling that they belong to a great and powerful nation.«³⁹ However, Kállay's blatantly propagandist campaign proved futile, as it found little resonance among those for whom it was intended. Donia suggests that, »identification with ethnoreligious communities was already too advanced for an appreciable number of Bosnians to renounce their ethnic identity in favor of regional patriotism.«⁴⁰ Kállay predicted that the Muslims would be the first to adopt *bošnjaštvo*, and that the Serbs and Croats would follow suit, but in reality his project of calculated nationalization never really caught on. Kállay went to great lengths to effectively isolate Bosnia's Muslims from their co-religionists in the Ottoman territories (in violation of agreements between the Ottoman sultan and the Austrian emperor), so as to avoid fueling any nascent nationalist sentiments. Eventually the concept of *bošnjaštvo* did find some support among the Muslims, who were inclined to adopt the largely fabricated identity with the intention of superceding the oft-ethnocentric ambitions of the Croats and Serbs to conjoin Bosnia to their respective titular states, but the supporters were so few in number and so fickle in their dedication that their efforts were of little consequence. It was not until the very end of the 19th century that an indigenous and independent Bosnian Muslim intelligentsia emerged, and this was almost wholly comprised of landed aristocrats who were dependent on the agrarian policies of Austrian government which afforded them their privileged position. Consequently, the intellectual elite – traditionally the harbinger of nationalism – failed to gain the requisite support from the community to assume any sort of leadership role, and the Bosnian Muslims remained divided on exactly what comprised their national identity and what its role should be. This was particularly apparent in the case of the Muslim peasants who had little in common with their aristocratic coreligionists, and Friedman points to a surge in support among Bosnia's rural Muslims of a more conservative brand of Islam, as evidence that among some sectors, Kállay's intentions backfired altogether.⁴¹

40 Donia, Robert: *Islam under the Double Eagle: The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1878-1914*, Boulder: East European Monographs 1981. p. 99.

41 Friedman 1996, p. 64f.

42 Okey, Robin: *State, Church, and Nation in the Serbo-Croat Speaking Lands of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1850-1914*. In: Kerr, Donald A. (Ed.): *Religion, State, and Ethnic Groups*. New York: New York UP 1992, pp. 63-65.



43 Jelavich, Charles: Revolt in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In: Slavonic Review 31 (June 1953), p. 422.

44 Lampe 1996, p. 67.

45 Malcolm 1996, p. 144.

46 Burg, Steven L.: The Political Integration of Yugoslavia's Muslims: Determinants of Success and Failure. Pittsburgh: Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies no. 203, Univ. of Pittsburgh Pr. 1983, p. 11.

47 Ibid., p. 12.

large, he also neglected the unique educational and religious needs of the individual communities, often favoring one over another.

Much to the dismay of the Serbs and Muslims, preferential treatment was consistently given to the Croats, who held a disproportionate number of government posts and were given the considerably more religious and cultural autonomy than either of the other predominant groups. In fact, the Habsburg administration imposed several unprecedented restrictions on both the Muslims and the Serbs. According to Charles Jelavich, participation in the hajj – the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca – became increasingly difficult, and the activities of mosques as well as Orthodox churches were subject to an extraordinary level of government scrutiny, which of course, only fueled popular resentment among the two most populous ethnic groups.⁴³

