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THE DISPUTE BETWEEN BOSNIAN MUSLIMS AND SERBS

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Public Administration


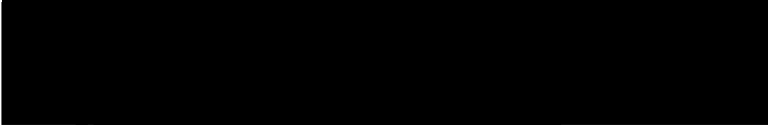
by
Recep Keskin
December 2003

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Approved by:



David Bellis, Ph.D., Committee Chair,
Public Administration

11-19-03
Date


Audrey Mathews, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

The root of the dispute between Bosnia and Serbia was based on ideological, political and historical problems. The root of the problem was that the Orthodox Serbs were trying to exact revenge for actions committed by the Ottoman Turkish Empire in the past, and they considered the Bosnian Muslims to be a remnant of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans administrated the Balkans between the 15th and 20th centuries and tried to keep the order and peace by applying public policies according to the ethnic, cultural, religious, and political structure of the region.

In 1918, Serbs, Croats and Slovenes established a kingdom called "1st Yugoslavia." Serbs were considering this state as the state of Serbs. Bosnia Herzegovina's community or political powers did not help the establishment of Yugoslavia. The official ideology considered Muslims as the heir of the Ottoman occupiers in the Balkans. In the 1st Yugoslavia, Bosnian Muslims were under pressure and they were attacked by Serbs who had the official support of the administration. In time those attacks turned to ethnic cleansing. Bosnian Muslims were pushed out of the government bureaucracy and their lands.

In the 1960's the pressure on the Muslims started to decrease. In 1968, the federal party confirmed that Bosnians are nationally Muslims. In 1974, Muslims got the public rights and the status of establisher of the Yugoslavian state. Yugoslavia fell in 1991 and many states declared their independence right after each other as a chain reaction. These states faced war at a cost. The largest and most painful one occurred in the Bosnia Herzegovina lands due to the structure of communities. Many states around the world supported different states in Yugoslavia according to their economic and political interests.

In November 1995, Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims signed a peace agreement, which was called the Dayton Peace in the US. Since the December 1995 signing of the Dayton Peace Accord, there has been significant progress in restoring peace and stability.

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CHAPTER ONE

ROOT OF BOSNIAN MUSLIM DISPUTE IN BALKANS

Statement of the Problem

The formation of nations in Bosnia-Herzegovina was a complicated progress. This phenomenon is mostly about the Bosnians. The origin of the Bosnian Muslims became a dispute after Vuk Karadzic, "who was the master of Serbian literature", published his article in 1849, which is "Srbi svi i svuda" (All of them are Serbian and they are everywhere). Karadzic determined the Bosnian Muslims as Muslim Serbs and also he determined the Croats as Catholic Serbians. Even the national movement of Serbs and Croats, which occurred at the end of 19th century, did not accept the Muslims as a different nation. Moreover they identified that the origin of Muslims were Serbs or Croats. Politics is struggle over whose values shall prevail, usually through bargaining, negotiation, and compromise. Politics is a game for cut-throats skilled at back-stabbing, stonewalling, and lying to make sure they come out on top.¹ The aim of those movements was to get

¹ David Bellis, ed., *Course Overheads* (San Bernardino: California State University, San Bernardino, 2003), 6.

the support of Muslims and then attach Bosnia-Herzegovina to Serbia or Croatia. These ideas about the Muslims have been continuing till today and have caused ethnic and national conflict.

Croats and Serbs kept considering the Muslims as a religious group or a nation, which was created by some administrative decision. During the bloody events in Bosnia in 1993, representatives of Bosnians were called for a meeting in Sarajevo. The representatives who joined this meeting made the decision of naming the community of Bosnia as Bosnians.² This decision turned back time to the traditional past.

The discussion about the reason of accepting Islam and the progress of it during the Ottoman Empire's dominancy is still a contentious subject. Some people think that Bosnian lords accept Islam to protect their properties and maintain their positions. On the other hand, some people think that the conflict between the two groups; on one side Rome, Hungary, Croatia and on the other side Catholics and Bogomils (a kind of local

² Aydin Babuna, *Gecmisten Gunumuze Bosnaklar* (Istanbul, Turkiye: Turkiye Ekonomik veToplumsal Tarih Vakfi Yayini, 2000), 4.

religion), contributed to the Bosnians progressively accepting Islam.³

In a modern way, Bosnian Muslims first demanded some political rights during the Austro-Hungary Empire period. However, they only got some limited political rights, such as choosing their public representatives. The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was the most important problem for the Global World Order. The meaning of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina is one of the worst ethnic cleansings or violence that happened in modern times. For the first time TV channels were broadcasting the violence all around the world, so people could watch it like a horror movie on their TV's. The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina showed us the violence of fascism, fanaticism, and religious discrimination in the 20th century in the middle of Europe.

The biggest problem in Bosnia-Herzegovina was trying to include three different groups, Bosnian Muslims, Serbs, and Croats under one country, Yugoslavia. The structure of Bosnia-Herzegovina is a kind of mini model of the structure of the mosaic of Yugoslavia. This kind of

³ Babuna, p. 6.

multi-cultural or multi-national mosaic could not stay together and caused the fall of Yugoslavia. Moreover, it caused an ethnic cleansing and a very violent war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

When Yugoslavia disintegrated in 1991, many states declared their independence right after each other as a chain reaction. All states which were declaring their independence from the Federation of Yugoslavia faced war at a cost. However, the largest and most painful one occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina territory. The majority of the population in Bosnia-Herzegovina is Muslim, however there are some other communities that are not accepted as minority due to the number of their population. These include Croats who have the second highest population and Serbs who have the third highest population. Therefore, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs thought that they had the right to get their independence from the Bosnia-Herzegovina State to combine with their main states that are Croatia and Serbia Republic.

