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YUGOSLAVIA's MUSLIM NATION

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The political affirmation of a "Muslim nation" in the land of South Slavs has implications for the wider questions of the relationship of Islam to modern nationalism and of Islamic revival in general.

In the center of the coat of arms of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia a cluster of flames rises from a single base. The flames symbolize the separate South Slav "nations" (*narod*i or sometimes *nacije*) that define Yugoslavia, a name meaning Land of the South Slavs, and that together account for 85 percent of the country's population; the common base symbolizes the "brotherhood and unity" (*bratstvo i jedinstvo*) that binds these nations and the other "nationalities" who live among them (*narodnosti*, now the official term for those who used to be called "minorities") in a common state under Communist rule. For the first two decades after this new Yugoslavia was forged out of the fragments of the old in the crucible of World War II, there were five flames on this coat of arms, representing Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, and Montenegrins, each with a Republic of "its own" in the six-republic federation. Since then, in a subtle change that has been generally unnoticed, there have been six flames. The sixth flame stands for a nation called "Muslim," most of whose members live in the sixth federated republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which they share with traditionally Orthodox Christian Serbs and traditionally Roman Catholic Croats.

This *Report* will describe some aspects, consequences, and implica-

tions of the development, definition, and political "affirmation" (by a Communist and therefore in principle atheistic regime) of this "Muslim nation" in the land of the South Slavs. Their story has more than local significance. In today's world the relationship of Islam to communalism and modern nationalism is of salient importance, part of the question of the mix of Islamic and nationalist elements in the Iranian revolution and the Afghan resistance movement, the nature and self-identity of Pakistan and the place of Muslims in Indian society, pan-Arabism and separate state consciousness in the Arab world, and the "Islamic revival" in general.¹ In this context the development, "affirmation," and growing self-consciousness of a nation called Muslim (or Muslims acquiring the status of a nation) in a multinational, multireligious and Communist-ruled European state constitutes a case study that should also be of interest to those concerned with other areas where Muslims and modern nationalism coexist and with current world affairs generally.

Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Islam, as Bosnian Muslim nationalists and Yugoslav Muslim clericalists are fond of noting, has been present in the Balkans and on the territory of present-day Yugoslavia since as early as the ninth century, when it was brought to Dalmatian and other Balkan shores by Saracen raiders from Sicily and made some scattered converts. In the fourteenth century and after, the gradual encroachments of the Ottoman Turks endowed their presence with quantitative and cultural significance. Muslim Turkish fief-holders, soldiers, and peasants settled in conquered territories, particularly in the south

and east of the Peninsula. Some of the native populations, eventually including a majority of Albanians, were converted almost everywhere, during the following centuries, with the Ottoman "blood tax" playing a significant role in this process in some territories, including Bosnia, where this form of recruitment to the corps of Janissaries was particularly intense or regular. (Mehmet Pasha Sokolović, or Sokolli, who as Ottoman Grand Vizier endowed his Bosnian homeland with bridges, mosques, hans, and other Ottoman and Islamic monuments and institutions—while also restoring the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate with his own brother as Patriarch!—is the most famous example and symbol of this Janissary feedback.) Only in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the adjacent Sanjak of Novi Pazar did conversion on a mass scale take place among the Slavs who were the Balkans' most numerous peoples.

When the Turks arrived in Bosnia in 1453, four years after the fall of the last independent Serbian despotate in the Morava valley and ten years after the fall of Constantinople, it was to conquer a highland kingdom that was an ecclesiastical no-man's land astride the frontier between Eastern Orthodox and Western Catholic Christendom. As far as is now known from a misty period that has left few written or even archaeological records, the nobles and subjects of this kingdom were partly or sometimes Orthodox, partly or sometimes Roman Catholic, and partly adherents of a "national church" of their own, called Bogomil. This last has left few traces, apart from the remarkable monolith tombstones (*stećci*) of their curious necropolises in the middle of nowhere, but it is widely accepted that Bogomilism was a form of Manicheanism that had taken root in this religious borderland during the early medieval march of the ancient Manichean heresy from Asia Minor through the Balkans and northern Italy to southwestern France. Whether or not this is true (it has been suggested that the principal evidence is that the Pope, in seeking to launch a Crusade against them, said they were Manicheans), the presence of this independent and at least heterodox church astride the frontier between Catholic and Orthodox Christianity—a sort of

medieval Titoism, defying the empires and ideologies of both East and West—was a challenge and an affront to both Rome and Constantinople. Rejected by the Orthodox Patriarchs, at war with the Catholic Popes, with their Christianity denied by both and with beliefs that made both standard Christian forms seem as alien as Islam, the Bogomils' adherence to Bogomilism had become little more than a symbol of loyalty to a state that now no longer existed. Such at least is the traditional view.