Because education was still linked to religious institutions (or at least religious affiliations), the partiality of the Habsburg administration was evident in the schools as well. Literacy was an altogether new phenomenon in Bosnia and Herzegovina, even among the landed Muslim aristocracy. At the time of the Habsburg occupation, there was not a single bookshop in the city of Sarajevo, and it was only in the 1860's that the first printing presses emerge in the region, and these were restricted almost exclusively for government and educational uses. From the onset of the occupation, Kállay's administration had made the development of the education system a priority in this, the most undereducated region in the Habsburg lands. While overall enrollment in Bosnian primary schools rose from 31% to 74% between 1882 and 1910, enrollment among Serbs diminished from 55 to 42%.⁴⁴ Lampe suggests that this discrepancy came as a result the implementation of several restrictive measures aimed at breaking down individual ethnoreligious organizations that seem to have most greatly affected the Serbs. In 1884, Kállay abolished a special tax-donation for Orthodox schools and in 1892, his administration began to require the *Certification of Political Reliability* of teachers, which almost always favored Croats over Serbs. Nonetheless, Malcolm excuses this perceived favoritism in his analysis, arguing that while many scholars have chastised the Austrian administration for its lack of effort to reform and provide education, »no government which builds nearly 200 primary schools, three high schools, a technical school and a teacher-training college can be described as utterly negligent in its educational policy.«⁴⁵ However, the establishment and perpetuation of these secular but segregated institutions actually served to hasten the development of separate nationalist ideologies and agendas, as the ethnic divisions and tensions were essentially accepted and codified by the administration. Steven Burg asserts that Bosnia's Serbs, Croats and Muslims »could live their lives wholly within the framework of Serb, Croat and Muslim organizations«.⁴⁶ Likewise, Burg explains that the Muslims in particular were allowed to define and refine their own identity, which transformed »from the narrowly religious to the national«.⁴⁷

The year 1903 heralded two particularly significant changes for the various ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Benjámín von Kállay died, and Serbia's ruling family, the pro-Austrian Obrenović dynasty, was overthrown and replaced by the far less pliant Karadjordjević family, which injected new life into the Serbian nationalist movement. Kállay was replaced as Director of *Landesregierung* by István Frieherr Burián von Rajecz, who recognized the counter-productivity his predecessor's *bošnjaštvo* strategy, and chose to take a considerably more liberal approach to the nationalities issue. He speculated that if the government continued to deprive Orthodox and Islamic entities of autonomy they desired, violent confrontation was inevitable. Consequently, between 1906 and 1908, the Rajecz administration succumbed to the demands of the various ethnic groups, allowing the Serbs, Muslims and Croats to establish the brand of ethnic political organizations banned under Kállay. Where the Habsburg administration was preoccupied with industrialization, these parties aimed at reforming and gaining control over their own educational and religious institutions as well as newspapers and political organizations. Negotiations between these ethnic organizations and the Rajecz administration did in fact, yield a limited degree of autonomy and eventually the constitutional recognition of a Bosnian representative assembly, the Sabor. It was Rajecz's expectation that the formation of moderate political parties and providing a forum in which they could operate would undermine popular influence for subversive nationalist organizations.



48 Donia / Fine 1994, p. 102.

49 Tanner, Marcus: *Croatia: A Nation Forged in War*. New Haven, London: Yale UP 1997, p. 112.

50 Bringa, Ton: *e Being Muslim the Bosnian Way: Identity and Community in a Central Bosnian Village*. Princeton: Princeton UP 1995, pp. 60-69, and Pinson 1993, p. 99, p. 102.

51 Malcolm 1996, p. 146.

The Emergence of Political Organizations

In 1907, an assortment of Serbian activist groups established the first of these parties, an umbrella organization called the *Srpska narodna organizacija* (SNO) – *Serbian National Organization* – which in 1910 won all 31 seats allotted to the Serbs in the Bosnian *Sabor*. Years of grassroots political action had equipped MP's and political activists with otherwise unattainable skills. Donia suggests that while the marginally successful autonomy movement provided the »Serbian community with political experience, recognized leaders, a newspaper, and a formal political organization«, it also led many Orthodox Christians to irrationally re-identify themselves as Serbs and champions of the Serbian cause.⁴⁸ For the most part, this meant the Serbian national cause detracted (albeit minimally) from that of the Croats.