Many states around the world supported different states in Yugoslavia which were struggling for independence according to their cultural ties, interest or religion. However those states tried to keep Bosnia-Herzegovina as one piece. Moreover, they supported

the Croatia-Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation. Most of the European states, Middle Eastern states and the United States did not support the Bosnian Serbs to get a part and then attach to the Serbia Republic to form a Great Serbia dream. This dream would serve the Russian dominancy in Europe. This situation was an advantage for Bosnian Muslims to get the support of the world for their unity. The dispute between Croats and Bosnians was not so profound; therefore, it was solved in a short time. The Bosnian dispute became an internal political dispute for the globalizing world. The prestige and the legitimacy of the idea of a new world order was lost due to the discussion about sending international military troops to Bosnia.⁴

In this research paper, I will examine the root of the Bosnian dispute in the Balkans, the history of the region, the current situation in the region (Balkans), and the future as policy recommendations. I will also examine the public administrative parts of the subject.

⁴ Tanil Bora, *Yeni Dunya Duzeni'nin Av Sahasi* (Istanbul, Turkiye: Birikim Yayinlari, 1994), 13.

History of the Region

Most of the land of Bosnia was administrated by the Roman Empire between the 1st century and 6th century. In the 7th century, the immigration of the southern Slavs to the Balkans also covered Bosnia after the collapse of the Roman Empire. The progress in Bosnia was different than the eastern branch of the Slavs which was called Serbia. The kings in Serbia got the responsibility of continuing the heritage of the East Roman/Byzantium Empire, and they preferred to be attached to the Orthodox sect of Christianity during the big separation.⁵

The development of Bosnia was also different than the eastern branch of the southeastern Slavs. In the 10th century the southern Slavs who were from the country called Croatia, preferred to be attached to the Catholic Church, which was also in Rome. The monarchy, which took form here, couldn't last long and the Dalmatia-Croatia-Slavonia kingdom group was attached to the kingdom of Hungary. However, Bosnia did not attach to any formation that was around it and many local kingdoms took form in Bosnia. These small kingdoms stayed under the

⁵ Babuna, p. 11.

pressure of Serbian, Venetian, Croatian and the Hungarian kingdom. Hungary and Croat kings influenced Bosnia by the 12th century.⁶

By the 14th century the Big Serb Kingdom started to feel the threat of the Ottoman Turkish Empire during its strongest era. Bosnian and Serb kings tried to establish some weak alliances against the coming threat. In 1389 the Ottoman army defeated the Serbian army in Kosovo and the result of this war caused internal conflicts in Bosnian, Croatian, Dalmatian, and Hungarian kingdoms. The Ottoman threat against the region increased in the 15th century and the Ottoman army captured the last pieces of the Serb Kingdom. So the next station for the Ottoman army was the Bosnian land. The Bosnian king, Styepan Tamasevic, helped the Albanian king, Alexander, who was asking for help against the Ottoman Empire. Also, the Bosnian King, Tomasevic, refused to pay taxes to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Sultan II Mehmet declared war on Bosnia due to these reasons. In 1461, most of the Bosnian lands were captured the by Islamic Ottomans without any difficulties. The only land, which was still independent, was southern

⁶ Bora, p. 16.

Bosnia, which was dominated by Prince Vuksic. This area was originally called Herzog in German which is Herzegovina, in English. However, in 1483 after the attachment of this land to Ottoman Empire, Bosnia was totally taken over by the Ottoman's administration.⁷

Some local Muslim communities which were attached to the Ottomans, and some Orthodox communities that were against the Catholic Pope, helped the Ottomans capture Bosnia easily. The Bogomil Sect was one of the causes of the Bosnian conversion to Islam. Moreover, landlords preferred to become Muslim to save their property and privilege. After the Ottoman Turkish Administration, the Islam religion spread fast in Bosnia among the peasants. The Bosnian church was broken up after a decade and 40% of all Bosnians converted to Islam and became Muslim. The rest of the people who didn't transfer to Islam preferred to become Catholic or Orthodox. So one can see, the people living in Bosnia are all from the same race, but believed in different religions. In other words, they are all brothers and sisters.

⁷ Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara, Türkiye: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayını, 1988), 20.

Ottomans tried to apply new public policies to get the support of peasants and to apply their own policies. One of the Ottoman public policies for newly captured lands was to nationalize the land and then deliver it to Muslim landlords, state officials or military men instead of paying them. However, the Ottoman Empire did not apply this policy to Bosnia, because it became the border state of the Ottoman Empire and the security of the border states was important than the other states.⁸ Furthermore, people were accepting the Islam religion now, so the Ottoman Empire was trying to do everything to please the people. The Ottoman administration used the art of serving the public a basic definition of public administration to get the support for its policies. After the Conquest, Ottomans implemented their administrative systems and agriculture policies, which were connected to each other. Islam spread fast in a short period of time in Bosnia. Some groups even became radical Muslims.

According to some researchers who were working on the history of the Bosnian communities, there are four ethnic groups that must be categorized: Serbs, Croats, Muslim

⁸ Karal, p. 23.

peasants, and Muslim landlords. The majority of the society in the Ottoman Empire was composed of Muslims and Christians who were called 'reaya'. This term was a kind of national system, which was used after 1453 for naming the people with their beliefs.

This form was first used for non-Muslim populations, but this time a term called 'Muslim Nation' was being used for the Muslim population. This policy was also applied in Bosnia on Muslims and Christians.