However valid this thesis may be—and it should be noted that contemporary Yugoslav historiography based on archival and cadastral materials tends to reject the importance attributed to "the Bogomil theory" in traditional explanations of the Islamization of Bosnia-Herzegovina²—the religious confusion, ambivalence, and marginality to both Christian mainstreams that characterized medieval Bosnia on the eve of the Ottoman conquest apparently rendered the population peculiarly ripe for a conversion that was also opportune. First the Bosnian nobility and by the sixteenth century many of their Orthodox, Catholic, and Bogomil subjects decided they had little to lose, and much to gain, by adopting the faith of their conquerors. They embraced Islam and thereby retained status, land, and rank under the new order.

The social situation created by this conversion distinguished Bosnia from the rest of the Ottoman Empire. In Serbia, Bulgaria, and Macedonia the Slav nobility generally remained faithful to Orthodoxy. They were therefore dispossessed and reduced to equality with their own former and also usually still Christian subjects, all *raya*, while the conquerors replaced the native aristocracy. Alien (but not always Turkish) Muslims ruled Christian Slav peasants, whose church became the rallying ground and haven of their sense of nationality until the day of liberation. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, however, the native aristocracy survived by means of conversion to Islam and carried many of their subjects with them. Muslim Slavs ruled Christian and Muslim Slavs in the name of a distant Sultan and Caliph. So great was the power of these notables that they were for a long period able to prevent the Sultan's official representative from residing in the real capital of the

Pashalik, Sarajevo; he could come within its walls only one day a year, but otherwise must live at Travnik, 60 miles away.

There are those who maintain that these Bosnian notables and petty gentry have always retained the pragmatism that once led them to change their religion rather than surrender their privileges. But no suzerain since the Turk has ever demanded that particular sacrifice of them or their fellow Muslim underlings again. Austro-Hungarian occupation after 1878 brought Bosnia and Herzegovina again under a Christian prince, a change that came about as the result of a rising of Christian peasants directed more against oppression by fellow-Slavs of different religion than against the Sultan. Readers of Nobel laureate Ivo Andrić's *Bridge on the Drina* are familiar with the dismay and resentment with which the Muslim Slavs of the province greeted the new order. For reasons of their own, however, the Habsburg regime did not touch the local social structure. The Muslims remained a favored people and Islam a privileged religion with autonomous institutions, even under the Most Catholic Emperor.

There was, in fact, only one brief period between their conversion and the advent of a Communist regime at the end of World War II that their religion was a disability for Bosnia's Muslims. The Yugoslavia of 1919-1941, in many ways a Greater (Orthodox) Serbia in which Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Slav Muslims were all considered nationally unconscious but redeemable Serbs, brought the abrogation of their privileges and most of their religious autonomy. In *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* Rebecca West records scenes from Sarajevo in 1938 that demonstrated their consequent nostalgia for the vanished Ottoman Empire, which in turn led to pre- and postwar waves of emigration to Turkey on such a scale that one informed Yugoslav estimate places the present size of the Bosnian colony in Turkey at more than 800,000.

These Slav Muslims, descendants of the original Serbo-Croatian-speaking Slav converts to Islam, comprise the "Muslim nation" in Yugoslavia today—a national or ethnic identity now written with a capital "M" (*Muslimani*) to distinguish them from the far larger and partly different

body of Yugoslavs who profess Islam as a faith, and who are now referred to with a small "m" (*muslimani*). In the Yugoslav census of 1971 "Muslims in the sense of nationality" (*Muslimani u smislu narodnosti*) was the category registered for 1,729,932 Yugoslavs, 8.4 percent of the then total population of 20,522,972. This made them the third most numerous (after 8.1 million Serbs and 4.5 million Croats) among the 29 "nations," "nationalities," and other ethnic and non-ethnic categories (including "other," "Yugoslav," and "unknown") recorded in that census.³ Of these Muslims by nationality, 1,482,430 lived in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where they were a plurality with 39.5 percent of the population (cf. 37.2% Serbs, 20.6% Croats). Most of the remainder lived in the former Sanjak of Novi Pazar, now divided between Serbia and Montenegro. In the preliminary results of the next census, which was taken in April 1981, there are 1,999,000 of them, representing 8.92 percent of Yugoslavia's population; 1,630,000 of these Muslims by nationality live in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Road to Nationhood: "Pragmatic" Reasons

The gradual elevation of Yugoslav Muslims with a capital "M" to the status of a full and equal South Slav *narod* or *nacija*, and the stages in which it was accomplished, have had both a pragmatic/political and a philosophical/sociological rationale...and corresponding consequences.