Bosnia's Croat population was far smaller, less politically active and needless to say, far more pliant to Austrian authority than either the Serb or Muslim communities. Unlike the nationalist agenda and organizations of the Serbs, Croat nationalists were divided between two considerably different factions. Croat nationalism came from the Franciscan order and from patriotic intellectuals, most of whom actually resided in Croatia proper. The *Hrvatska narodna zajednica* (HNZ) – *Croatian National Union* – which had been established in 1908 as a response to the SNO, was far less focused on the religious component of their ethnic identity than they were with that of political clout. The ultimate goal of the HNZ was unification with Croatia proper, ideally as an independent state or at least as a third polity in a reconfigured Habsburg monarchy.

The second and significantly smaller (but far more extreme) Croat nationalist organization was headed by Sarajevo's Monsignor Josef Stadler whose *Hrvatska katolička udruga* (HKU) – *Croatian Catholic Association* – emphasized Catholicism as the foundation of legitimate Croat nationalism. Stadler organized the HKU only after he was unable to gain control of the HNZ, and his primary ambition was the conversion (and therefore political conscription) of Bosnia's Muslims.⁴⁹ The aggressive conversion crusade of Stadler and his supporters was understandably unsettling to many Muslims, particularly after a series of conversions of Muslim girls so that they could marry into Catholic families and whose whereabouts were subsequently kept from their own families. This sort of »bride theft« had long been fairly common in the region, but beginning with the case of Saja Čokić, a fifteen-year-old Muslim peasant girl who was »abducted« from her village near Mostar and forced to convert to Catholicism in 1881, religious conversion – which had obviously always been a religious taboo – became a political issue.⁵⁰

In 1891, the government relented to Muslim demands and enacted the so-called *Conversion Statute*, which mandated a two-month waiting period in cases where coercion was suspected. This legislation was soon undermined by Stadler, who received permission from the Pope in 1895 to essentially ignore the *Conversion Statute*. However, this was not discovered until 1903, when Stadler was involved in what was believed to be the coerced conversion of a widow and her two children. When his actions were discovered, the family was returned from a convent to their village where they agreed to re-convert to Islam.⁵¹ Nevertheless, it was this sort of aggression that provoked a sense of panic among Muslims that their religion and even existence was under threat of eradication.

In the summer of 1900, a twelve-member committee of Bosnian Muslim activists drafted a list of grievances which accused the Austrian government of a range of offenses which included encouraging the aggressive proselytizing of Croat activists and depriving the Muslims of truly independent Islamic institutions. The government attempted to allay persistent Muslim anxieties in 1909 by providing the Muslims with a number of long awaited concessions, among them were guaranteed protection of autonomous Muslim institutions and the establishment of the office of *reis ul-ulema* (cultural leader of an Islamic community), and a four-man religious affairs council, the *mejlis al-ulema*. These officials were to be handpicked by the emperor based on Muslim nominations. Of course, the establishment of these institutions had at least as much to do with superseding Muslim allegiances to Istanbul as it did creating a place for them in the Habsburg realm, and consequently these offices were therefore widely disregarded by the Bosnian Muslim population. Nonetheless, Muslim political organizations responded in 1910 by finally recognizing (they were the last political entity to do so) the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Muslim political activists had joined forces to establish the *Muslimanska narodna organizacija* (MNO) – *Muslim National Organization* – in 1906. Muslim political organizations had



52 Donia 1981, p. 90, pp. 123-25, and
Friedman 1996, p. 65f.

53 Donia 1981, p. 105.

54 Rusinow, Dennison: *The Yugoslav
Peoples*. In: Sugar, Peter F. (Ed.): *East-
ern European Nationalism in the
Twentieth Century*. Washington/DC:
The American UP 1995, p. 368.

55 Biondich, Mark: *Stjepan Radić,
Yugoslavism, and the Habsburg
Monarchy*. In: *Austrian History
Yearbook* 27 (1996), pp. 119-121.

56 Judah, Tim: *The Serbs*. New Ha-
ven, London: Yale UP 1997, p. 61f.

57 Vucinich, Wayne S.: *Yugoslavs of
the Moslem Faith*. In: Kerner, Robert
J. (Ed.): *Yugoslavia*. Berkeley: Univ. of
California Pr. 1947, p. 268.