Bosnia State and Bosnians During the Ottoman Empire Period

Bosnia was first attached to the western European administration as a state during the Ottoman Empire. Bosnia had privileges of forming its own budget and financial administration due to the strategic importance of its location. In 1580, Bosnia became a land which belonged to 389 landlords. And these landlords kept 10.000 troops, which could help the Ottoman army and which conducted operations against enemy states to capture new lands. Therefore, these special circumstances in Bosnia were improving its importance for the Ottoman Empire's

policies, due to its policies spreading through middle Europe.⁹

The Bosnian State was considered a block of Ottoman territory and the lock of the European lands (Rumeli). Furthermore, the geography of Bosnia was providing an advantage to the Ottoman army with the very high mountains, which provided an area to watch the enemy states, borders, and rebellions. The first administration center in Bosnia for the Ottomans was Sarajevo (Saraybosna). Due to its location, Sarajevo received many investments from the Ottoman administration and became a big city and a trade center in the West Balkans like other Ottoman cities such as Edirne, Salonika (Greece), Athens (capital city of today's Greece), and Nigbolu. The role of Islam and the position that was obtained in the social status of Bosnia-Herzegovina contributed to the ethnic development of the Bosnian Muslims. Bosnia Herzegovina had four features different from the other parts of the Ottoman Empire during the 1500's: 1) Bosnia State was at the edge of the Empire; 2) the development of Bosnian

⁹ Sule Kut and Ismail Soysal, *Dagilan Yugoslavya ve Bosna Hersek Sorunu: Olaylar Belgeler* (Istanbul, Turkiye: Ortadogu ve Balkan Incelemeleri Vakfi, 1997), 44.

aristocracy; 3) Most of the Bosnian population accepted Islam; and 4) the institution of Captains.¹⁰ Captain was the other name that was used for the administrator in Bosnia. In the Ottoman period, Bosnian Muslims, Muslims in Sancak, Muslims in Montenegro, and Muslims in Kosovo were called Bosnians. The Muslim nation had a high status in the social hierarchy due to depending on the religion of the bureaucratic elite in the Ottoman Empire.¹¹ Bosnian Muslims were part of the Muslim nation in the 'Nation System' which was based on the different religious beliefs. The most important difference between the Slav origin ethnic groups was the irreligion. Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims were all from southern Slav origin.

The Ottoman Empire rewarded many Bosnians by appointing them as ministers (viziers) between the 15th and 20th centuries. These ministers helped the Ottoman Empire and legitimized its sovereignty. Also the sovereignty and the administration of the Ottoman Empire in Hungary were controlled by Bosnian lords.¹²

¹⁰ Kut, p. 46.

¹¹ Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe Under Ottoman Rule* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 52.

¹² Sugar, p. 54.

In the 17th century, Ottoman armies lost some wars against Austrian armies and some cities such as Lika, Krbava, and Slovenia came under Christian Sovereignty. Therefore, all of the Muslim communities, who were living in those cities, immigrated to Serbia and Macedonia. This immigration strengthened the Muslim communities which were already living there. Bosnian administrators were not only working in the Balkans for Islam, but also working in all Ottoman lands including North Africa, the Middle-East, the Caucasus, and Europe.¹³

The Political Depression about the Ottoman Regime and the Reactions Happening in Bosnia

The Ottoman Empire's land policy started to collapse in the 17th century in the Balkans. When the Ottoman's land policies started to break, the landlords in Bosnia became more independent. Some rebellions started in small villages by the end of 17th century. Some institutions like the dervish lodge or other religious institutions were the main points of the community's displeasure and the reaction against the central authority.¹⁴

¹³ Ismail Hakki Uzuncarsili, *Osmanli Tarihi* (Ankara, Turkiye: Turk Tarih Kurumu Yayini, 1988), 35.

¹⁴ Bora, p. 41.

The inequality between the cities and villages increased in Bosnia, as in other Ottoman lands in Europe in the 19th century. In 1831, one of the landlords in Bosnia rebelled against the Ottoman Emperor II Mahmud and fought the Ottoman army in Kosovo. The Ottoman army had to pull-back, and due to this pull-back many landlords were encouraged to reject paying taxes to the Ottoman Empire. In 1849, the Ottoman army and the Bosnian army went to war, and the Ottoman army lost. However, the new Ottoman army in the Balkans, which was under the command of Mihaylo Latas, who was a Serb from Croatia, suppressed the rebellion against Ottoman Sovereignty. Commander Latas strengthened the Ottoman's central authority in Bosnia again. Bosnian landlords' rights and privileges were kept, but their political and administrative powers were abolished.¹⁵

The high-pressure that was put on the peasants was that they were given fewer shares from farm products and were used for heavy work. This increased day by day in the 19th century. At the end of the 19th century, some

¹⁵ Mediha Akarslan, *Bosna-Hersek ve Turkiye* (Istanbul, Turkiye: Agac Yayinlari/Alternatif Universite, 1993), 59.

commanders captured some important positions in the judicial institutions and in important cities due to the lack of authority. They were called 'ayan'. The reason that caused some people to become an 'ayan' was the officials, who could not administrate the lands that belongs to the state, and who could not collect the tax for the central authority. Some of these people called 'ayan' were elected by the communities of that region and some of them who came from the other social institutions captured that position to get the power and the prestige. This system also symbolized the collapse of the Empire. This system showed its effect in Bosnia-Herzegovina very slowly, like it happened in the farm system. The farm system was a kind of land share to the warriors of the army. The Ottoman Empire was sharing the new captured lands between the warriors instead of paying them. These warriors were just paying the tax every year according to the product that was grown. So, the central authority could control all the lands easily and charge for the use. Mostly, the peasants were working in these huge farms to earn some money. At the end at 19th century, the western observers who visited Bosnia-Herzegovina stated that Croats, especially Serb peasants were the poorest and the most tormented peasants of the Balkans. They also pointed