The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina are with almost no exceptions Slavs, speaking local dialects or literary variants (almost always the *ijekavski* variant) of the language that is officially "Serbo-Croatian or Croato-Serbian" but more commonly either Serbian or Croation, depending on who and where one is. The usual way of distinguishing a Serb from a Croat, although there are a few exceptions, is by religion: Serbs are Orthodox and Croats are Catholic Christians. What, then, is a Serbo-Croatian or Croato-Serbian speaker whose religion or religious background is Islam, whose pre-Ottoman Christian ancestors inhabited a religious no man's land astride the frontiers between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, and who may have been either or (as "Bogomils") neither of these?

For Croats the traditional answer is that they are Islamicized Croats: for Serbs that they are Islamicized Serbs. In an age of nationalism, with the Serb-Croat question the most sensitive and literally explosive of all of Yugoslavia's national questions, and with their respective historical and demographic "rights" to Bosnia and Herzegovina a major item in their dispute, the answer matters: if the Muslims are Croats, Bosnia-Herzegovina has a Croat majority; if they are Serbs, it is a Serb land with a Croatian minority. It mattered in 1878 and 1908, when Croats in the Habsburg Monarchy rejoiced and Serbs in and outside Serbia plotted revenge for the occupation and then the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary.

It mattered again, and terribly, when Bosnia-Herzegovina became part of the "independent State of Croatia" (NDH in the Croatian acronym) created in 1941 as a German-Italian puppet state and ruled by the fascist *ustaše*, a band of Croatian chauvinist and militantly Catholic desperadoes dedicated to an independent Greater Croatia and to the liquidation of Serbs and Orthodoxy throughout its territory. This last they promptly began to do, with a strategy that called for the expulsion of one-third, the conversion to Catholicism of one-third, and the killing of the remaining third of the NDH's then 1.5 million Serbs. On the other hand, and despite their militant Catholicism, the *ustaše*—imitating Habsburg policy in this as in some other areas—declared that their Muslim subjects were brothers and allies who were Croats in origin and decreed that Croatia was a nation with two recognized religions, Catholic and Muslim.

Thus wooed and stimulated to see in Hitler's Germans (and Hitler's Austrians, who staffed many key German offices in the NDH) a return of the Habsburg rule they now remembered as benevolent and pro-Islamic, unlike Serbian rule between the wars, more members of the Muslim community initially contributed their sympathies and arms to the *ustaše* and German cause than to that of the Communist-led Partisan resistance movement. The latter in any case possessed two other disqualifying features for most Muslims: the occasionally militant atheism of its Communist leadership and in Bosnia an initial preponderance in its

ranks of Serbs fleeing *ustaše* persecution and murder. Conversely, the few Muslims who joined the Partisans in early months were regarded with suspicion and some hostility by the Serb Partisans. (One such Muslim, a prewar Communist and postwar senior Party and State official, has told me that for this reason he found it expedient to adopt a Serb *nom de guerre*, so that he would not be recognized as a Muslim, when assigned as political commissar to a Partisan unit in the Romanija mountains).

The Germans held this Muslim loyalty longer than the *ustaše* in some circles, with consequences that also affected their postwar "image." In 1942 a group of prominent Sarajevo Muslim clergy and businessmen sent a letter to Hitler begging him to separate Bosnia-Herzegovina from the NDH and establish it as an Independent Muslim State. Hitler denied the request but did authorize the creation of a Bosnian Muslim armed force, a German-commanded and grimly famous SS Handschar Division, which had the honor to be inspected by the pro-German Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in the name of a Pan-Islamic struggle against Western colonialism and (local) Communist atheism. In Bosnian "establishment" usage even today the term "Pan-Islam" carries negative connotations derived in part from that episode and coloring attitudes toward the contemporary "worldwide Islamic revival" and its protagonists.