58 Burg 1983, p. 11, and Donia / Fine
1994, p. 111.

59 Vucinich 1947, p. 267-270, and
Donia 1981, p. 189.

operated for several years, but as both Friedman and Donia point out, these early organiza-
tions, which were situated primarily in the Hercegovinian capital of Mostar, were overly con-
cerned with extraneous issues, such as the Austrian government's tendency to regard Herze-
govina – which they maintained was historically distinct from Bosnia proper – as part and par-
cel of »Bosnia«. ⁵² Even after organizing into the more formidable MNO however, the Muslims
still had no expectation of determining the political destiny of Bosnia and Herzegovina on
their own, and unlike the Serb and Croat political organizations, the MNO was primarily – at
least at its inception – an instrument of the elites rather than the greater ethnic community.
Regardless, the Muslims proved to be the key to the political success for either Serb or Croat
political parties, and they were careful to exploit this unique position. Donia describes Bosnian
Muslims as »adept and pragmatic coalition-builders, the ›swing‹ group with the most to
lose«. ⁵³ Although Serbian and Croatian politicians were initially weary of courting the Mus-
lims, they soon came to realize their essentiality to political dominance. If the Serbs, who
maintained only a slightly higher population than the Muslims, were able to win the support
of the Muslims, they would presumably be able to declare a mandate in support independen-
ce and possibly even annexation to Serbia. Likewise the minority Croats, who at the turn of the
century represented no more than a quarter of the population, were able to form a coalition
with the Muslims, they would have a parliamentary majority, enabling them to claim a nume-
rical significance which could theoretically persuade Vienna and Budapest to reconfigure the
Habsburg realm according to the so-called »trialist« design, which would include a third (in
addition to the Austrian and Hungarian components) predominantly Roman Catholic South
Slavic entity with increased autonomy under Zagreb's direction.

In their often jingoistic bids to garner Muslim support, both Serb and Croat organizations
attempted to convince the Muslims that Bosnia and Herzegovina were in fact »truly Serb« or
»truly Croat« lands, and that the Muslims were actually »converted« Serbs or Croats. It should
be noted that this is a widely accepted view even in the sphere of Western scholarship. Indeed,
Dennison Rusinow posits that »[w]ith a nation defined as a specific kind of linguistic, ethnic
or racial, and territorial community, the Slav Muslims, speaking the same Štokavian dialect as
their Orthodox and Catholic neighbors (although with more Turkish and Arabic loan-words)
and sharing the same origins (or myths of origin), must be either Serbs or Croats«. ⁵⁴ However,
this is essentially immaterial considering that the Bosnian Muslims – after at least four cen-
turies of religious and socioeconomic divergence – presented and in fact perceived themselves
to be an altogether separate ethnic group. Of course, assertions to the contrary were not new
or even uncommon to either the Croat or Serb nationalist ideologies. Across the border in
Croatia, the oft-celebrated Croat nationalist Stepjan Radidj was even proclaiming that Slove-
nes were »Mountain Croats«, and the Serbs, »Orthodox Croats«. ⁵⁵ In his bid to legitimize the
ideology of a »Greater Croatia«, or at least a south Slav union under Croat leadership. Ante
Starčević's *Croatian Party of the Right* advocated an autonomous greater Croatia, which would
include both Bosnia and Herzegovina, and rejected the Serbian nationalist agenda of a South
Slav union altogether. Likewise, the Serbian epic poet Vuk Karadžić, who is widely recognized
as the »father« of modern Serbian nationalism, had proclaimed earlier in the 19th century that
the Bosnian Muslims were merely »Islamicized Serbs« who had betrayed their true identity. ⁵⁶
At any rate, the encouragement of Muslims on the part of the Serbs and Croats to adopt (or
assert) their respective identities was – for the most part – ineffectual, although there was a
notable minority who did choose to realign themselves. Prior to the turn of the century, Mus-
lim intellectuals and activists were more apt to assume a Croat identity – probably to curry fa-
vor with the new predominately Catholic administration, but as the newly independent Serbia
established itself, adoption of a Serbian heritage became more prominent. Wayne Vucinich
reasons that the Muslims were increasingly inclined to join with the Serbs, »because it was
the Serbs who led the fight against the common enemy, Austria-Hungary«. ⁵⁷ It must be noted
however, that of those few Muslims who did identify with Croats or Serbs, very few were like-
ly to abandon their confessional identity, referring to themselves as »Croats of the Muslim
faith« or »Serbs of the Muslim faith«. ⁵⁸ Thus, their identity was merely amended, sometimes
on numerous occasions. Donia asserts that »Muslim activists were careful to cloak their goals
in the garb of religious devotion, but their real objective was to preserve or increase their own
power«. ⁵⁹ To further obfuscate the political scene, the Muslims remained consistently divided
among their own pro-Austrian bloc (*prdekeri* in Serbo-Croatian) and its rival pro-Serbian fac-
tion, which favored independence from Austria.