The central authority did not interfere with the rebellion for a while. Therefore, the Muslim population panicked and took up arms against the Christian rebels. The armaments of the Muslim population was one of the reasons that caused the rebellion to become more nationalize against the Ottoman Empire. In the last period of the Ottoman Empire, while the communities from the other religious beliefs were fighting against the Central power for their independence, the Bosnian Muslims believed that their fortune was tied to the Ottoman Empire.¹⁹ Right after the Bosnia rebellion, another rebellion started against the Ottoman Empire in Bulgaria. In addition, a war was started in 1877 between Russia and the Ottomans. Due to all those events, the Ottoman Empire's sovereignty in the Balkans collapsed. The document which shows this collapse was the Berlin agreement which was signed in 1878. According to this agreement, Bosnia-Herzegovina would remain part of the Ottoman Empire, but would be inspected by the Austro-Hungary Empire.²⁰

¹⁹ Uzuncarsili, p. 72.

²⁰ Alpaslan isikli, *Kuramlar Boyunca Ozyonetim ve Yugoslavya Deneyi* (Istanbul, Turkiye: Alan Yayıncılık, 1983), 102.

The goal of Austro-Hungary Empire was to dominate Dalmatia and the Adriatic Sea and provide an Italian unity to balance the power in the region against the strengthening Serbia in the east. Croat nationalists were willing to add Bosnia to the Austro-Hungary Empire (Hapsburg) to make a bumper state between them and the Serbia Empire. In the fall of 1878, the Austro-Hungary army was confronted by the resistance of Muslims. Once upon a time, Christians made a similar crusade against Muslim Ottomans, but now Muslims were rebelling against the Christian Austro-Hungary (Hapsburg) Empire. After some tough wars in Jajce, Maglaj, and Doboj cities, the Hapsburg Empire took control of the region.

After 1878, a mass of Muslims started to emigrate from the country due to pressure from the Christian Hapsburg Empire. In the period of 1878-1910, approximately 300,000 Muslims emigrated to Anatolia (the middle part of today's Turkey), some of them emigrated to Albania and Macedonia, and a very small number of them migrated to North African countries especially the marginal ones.²¹ In the 19th century, both Croat and Serb nationalists were

²¹ Bora, p. 67.

trying to integrate the Muslims in their own ethnic communities. However, a few number of Muslims accepted the Croat identity, because Croat nationalism was more respectful than Serb nationalism against Bosnian Muslims.

The situation of Bosnia-Herzegovina during the Hapsburg Empire was bad and Bosnian Muslims were under pressure from the Christian administration. Croat nationalists tried to establish dominance over Bosnia with the help of the Hapsburg administration. By this time, many Croat settlers were sent to the fertile lands of Bosnia. On the other hand, Serbs were against the settlement, because they were claiming that Bosnia was part of Serbia. The Hapsburg administration made many investments in Bosnia to get the support of Muslims and destroy the influence of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the Austro-Hungarian administration gave more freedom to the peasants and supported them to get their own property. Due to these reforms, the resistance of Bosnia Muslims decreased against the Habsburg administration. Austro-Hungary was doing all this due to its dreams of turning the Muslims into Christians. However, when this policy was heard by the community, it caused protests all around Bosnia.

When the Austro-Hungary Empire annexed Bosnia in 1908, the Ottoman Empire protested. However, after a while, the Ottoman administration decided to accept the administration of Austro-Hungary over Bosnia, if they would provide an autonomous status to Bosnia.²² This annexation upset the Russians and Serbia. Moreover, this annexation started to lay the conditions that led to World War I. In June 1914, Austro-Hungary's crown prince was assassinated in Sarajevo by a Bosnian Serb nationalist, and this incident ignited the war in the Balkans, which was called World War I.

In 1918, Serbs, Croats and Slovenes established a kingdom called "1st Yugoslavia". Serbs considered this state as the state of Serbs. Bosnia-Herzegovina's community or political powers did not help the establishment of Yugoslavia. Croats and Slovenes had a status of the establishers of the nation, but just on paper. However, the Bosnian's situation was worse than in the Christian communities, because the official ideology (Slav/Serb nationalism) considered Muslims as the heir of

²² Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Volume 2, Twentieth Century* (New York, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 73.

the Ottoman occupiers in the Balkans. Furthermore, most of the Muslims supported Austro-Hungary armies against Serbs and joined them to fight against the Serbs. Due to these reasons, Croats and Serbs did not trust and began to hate Muslims, like the anti-Semitism against Jews in Germany and Austria.²³ In the 1st Yugoslavia, Bosnians were under pressure and they were attacked by Serbs who had official support. In time those attacks turned to ethnic cleansing. In 1920 there was an idiom that was used in Montenegro (a region in Serbia) "what are we going to do with the freedom, if we could not cut a throat of a Muslim".²⁴ Muslims were totally pushed out of the government bureaucracy and their lands were publicised with a low payment like \$ 4 for one acre.

In 1914, Muslims established their first political party, which was called the Organization of the Yugoslavian Muslims (Jugoslavenska Muslimanska Organizacija). This party supported the idea of "Yugoslavia" with a condition of recognition of the Muslim

²³ Akarslan, p. 104.