Only during 1943 did Muslims begin to flock to the Partisan standard in significant numbers. By then the Germans and the *ustaše*, whose slaughter of Serbs had brought brutal reprisals by Serbian royalist Chetniks down on the heads of Muslim as well as Croat villagers, looked increasingly like losers.

Partisan slogans of brotherhood and unity and pledges of national equality and religious tolerance were also having an effect. A further boost was provided by the second congress of the Partisans' all-Yugoslav political arm, the Antifascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ), which met in the medieval Bosnian capital of Jajce in November 1943 to lay the foundations for a new Yugoslav state. The Jajce Congress formally

committed the Partisan movement to a postwar federation of six republics in which the names and the autonomy of five of them would recognize the national aspirations of the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, and Montenegrins. The sixth Republic—Bosnia and Herzegovina—would be the common homeland of "the Serbs, Croats, and Muslims" of that historical rather than national unit. In retrospect, Yugoslav Communists regard the Jajce declaration as the Party's first if still only implicit formal recognition of the separate "nationality" of the Muslims.

These wartime developments are recounted in some detail because they established a contradictory framework for the subsequent evolution of the status, the self-image, and the other Yugoslavs' view of the Slav Muslim community. On the one hand, this community emerged from the war tarred with the brush of having been collaborators of the "Nazi-fascist" occupiers, enemies of the Communists who now ruled the country (an image enhanced by a surge of anticommunist feeling and activity among the Muslim clergy and bourgeoisie in 1946-47), and parochial chauvinists in their own right. On the other hand, the pledges made to them were genuinely and sincerely rooted in the Yugoslav Communist Party's ideological and strategic view of the national question and were not merely a wartime and revolutionary tactical ploy. In addition, wartime developments had again dramatically demonstrated the multiple dangers for the state, society, and civil peace inherent in the Serb-Croat dispute over their respective national rights to Bosnia-Herzegovina and the vital corollary of that dispute, the nationality—Serb or Croat—of the Slav Muslims.

It is often said, and is certainly an important part of the truth, that "Tito created a 'Muslim nation'" to put an end to Serb-Croat conflict over Bosnia-Herzegovina by sanctioning the separate political existence, as a Federal Republic, of an historic unit reconstituted as a tri-national state. If the Slav Muslims are neither Serbs nor Croats, then Bosnia-Herzegovina does not "belong" to either Serbia or Croatia but rather, as proclaimed at Jajce, to its

Serbs, Croats, and Muslims...of whom the last are now the most numerous. As the Macedonian nation was "created" (again a piece of the truth, but an even smaller piece) to put an end to the equally dangerous dispute between Serbs and Bulgars over the geographic region called Macedonia, so it is with the Muslim nation. Surely an admirable pragmatic/political reason.

The achievement of formal and full "national" status for the Muslims did not, however, happen at once and forever as it did with the Macedonians. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY), renamed the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in 1952, was itself of divided counsel on the question, as Party leaders involved over the years now admit, although they are still reluctant to discuss the *political* details of these divisions and hesitations. The one exception is willingness, indeed eagerness, to describe the concerted resistance offered until 1966 by some federal organs, including the powerful security service (UDBa), which were controlled by Serb Party leaders who were purged that year on Tito's initiative and on charges of "centralism," misuse of power, and Serbian nationalism. Those of whom I asked this question did, however, list three additional factors that also delayed the "full affirmation" of a "Muslim nation" and made it controversial: the negative "image" of the Muslims in many Party and Partisan circles and among members of other nationalities after the war, as described above; the need for further development of "national consciousness" among the Muslims themselves and its recognition outside their ranks; and the risk that "others," further defined as Muslim "clericalists" and "bourgeois nationalists," might succeed in exploiting or appropriating to themselves, and for their own purposes, the "national consciousness" fanned into flame by the Communist regime.

Some aspects of the second and third of these factors are particularly relevant to the more general question of the relationship of Islam to communalism and nationalism, and are therefore considered in more detail below. Before doing so, however, it may be useful to trace the

evolution of the formal status of the Slav Muslim community as it emerges, clearly and suggestively, in the nomenclature employed and the numbers recorded in successive postwar censuses under the rubric "population according to nationality."