60 Sked 1989, p. 244.

During the entire four-year existence of the constitutional parliament, it would be dominated by the SNO, MNO and HNZ. Multiethnic parties like the *Democratic Socialist Organization* gained only marginal support. While the SNO was quick to make jingoistic assertions about the Bosnian Muslims and the territories rightfully belonging to a »Greater Serbia«, they were consistently careful to avoid the sensitive issue of agrarian reform. In essence, the SNO was more concerned with establishing and maintaining political coalescence with the Muslim elites than they were with improving conditions for the primarily Serb peasantry. The Muslims were chiefly aligned with the SNO for the first year, on the condition that land reform be indefinitely deferred, but this coalition collapsed in 1911, following a peasant uprising against Muslim landlords, and the MNO formed a coalition with the HNZ on similar conditions. This political wrangling heralded the end of the *Sabor's* cursory period of productivity. The Bosnian assembly, with all its infighting and dramatics soon mirrored the calamitous assemblies of Vienna and Budapest, and subsequently very little was accomplished. The *Sabor* never really proved to be much more than an arena in which the various ethnic groups could compete for concessions from the Habsburg administration anyway, but even after the formal annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bosnians were not granted full citizenship to either the Austrian or Hungarian halves of the monarchy.⁶⁰

The Annexation Crisis

While Austria's intention of establishing a permanent administrative presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina was apparent to any critical observer from even the earliest days of the occupation, the territories were not been officially annexed until 1908. Ironically, it was not until the formal proclamation of annexation that the European powers, or even the decrepit Ottoman Empire raised any significant objection to the conduct of Austria. The act of annexation, which was obviously a mere technicality at this point, was prompted primarily by the zealous aspirations of the revolutionary *Young Turk* movement, whom the Austrian Foreign Minister Baron von Aerenthal feared might attempt to reclaim lost Ottoman territories such as Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁶¹ However, while this may have safeguarded the territories against Turkish claims, annexation, which was plainly a direct breach of the original agreement at the *Congress of Berlin* three decades before, incited panic and outrage in neighboring Serbia. To the Serbs, Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was perceived as a substantial threat to Serbia's national security and an insurmountable obstacle to the prevailing South-Slavist agendas of unification. While the territories had been under Ottoman jurisdiction (no matter how nominal), unification with Serbia had seemed a possibility, but with the annexation, »Greater Serbia« seemed to be a lost cause. The governments of Serbia and Montenegro were incensed that the Habsburgs presumed their own claim to the territories to be more legitimate than that of fellow South Slavs – the Serb plurality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who were now Habsburg subjects.