²⁴ Tilman Zulch, *Ethnische Saeuberung-Volkermord fur Grosserbien* (Hamburg-Zurich: Luchterhand Verlag, 1993), 71.

entity. This party combined with the radical Yugoslavia party in 1935. Due to the pressures in Bosnia-Herzegovina between 1910 and 1935, 100,000 more Bosnians immigrated to Turkey. In 1939, Bosnia-Herzegovina was shared by Yugoslavia and Croatia. Croatia took autonomy from the Yugoslavian State. A journalist, who asked about the situation of Muslims in Bosnia to the officials of Yugoslavia and Croatia, got a response as "we are treating them like they don't exist."²⁵

In 1941, due to the problems between Croats and Serbs, the Serbian army conducted a military coup against the king, to apply its own fascist ideology to Croatia and Yugoslavia. Therefore, Germany declared war on Yugoslavia. After the military coup, the independent Croatia was established with the help of Germany. The new independent Croatia was established by using the Croat nationalists who were called 'ustasha'. Ustasha implemented the second worst genocide after the Nazi's during the 2nd World War against Jews, Gypsies, Muslims, and Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia. They killed around 400,000 to 600,000 innocent people. According to some investigations, Muslims were the

²⁵ Zulch, p. 77.

first community who lost so many people in the 2nd World War. There was pressure on Muslims in Yugoslavia until the 1960's. Most of their social rights, properties, historical and cultural heritages were abolished or destroyed by Serbs. Moreover, their civil organizations, schools, religious institutions, and media institutions were shut down or prohibited.²⁶ They were totally deprived of public and social rights.

After the second half of the 1960's, the pressure on the Muslims started to decrease. In 1968, the federal party confirmed that Bosnians are nationally Muslim. In 1974, Muslims got the status of establisher of the State as Serbs, Croats, people from Montenegro, Slovenes and Macedonians. So the Muslims became equal with other subcluster of people in Yugoslavia.

²⁶ Bora, p. 97.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE REGION

The Recent History of Bosnia-Herzegovina (1980-1995)

In the 1980's, the discrimination between the North-South (rich-poor) under the name of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the number of Muslims were increasing in Socialist Yugoslavia. Bosnia-Herzegovina experienced an economic crisis in Yugoslavia in the 1980's. The Yugoslavian Marxists (Serbs) tried to apply some neo-Stalinist rules or restorations over the Islamic communities in Bosnia. Many Muslims were imprisoned and media institutions were strictly inspected.²⁷ In the middle of the 1980's Slobodan Milosevic, who was a Serb nationalist, captured the administration in Yugoslavia. Milosevic started to increase the pressure on Bosnian Muslims and tried to increase the authority of Serbia in Yugoslavia. The first Serbian mass rallies in Bosnia in 1989 were in response to the crisis in Kosovo and the conflict between Serbia and Slovenia, and were a direct product of the 'anti-bureaucratic revolution' in Serbia

²⁷ A.D. Dyker and I Vejvod, *Yugoslavia and After* (London, England: Longman, 1996), 12.

proper.²⁸ The period of 1990-1991 was the collapse of Yugoslavia. The federal communists established new parties and held the elections. Moreover, they changed the constitution for more independence and a new parliament was to work for the independence progress.²⁹ There were three nationalist groups: Croats, Serbs, and Muslims. Some Muslims considered themselves as relative of Serbs. However, Serbs were denying this because they consider the Bosnians as successors of the Ottoman Turkish Empire that knocked down the Serb Empire in the Middle Ages and kept them under their yoke.

Bosnian-Muslims established their political party in the early 1990's, which was called the Democratic Action party. In the 1991 elections, DAP (Democratic Action party) gained a majority in Bosnia-Herzegovina's parliament, and then Alija Izetbegovic, who was the leader of DAP was elected as President of Bosnia-Herzegovina by the votes of the party's representatives in the parliament. Unlike Milosevic and Tudjman (the Croat leader), Izetbegovic was never a member of the Yugoslav

²⁸ Dyker, p. 15.

²⁹ Wolfgang Ilibal, *Das Ende Jugoslawiens* (Wien, Zurich: Europarvelag, 1991), 31.

Communist Party. Whereas Milosevic and Tudjman traded communism for nationalism and shifted with the winds of public opinion over the years, Izetbegovic remained true throughout his life to Islamic inspired political activism.³⁰

Bosnian Serb nationalists tried to portray President Alija Izetbegovic as a fundamentalist Muslim and they thought that he was giving priority to the Muslim entity. In fact, Alija Izetbegovic was really a tough Muslim politician. He was also an active member of some Muslim institutions in his youth. Therefore, Serbs blamed him for many things due to his past. So, Serbs were planning to weaken him and prepared the conditions for their independence from Bosnia-Herzegovina to combine with Serbia. Serbs in Serbia were saying that Bosnia-Herzegovina could be independent if it would just attach itself to either Serbia, Montenegro or the autonomous Serbian parts of the Croats.³¹

³⁰ "Alija Izetbegovic, 78; Led Bosnia Through War," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 October 2003, sec. II, p. 9.

³¹ Robert Donia and John V.A. Fine, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed* (London, United Kingdom: C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., 1997), 98.

One of Izetbegovic's most controversial statements came on the eve of war, a delicate time across the Balkans. "I would sacrifice peace for a sovereign Bosnia-Herzegovina, I would not sacrifice sovereignty," he told the Bosnian Parliament on February 27, 1991. Many Serbs took the statement as a cry for war. It was a kind of public stance that caused many of Izetbegovic's critics to question his wisdom and political skill. But few questioned his determination to fight for the freedom of his people.³²

Serbs could never tolerate the idea of a totally independent Bosnia-Herzegovina, which would also be administrated by a Muslim administration. However, after the referendum for the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Bosnia-Herzegovina's government declared independence after getting a guarantee from US Secretary of State James Baker and other state secretaries on 3 March 1992. Thereafter, the Serb representatives declared their independence from Bosnia-Herzegovina and called their government the republic of the Serbs. Their idea was to unite with Serbia to form the Great Serbia in the Balkans.

³² "Alija Izetbegovic, 78; Led Bosnia Through War," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 October 2003, sec. II, p. 9.