"Muslim" and Nationality in Yugoslav Censuses

In the 1948 census the Slav Muslims could declare themselves in any one of three ways: as Serbs, as Croats, or as "Muslims nationally undesignated" (*muslimane nacionalno neopredeljene*). According to figures provided to me in Sarajevo in January 1981, 71,911 Muslims were registered as Serbs in that census, 25,295 as Croats, and 778,403 as "Muslims nationally undetermined," for a total of 875,609.⁴

In the 1953 census there was no "Muslim" category of any kind, but a new category, "Yugoslavs undesignated" (*Jugoslovene neopredeljene*), had been introduced as part of a short-lived campaign, initially supported by Tito but later identified with "Greater Serbian" concepts and aspirations, for a "Yugoslav identity" (*Jugoslavenstvo*), a "higher" level of patriotism and cultural community superimposed on or even replacing separate national identities. The number recorded in this category was 998,698. It is generally assumed, and both their concentration in Bosnia-Herzegovina and data from subsequent censuses would appear to confirm, that most of these were Muslims who had chosen in this way to express their sense that they were neither Serbs nor Croats. The remaining "Yugoslavs undesignated," it is also generally and reasonably assumed, represented products of mixed marriages who did not know what else to call themselves, and a few others, particularly Communists, who for ideological reasons wished to consider themselves "Yugoslavs."

In the 1961 census, taken after the "Jugoslavenstvo" campaign was dropped because all except the Serbs perceived it as a new attempt at Serbianization, as had proved to be the case with King Alexander's proclamation of a "Yugoslav nation" in 1929, another new category was introduced: "Muslims (ethnic adherence)" (*Muslimani [etnička pripadnost]*). When 972,954 were

recorded in this category, the number of "Yugoslavs undesignated" fell drastically, from nearly a million to 317,125. Most of these remaining "Yugoslavs" (87%) were still recorded in Bosnia-Herzegovina, indicating that a considerable number of Communist and other nonreligious members of the Slav Muslim community continued to regard "Muslim" as a religious and not an "ethnic" category and therefore rejected it.

In January 1968, before the next census, the Muslims were finally and officially declared a full "nation."⁵ The changes in the political climate that made this step possible, and that were both cause and consequence of the purges of 1966, had ushered in an era of "liberalism" (a positive term at the time, later officially a negative one) on all questions including the national one, where it led to a resurgence of nationalisms, and national disputes, throughout the land. These developments eventually led to Tito's intervention, at the end of 1971, and the purge of "nationalists" and "liberals" in several republics. Meanwhile, the 1971 census recorded the latest change in the formal status of Bosnia-Herzegovina's most numerous community in another change of nomenclature that was also clearly still a compromise: "Muslims in the sense of nationality" (*Muslimani u smislu narodnosti*) replaced "Muslims (ethnic adherence)." More significant was the prodigious jump in their numbers: to 1,729,932, an increase of 78 percent which made them—as noted above—the third most numerous national group in Yugoslavia. The category "Yugoslavs undesignated" also underwent further suggestive changes. Now simply denominated "Yugoslavs" (n.b., quotation marks as though to signify doubt that this is a legitimate category), it was demoted to the tail end of the list, whereas it had previously come just after the five and later six South Slav "nations" and ahead of all the non-South Slav "nationalities." The number of "Yugoslavs" declined further to 273,077, a loss of an additional 100,000 since 1961.⁶

In the 1981 census, the last relics of discriminatory treatment vanished from the nomenclature. "Muslim" appeared without any qualifiers and was listed in the instructions for

recording the census in alphabetical order (in the Serbo-Croatian language) among the "nations" as follows: "Question 9. Adherence to nation, nationality, or ethnic group...on this question the census-taker is obligated to record faithfully how the enumerated person declares himself as to adherence to one of the nations of Yugoslavia (Montenegrin, Croat, Macedonian, Muslim, Slovene, Serb) or one of the nationalities of Yugoslavia, e.g.: Albanian, Hungarian, Gypsy, Italian, Czech, Slovak, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Turk, or other nationality."⁷ As this *Report* goes to press the results of this census are still being published. The preliminary breakdown by nations, nationalities, and ethnic groups records 1,999,000 Muslims, of whom 1,630,000 were registered in Bosnia-Herzegovina—an increase since 1971 of 270,000 in the country as a whole and 148,000 in "their" Republic. The surprise of the census was a jump in the number of "Yugoslavs" to 1,215,000, with most of this increase in Croatia and Serbia and a drop in the total number of Serbs and Croats by 154,000. The corresponding proportionate reinforcement of the Muslims' position as the third largest Yugoslav nation will have political repercussions in a country in which each national unit counts its share in political power and jobs to see whether these are proportionate to its numbers. The legitimacy of Muslim nationhood is becoming more important, not less.