At this point the enraged Serbs posed a greater threat to the monarchy's security than the Turks had for centuries, and there were those among the government in Vienna who supported an even more aggressively expansionist approach in the region. In a 1906 memorandum to the emperor, General Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, the monarchy's chief of the general staff, had advocated a preemptive strike and occupation of Serbia and Montenegro so as to »ensure the monarchy's decisive influence in the Balkans [and] to prevent a sovereign Serbia from becoming a dangerous enemy and a point of attraction for the South Slav territories of the monarchy.«⁶² By the time the territories were annexed two years later, this more combative strategy had gained considerable support among the monarchy's ruling elite, especially after Serbia's dramatic protestations (this would again be considered in the wake of Serbia's successes in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913). Nonetheless, the emperor decided against engaging Serbia directly for the time being, choosing instead to grapple with Serbian nationalist terrorists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By 1913, General Oskar Potiorek, then governor of the territories, had established a security force – the so-called *Šuckori* (derived from the German »Schutzkorps«) – specifically designed to root out those suspected of »disloyalty.«⁶³

Meanwhile the Croats in both the territories and Croatia were quite pleased with the annexation. Some Croats interpreted it to be the confirmation or validation of their nationalist ideologies and the realization of their aspirations of a »Greater Croatia«, within the monarchy, while others viewed it as a precursor to the establishment of a unified South Slav state. Croa-

61 Malcolm 1996, p. 150. The following year, the Dual Monarchy paid an indemnity of 2,500,000 Turkish pounds for the territory it now considered its own.

62 Qutd. in Dedijer, Vladimir: *The Road to Sarajevo*. London: MacGibbon & Kee 1967, p. 144, and Friedman 1996, 74.

63 Vucinich, Wayne S.: *The Serbs in Austria-Hungary*. In: *Austrian History Yearbook* 3/2 (1967), p. 33f.



64 Vucinich 1947, p. 268.

tia proper was still under the jurisdiction of Budapest, so the Hungarians stood to lose both Croatia, which was the empire's major outlet to the sea, and a significant measure of their political clout in the already peculiar »dualist« arrangement. Consequently the government in Budapest was fiercely opposed to the prospect of a union of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Croatia and the potential increase in autonomy for which Croatia was striving.

Like the Serbs, the Bosnian Muslims were infuriated by the Austrian course of action. Just as annexation rendered a potential union with Serbia untenable, it exposed the Ottoman government's lack of influence (as well as the power to contest this) in the region, and formalized the geopolitical separation of the Bosnian Muslims with the coreligionist regime in Istanbul. At this point, the Bosnian Muslims were equally disillusioned with the Turks, who had essentially »sold them out«. ⁶⁴ Nonetheless, this did not make Austrian hegemony any more appealing to them, and the Muslim community (with the exception of the politically and economically privileged elites) came to resent the Habsburg administration even more than before.

65 Judah 1997, p. 96.

Austria Loses Control

66 Ibid., p. 95.

As tensions between Belgrade and Vienna increased, so did potentially violent unrest in Bosnia. Peasant and student uprisings, with demands ranging from dramatic agrarian reform to unification with Serbia, became quite commonplace. Austrian border guards on the Serbian frontier regularly detained agitators and intercepted subversive literature and even arms. Nationalist associations and secret societies soon proliferated in the territories, each with its own agenda and proposed means of fulfilling it. Among the most notorious of the organizations were *Mlada Bosna* (*Young Bosnia*), an ambiguously pro-Bosnian association, and *Crna Ruka* (*The Black Hand*), also known as *Ujedinjenje ili Smrt* (*Unity or Death*), which extended its call to arms to »all Serbs, regardless of sex, religion or place of birth [...] and anyone else who is prepared to serve this ideal faithfully«. ⁶⁵ *Ujedinjenje ili Smrt* was directed by Colonel Dragutin Dimitrijević, exclusively referred to by his codename, »Apis«, who had worked as the head of Serbian military intelligence and had played an instrumental role in the regicidal coup that liquidated Serbia's moderate Obrenović dynasty in 1903. ⁶⁶ Other associations, such as the Pro-Serb *Narodna Obrana* (*National Defense*), which had been reduced from an extensive militia network to a chiefly cultural organization, and *Slavonski Jug* (*Slavonic South*) were non-threatening in nature. Likewise was the inclusive but absurdly titled *Croat-Serb or Serb-Croat or Yugoslav Progressive Youth Movement*, which was incidentally headed by the eventual Pulitzer prize-winning author, Ivo Andrić. Most of these organizations, regardless of their degree of militancy, produced a glut of nationalist literature, »perhaps too much«, suggests Malcolm, »as there is a limit to the amount of philosophically interesting material that can be found in the heads of a loose assortment of idealistic but ill-educated teenagers«. ⁶⁷