However after all, the relations between three groups were continuing and they were planning to establish a confederation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Finally, the Bosnian-Serb government announced that they decided to join with the new Yugoslavia which was established by Serbs in Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. After this decision, the situation in Bosnia deteriorated. "The war began in Bosnia in 1992 encompassed death, atrocities, and terror on a scale unknown in Europe since World War II."³³

The war in Bosnia occurred against a backdrop of three important external developments that altered the prospects and alternatives of Bosnia's political leaders. First, the Yugoslavia People's Army (YPA) dramatically changed its mission in the latter half of 1991 from defending Yugoslav ideals to becoming an agent of Greater Serbian nationalism. Second, the 1991 war in Croatia strengthened national extremists among the Bosnian Serbs and weakened those who hoped to preserve a multiethnic Bosnian state. Finally, although diplomatic representatives of the international community cited lofty principles and voiced high ideals, their actions drove the

³³ Donia, p. 234.

major participants in Bosnia to press separatist claims and abandon efforts for a negotiated solution.³⁴

Armed conflicts, ethnic cleansing, the bombardment of cities, and atrocities against civilians in Bosnia were not preordained consequences of ethno-national divisions in Bosnian society; they developed as a result of the transformation of the Yugoslav People's Army into an instrument of Serbian nationalists, the annexationist ambitions of the Croatian and Serbian governments, and the eagerness of national extremists to conduct unsavory ethnic cleansing campaigns with the endorsement and assistance of organized armies in the region.

The war in the Yugoslavian region first began between Croatia and Slovenia and then spread all over the Yugoslavian states. By this time, the Croatian war spilled over into Bosnia in two different ways. First, Serbs from the republic of Krajina and Croatian troops from the Ministry of Internal Affairs used cross-border incursions to advance their nationalist claims to Bosnia. Second and more significant militarily, the Yugoslav People's Army

³⁴ Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia* (London, England:Penguin Group, 1996), 51.

used Bosnia as a staging area to support the Croatian war effort.³⁵

On January 1, 1992, the United Nations Secretary General appointed former US. Secretary of state, Cyrus Vance announced that the Yugoslav People's Army, Serbia, and Croatia had agreed to a cease-fire and that the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) would be deployed to separate the belligerents in Croatia. On the very next day, a formal agreement among the Serbs, Croats, and Yugoslav People's Army was signed in Sarajevo. Notwithstanding the Yugoslav People's Army widespread military preparations in early 1992 and the political truculence of the Bosnian Serbs, the actions of the international community were the proximate cause of the war in Bosnia.³⁶ The European community failed to recognize the importance of negotiation and compromise in multiethnic Bosnia, where no nationality constituted a majority and coalition politics had been the rule through much of the century.

³⁵ Glenny, p. 63.

³⁶ Mark Pinson, *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 105.

After a while, the European community announced its recognition of Bosnia to take effect on April 6. On the very next day, Turkey and the United States followed and announced that they recognized Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia as sovereign and independent states. However, despite the recognitions of Western States, clashes around Bosnia continued. The Bosnian army was poorly prepared partly because of Izetbegovic, who was the President of Bosnia, who had clung until the last moment to the hope of a political settlement. However his hopes didn't work and Serb forces set out to capture as much of Bosnia as they could. The forces of the Bosnian government hoped, at the very minimum, to maintain control of the principal cities and the roads connecting them.³⁷

Under pressure from the international community to end aggression against Bosnia, the federal presidency of Rump Yugoslavia ordered the Yugoslav People's Army to withdraw, but its order allowed soldiers from Bosnia to remain there. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimated that two million Bosnians had become

³⁷ Isa Can, "Yugoslavya ve Bosna-Hersek Bunalimi-Tarihsel Arka Plan," *Dunya ve Islam*, no. 3 (September 1992): 39.

refugees. Many groups and observers, including Helsinki Watch, Amnesty International, the U.S. State department, and the International Court of Justice, shared the belief that Serbia has been the initiator and principal perpetrator of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Croatian-Muslim relations were further poisoned when soldiers of each side committed atrocities against civilians of the other. However, the hostilities between Bosnian Muslims and Croats ended in 1994, due to U.S. diplomatic pressure on Croatian President Tudjman and the threat of United Nations' economic sanctions against Croatia if it continued military assistance to the Bosnian Croats. By late March 1994, each side had ratified an agreement to join in a federation. Then, Croatian and Bosnian commanders met to begin merging their forces into a single army.³⁸ However, it was hard to persuade Bosnian Serbs to stop their attacks on Bosnia. Moreover, Serbia rejected any plan of the international community for peace or to cease-fire.

³⁸ Stefan Krause, *Chronology of Balkan Peace Effort: Events and Issues in the Former Union and East-Central and Southeastern Europe* (Prag:OMRI, 1996), 84.

In February 1994 the efforts of Lord David Owen to achieve a consensus among the three parties were superseded by an American plan to bring the Bosnian Croats into a federation with the Muslims. United Nations Secretary General Boutros Ghali announced that the use of air strikes and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) issued an ultimatum to all parties, especially to the Bosnian Serbs, demanding that all the heavy weapons be brought under United Nations' control or withdraw from Sarajevo by February 21, 1994.³⁹ On February 28, Serbs violated NATO's ultimatum by flying aircraft over Bosnia. Therefore, NATO used its force for the first time in Yugoslavia and NATO aircraft downed four Serbian planes. On March, 1994 Croats and Muslims had agreed to join the newly constituted Muslim-Croatian Federation. So, the agreement between the Muslims and Croats dramatically changed the political landscape in Bosnia. However, the Bosnian Serbs continued the systematic violence against civilians in Bosnia. NATO approved another ultimatum similar to the February threat that forced an end to attacks on Sarajevo. Serbs didn't behave logically and

³⁹ Krause, p. 89.

democratically due to their strong nationalist ideas. Policy formulation is fundamentally concerned with making choices, and choices are shaped by values. Values are the explication of things we value, and values pertain to people's desires, wants, or priorities. Serbs didn't respect the value of independence of the different communities. They wanted all the former states of Yugoslavia to unite under the Serbian administration. Serbs didn't care about Bosnian Muslims' values to reach their desires. Serbs wanted to apply only their own political values such as popular control, effectiveness and liberty. They didn't respect equality.