67 Malcolm 1996, p. 153.

68 Dedijer 1967, pp. 236-245.

69 Ibid., p. 341.

70 Malcolm 1996, p. 156.

71 Sked 1989, p. 248.

It was a actually one of these teenagers (from *Mlada Bosna*), who would catapult Europe into the first world war with a few lucky shots that would kill Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie on their ill-fated visit to Sarajevo in June 28, 1914. After the assassination, eight members of *Mlada Bosna* were apprehended (seven Serbs and one Muslim), at least six of whom were positioned along Franz Ferdinand's well-publicized route, poised to strike with guns or explosives. In addition to Gavarillo Princip, whose shots killed the royal couple, Nedeljko Čabrinović threw a bomb that bounced off the archduke's car and injured some of his entourage. The others failed to act at all. ⁶⁸

At his trial, Princip would declare, »I am a Yugoslav nationalist, aiming for the unification of all Yugoslavs, and I do not care what form of state, but it must be free from Austria«, ⁶⁹ but he failed to gain the support of most of his fellow Bosnians. The assassination was widely regarded to be the work of grand Serbian conspiracy (the exact role of Apis, who is often suspected of coordinating the assassination, has never been determined), which was resented by Croats and Muslims. News of the assassination was followed immediately with extremely violent anti-Serb demonstrations, one of which in Sarajevo's marketplace resulted in a number of fatalities and substantial property damage. Sarajevo's *Reis ul-ulema*, Džemaludin Čaušević, denounced the abuses of local Serbs and even provided sanctuary for a number of those threatened. ⁷⁰ The *Sabor* convened in an emergency session, condemned the assassination and disbanded permanently.

Three weeks later, the Austrians issued the now infamous ultimatum that Sked suggests was »deliberately designed to start a war, and probably a world war«. ⁷¹ Over the course of the



72 Donia / Fine 1994, p. 118.

73 Vucinich 1967, p. 33. Cf. also Čorović, Vladimír f Crna Knjiga. Belgrade: Izdanje I. Dj. Djurdjevića 1920.

74 Lampe 1996, p. 66.

next four years, both Serbia and the Habsburg monarchy would lose millions to war, disease and even famine, and while there was almost no fighting on Bosnian soil, the Austrians had obviously lost control the territories. According to Donia, Austrian military courts interned 5,000 Serbs in work camps and executed 250 more for »treason, espionage, or aiding and abetting the enemy« in Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁷² Likewise, a several explicitly anti-Serb measures, such as the banning of the Cyrillic alphabet, were imposed in the Habsburg territories.⁷³ The tumultuous but remunerative period of development Bosnia-Herzegovina had come to an abrupt and untimely end.

During the nearly forty years of Habsburg administration, Bosnia and Herzegovina were transformed from largely latent and discontented satellites into a productive province of a major European power with a viable industrial structure and a number of new culturally valuable institutions. Lampe asserts that »from the start, the province was charged with paying its own way«,⁷⁴ but it should be noted that unlike elsewhere in the Habsburg realm, revenue collected in Bosnia and Herzegovina was wholly reinvested within these provinces. While industrial reforms failed to achieve sustained economic growth (not to mention the almost total malfeasance of agricultural reform), the *Landesregierung* equipped the territories with the tools to prosper in 20th century. This invaluable process of modernization would most assuredly not have happened without the direction of the Habsburg administration.