In policy analysis, generally, political factors prevent a technically superior alternative from being selected. The dispute between Bosnian Muslims and Serbs couldn't be solved clearly because of political factors. In a pluralistic society like the US, a variety in belief systems is a natural consequence of differences in backgrounds and aspirations. However, former Yugoslavian nations could not keep their beliefs or political ideas out of their state structure.

In November 1995, due to pressure from the United States and the United Nations, three parties signed a

peace agreement which was called the Dayton Peace in the United States, it ended the bloody war in the Balkans.

Progress After 1995

The wars of the Yugoslav succession produced no real winners. Victors and Victims alike suffered, albeit in varying degrees and in different ways. Ethnic cleansing by Serbs, Croats, and Muslims, destroyed multiethnic population patterns in many parts of Bosnia in 1992 and 1993.

In the White House, Bill Clinton explained that Milosevic, Tudjman, and Izetbegovic decided to end the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Rarely there is an objectively "right" solution to a problem when seen from a political perspective. Politicians do not discover answers to problems, they forge policies through negotiations of interests as well as the implementation of knowledge.⁴⁰ According to the Dayton Peace Agreement, the federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Republica Srpska (Republic of Serbs) would be recognized as one state by the international arena. After the Dayton Peace Agreement, the United Nations decided to abolish the weapons embargo and

⁴⁰ Bellis, p. 21.

the sanctions applied to the Yugoslav federation. Then, the United Nations decided to place IFOR (Implementation Force), which was going to control the application of the agreement conditions and keep the peace. On December 5, NATO's council completed the preparation of Operation Joint Endeavor which was also including IFOR. NATO's land forces were placed out in its responsibility area for the first time in its history. More than a quarter million Bosnians were killed in a conflict that put the term "ethnic cleansing" into the global lexicon and engendered the bloodiest atrocities in Europe since World War II. Nearly two million Bosnians were driven from their homes.⁴¹

After the signing of the Washington Agreement on March 18, 1994, on March 30, 1994, the session of the Constituting Parliament of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was held in Sarajevo and the assembly included representatives elected in the 1990 elections for the Parliament of Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the territory of the Federation and that was when the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

⁴¹ "Alija Izetbegovic, 78; Led Bosnia Through War," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 October 2003, sec. II, p. 9.

was enacted. The constitution specifies Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) and Croats as nations, together with the others, and citizens of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, by exercising their sovereign rights. It changed the internal structure of territories with majority Bosniaks and Croat population in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina into a Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which consists of federal units (cantons) with equal rights and responsibilities.⁴² The constituting Parliament ceased to exist in October 1996, just after the elections for the Parliament of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The new external forces, such as national values, functional needs, population trends, economic conditions, public opinion, public interest groups, and constitutional structure of Bosnia Herzegovina will shape the public bureaucracy in the future.

⁴² Kut, p. 135.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE OF TURKEY AS A NATO ALLY

I am a Turk. Turkey's concern with Bosnia or the Balkans was basically due to two reasons: historical ties due to the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the five million Turkish citizens who are originally Bosnian. The Bosnian dispute in the Balkans was an opportunity for Turkey to strengthen its influence in the Balkans. According to some liberal journalists, if the purification of the Ottoman Empire's heritage from Europe would be achieved in Bosnia, then the result of this would reach to the repulse of Turkey out of the western system, therefore, Bosnia and Herzegovina was a strategic matter.⁴³

The European Union tried to be the main actor that could solve the dispute in Bosnia Herzegovina. However, the European Union couldn't persuade the Serbs to make peace. When the United States interfered in the Bosnia Herzegovina dispute, the European Union became comfortable. Turkey and the United States were the powers that were supporting the military operation against Bosnia Herzegovina. NATO was the identification card for Turkey's

⁴³ Bora, p. 121.

and the United States' existence in Europe; therefore, both countries were supporting the effective intervention into Bosnia Herzegovina dispute by NATO's leadership.⁴⁴

The spillover of the struggle in the Balkans into the Aegean Sea would be most disturbing. Such a conflict would be much more disruptive to the immediate interests of the United States than the Bosnian war has been. In particular, it would threaten American lines of communication with the Middle-East. The European Union has never been as concerned as the United States with the strategic importance of the Southern Balkans and the Aegean Sea. But the European Union does have a special responsibility in the region because Greece is a member state. The disputes between Greece and its neighbors - Macedonia, Albania, and Turkey - highlight the extreme difficulties the European Union faces in establishing a common foreign and security policy.⁴⁵ The American fascination with picturesque and slightly wacky Balkan bit players was due partly to the shift in Turkey's geostrategic significance after the fall of communism in

⁴⁴ Pinson, p. 97.

⁴⁵ Donia, p. 137.

Bulgaria and partly to a misinterpretation of the Yugoslavian conflict that has been adjusted somewhat since Richard Holbrooke's appointment as assistant US Secretary of state.

Until 1989, Turkey was important mainly for its role as the most southeasterly bulwark against Soviet access to the Mediterranean Sea and as the only secular democracy with a Muslim population. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkey's role has changed. The United States considers Turkey vital to blocking Iranian and Russian influences in the region. It served as a base for United Nations operations inside Northern Iraq. The value of Turkish support for the Middle-East peace process would immediately become evident if it were withdrawn. In the Balkans, Turkey's troops are participating in authorized peacekeeping, and Turkey's diplomats, together with the Americans, are attempting to soothe the bitter relationship between Bosnia and Croatia. Turkey has also committed to supplying Albania with weaponry and other military supplies should Albania find itself at war with Serbia over Kosovo. Dramatic changes in Europe have had a profound impact on domestic Turkish politics. The disaffection with traditional secular politics has been strengthened by a widespread perception that the wars in

Bosnia and Chechnya (in Russia) are Christian crusades against helpless Muslim populations (and that the west is standing by and letting them happen).⁴⁶

The United States' increased interest in the southern Balkans was prompted primarily by its concern about Turkey. However, during the former Bush administration and the first half of President Clinton's term, there were indications that the policy was also informed by a desire to isolate Serbia.⁴⁷ The racial ties between countries influenced the flow or the solution of the dispute between Bosnians and Serbs. Russia supported the Serbs due to come from the same race. Public problems also occur or get influenced by some global economic or political competition. Globalization is reducing the role of the state in maintaining law and order, and repressive social control over potentially explosive segments of populations being hurt socially, economically, and politically by the inexorable march of corporate capitalism.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Kut, p. 141.

⁴⁷ Pinson, p. 99.

⁴⁸ Bellis, p. 20.

If NATO would not interfere, Russians would have had a strong pressure in Europe by so strongly supporting the Serbs. The conflict has been further exacerbated due to the influence of Russia, Germany, Turkey, USA, and France. These countries affected the flow of events that happened in Yugoslavia. France and Russia supported Serbs while the US, Turkey, and Germany supported Croats and Bosnian Muslims due to their own interests and policies.

US Officials in Washington explained that "in order to keep Turkey happy, we have become included in a delicate balancing act in the southern Balkans".⁴⁹ The Balkan and East European situation was so complicated. An enlarged Balkan war, potentially involving Turkey and Greece, both NATO members, or Hungary, a candidate for European Community membership, or Bulgaria, could not be without serious consequences for Germany, Austria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Russia, which has historical and emotional links to Bulgaria and Serbia, therefore affecting the security of the United States as well.

⁴⁹ Krause, p. 94.

As a result, Turkey was one of the main actors that affected the destiny of the Balkans due to its historical ties with Bosnian Muslims, domestic public policy because of its Bosnian origin population, geostrategy, keeping the second largest armed forces in NATO after United States, and being the regional power in the Balkans.

CHAPTER FOUR

FUTURE OF THE REGION

Policy Recommendations

The situation has largely stabilized since the Dayton Peace Accords halted the war in Bosnia Herzegovina in 1995. However, there are still risks from occasional localized political violence. There were outbreaks of mob violence in reaction to a financial crisis in Bosnia in 2001. Attacks against minority returnees, especially in the eastern and western parts of Bosnia Herzegovina, continue. Increased operations to capture persons indicted for war crimes may cause local disruptions and protests, especially in the eastern parts of the Bosnia Herzegovina.

Nonetheless, since the December, 1995 signing of the Dayton Peace Accord, there has been significant progress in restoring peace and stability. Although the physical infrastructure was devastated by the war, in recent years there has been a significant improvement, and reconstruction is progressing. Politicians from the three sides should give up the idea of getting revenge for past evils. So, the politicians should give up using these events as political fodder for their political careers in political elections. Demands are also influencing the

solution of a problem. Both Bosnian and Serbian politicians' demands get the solution in a harder position. They should realize that political equality is important.

In order to find an appropriate or lasting solution, a policy analysis should be conducted very carefully and technically. Evaluations should be done by considering the three nation's demands, needs and cultural values. Moreover, the international arena should support them, and help solve the problems. Today, Bosnia Herzegovina is the constitutional state of a multiethnic community, therefore the policy making should be done fairly.

The welfare should be shared equally between the three communities. If the democratic and economic reforms would progress faster, it would be more helpful for the solution of the problems. Also, the bureaucracy should contribute to the solution of the problems in the country, because some cultural or democratic problems become swampy due to bureaucratic procedures. Bureaucracies are control institutions increasingly ruling society, politics, and government. Bureaucracy is a favorite scapegoat for many

of society's current ills and bureaucrats are convenient, increasingly visible targets.⁵⁰

Also the efforts of government is not enough by itself. The three communities should support their governments and start to forget the war years for the wellbeing and future of new generations. The bloody war in Yugoslavia occurred due to past reasons. Bosnia Herzegovina's society should start to learn to live without hostilities. The Bosnia Herzegovina's government has to find the best solution for the main public problem in its country and implement the formula according to the communities' different values. In politics, the victory usually goes to the strongest coalition and who can organize the strongest, most powerful faction.⁵¹

In addition, the international communities must support Bosnia Herzegovina's integration in the global world with their economic and social contributions. Bosnia Herzegovina's government has to take lessons from its past, otherwise it could not reach the success, welfare, and order of the future. The Balkans had never seen such a

⁵⁰ Bellis, p. 28-A.

⁵¹ Bellis, p. 7.

bloody war and so much discrimination until the 1990's, and more than a quarter million Bosnians were killed in five years due to ethnic cleansing by Serb nationalists.

True public policies, policy process, and political equality are the keys of peace, order and development in a country. The Ottoman Empire tried to keep the order and peace for 500 years in the Balkans by applying true public policies according to the cultural, religious, ethnic, and political structure of the region, such as local public administration policies, local security policies which were provided by the Landlords' soldiers, agricultural policies that were also determined by the Landlords, no intervention to the religious freedom, and taxation according to the welfare of the each city, until the beginning of the nationalist movements in its territory.

Surely, the public policies that were applied in the past would not work in the 21st century with the new structure of Bosnia Herzegovina, but they could be the guide for preparing the new and appropriate public policies for the new administration for peace, welfare, security and freedom of its communities for the future.

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