However, the efforts of the Habsburg administration clearly took a tremendous toll on the relations of the various peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina. When the administration's program of national unity and re-identification failed, they devised other methods for dealing with the various ethnic groups, generally favoring one or two at the expense of the third, and that was almost always the Serbs. While Serb nationalism would certainly not have accelerated to the detrimental proportions that it did without being fueled by expansionist rhetoric and reliable supply of arms provided by Belgrade, one can't help but blame the Austrians, at least in part, for providing a climate right for this sort of subversion. It was ultimately this inconsistency and lack of foresight that sealed the fate of the Habsburg agenda in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

75 Vucinich 1967, p. 28.

Conclusion: The End of Habsburg Rule and Beyond

Even before their occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Austrians recognized the potential threat posed by nationalist sentiments. For the Muslims and the Serbs the major conflicts revolved around the degree of autonomy allowed to Islamic and Orthodox religious organizations. Obviously this was a less pressing issue to the Catholic Croats who enjoyed a privileged status in the Dual Monarchy – both because of their religious affinity with the ruling house and their ethnic relation to a sizeable and traditionally loyal national group already within the empire. For their part, the Austrians failed to effectively address the needs of the various ethnic communities. Instead they experimented with a series of inconsistent nationality policies that ultimately facilitated the escalation of ethnic tensions to the point of crisis and eventual conflagration. Nonetheless, it was only after the ill-conceived and ultimately unnecessary act of annexation, that nationalist agendas – specifically of the Serbs – became a genuine threat to stability. Prior to 1908, the Austrians were able to appease – if only partially and tentatively – the restive Serbs and Muslims. But the act of annexation, which was resented by not only the Bosnians, but Austria's diplomatic rivals as well, only served to agitate the excitable Serbs and Muslims.

Of course the Austrian government did make a half-hearted attempt to skirt the nationality issue altogether with Benjámín von Kállay's *bošnjaštvo* scheme, but the administration was ultimately reliant on »divide-and-rule« tactics which pitted the various ethnic groups against one another. Many analysts have theorized that the antagonistic and violent nature that has characterized ethnic relations in this region during the 20th century are the inevitable and obvious result of the strategies of the Habsburg administration. In fact, Wayne Vucinich goes so far as to argue that »the atrocities perpetrated in the name of religion and nationality during the two world wars were to no small degree the fruits of Austro-Hungarian ethnic and confessional policies«. ⁷⁵

Although all three groups had similar priorities, namely autonomy for their respective religious affiliations, it was not until the collapse of the Habsburg Empire that they united behind a common cause – the formation of a South Slav state. This first incarnation of Yugoslavia –



called the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes until the less cumbersome Yugoslavia was adopted in 1929 – was essentially a »Greater Serbia«, with the capital situated in Belgrade and the monarch the sitting Serbian king. But this arrangement lasted only until the outbreak of the Second World War, when nationalist separatist agendas, goaded by foreign powers tore the country apart. By the end of the war, the ethnically disparate union was forcibly pieced back together by Marshall Josip Broz Tito, whose »Kállayesque« approach to ethnicity (he pioneered the considerably successful »Yugoslav« identity) held the union together for nearly five decades before the republics of the former Yugoslavia – and Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular – were plunged once more into ethnicity-based conflict.

In the first years of the 21st century, as Bosnia-Herzegovina continues to struggle in its recovery from four years of war, as well as relentless corruption and political stability, the region is again the focus of international attention. While Bosnia-Herzegovina currently exists as an independent state for the first time since the middle ages, the country is almost wholly dependent on the administrative efforts of the international community, which, much like the Habsburgs did more than a century ago, has assumed charge of the local industry, media and in many instances, government. Although the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina has been over for nearly a decade, the most significant obstacle to sustained peace continues to be the ethnic rivalries of the Muslims, Serbs and Croats. Therefore the United Nations, *Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe*, and the *North Atlantic Treaty Alliance* would do well to learn from the administrative mistakes of the Habsburg authorities.



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