The Road to Nationhood: From Cultural Distinctiveness to "National Consciousness"

The "Party line" and contemporary Bosnian historiography, while not denying the "pragmatic" usefulness of recognition of the Muslim (and Macedonian and Montenegrin) nations described above, vehemently insist that the regime has merely "affirmed" but not "created" these nations. According to this view, the "national consciousness" of the Slav Muslims that has developed in pace with the upgrading of their legal and terminological status since the war—a fact apparent to anyone with more than a superficial acquaintance with today's Bosnia and the variously militant, defensive, and proud sense of separate cultural and national identity displayed by most Bosnian Muslim contacts—is merely the natural culmination of a process of "nation-building" with

numerous analogues in contemporary Third World and more remote European history.

Translated into this outside observer's non-Marxist terminology and concepts, their argument is roughly as follows: The Yugoslav Muslim nation is a modern and in essence secular nation only partly synonymous with the Yugoslav Muslims by religious faith, a category that includes many Muslims of other nationalities and excludes nonreligious Muslims-by-nationality. The Yugoslav Muslim nation derives its specificity and consciousness from a combination of factors. The impact of Islam as *culture* and *ethos* as well as religion is undeniably one of the most important of these, but so is the fact that the impacted culture was a distinct (Bosnian) one when Islam struck. It was therefore as capable of further evolution from the premodern welter of South Slav tribal and clan cultures and identities into a full-fledged separate *national* culture and identity, had separate statehood continued, as those of the Serbs, Croats, and Bulgars. Islam added new dimensions to and accelerated the process of differentiation and individualization. The product of this dynamic synthesis of Islamic and Bosnian Slav cultural elements is a society distinct from other Slav and other Muslim nations—a society *sui generis*, which is one way of defining a nation.

The emergence of a modern "national consciousness" appropriate to this particularity was delayed, however, for several reasons, some of them specific to Bosnian history. Several Yugoslav scholars I have talked to agree with the thesis that commitment to the concept of a universal Islamic Community (*umma islamiyya*) and Islam as both state and religion (*Islam din wa dawla*), reinforced in the political culture by the Ottoman *millet* system, constituted powerful competing and inhibiting principles. Equally or more important, they suggest, were the consequences of Bosnia-Herzegovina's proximity to the European West and geographic marginality to the rest of the Muslim world, and the way European concepts of nation and nation-state came to the Balkans and Bosnia. Drastically oversimplified: by standard and classic Central European definitions of a "nation" (as a

specific kind of linguistic, ethnic or racial, and territorial community) these Slav Muslims, speaking the same language and having the same basic origins as their Serb and Croat neighbors, *must* be either Serbs or Croats. And that, of course, was what they were hearing from both Serb and Croat apostles of nationalism since the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. By and large, and insofar as they were drawn into the argument at all in Bosnian conditions of isolation, illiteracy, and a simple struggle for survival and freedom from oppression (this last by their own kinsmen and fellow-Muslims, remember), they went along.

But not all, and not entirely: Bosnian Muslim historians, behaving like the historians of all "new" or "emerging" nations, are now busy delving into the past for evidence of early awareness of separate cultural identity if not quite separate nationhood. The results, although often exaggerated (like the results of all such national historiography), are impressive. This is particularly true for the period after 1878, when Bosnia-Herzegovina moved from a marginal position in the Muslim world to an equally marginal one in the European world of modern nationalism—and did so at a time when the "national question" was entering its acute phase precisely in the Habsburg Monarchy to which Bosnia-Herzegovina was now attached. Especially revealing are descriptions of the new Habsburg Province's first generation of "Westernized" Muslim intellectuals living in *fin de siècle* Vienna and seeking to develop a secular but distinctive Bosnian-Muslim literature written in the Serbo-Croatian language with Arabic script, and then switching to Latin script as they broke with the clerical faction among them. So are the wider implications of the creation and mobilizing role of a Bosno-Herzegovinian Muslim political party, the United Muslim Organization, in old Yugoslavia (1919-1941), established along the same lines and in competition with the nationalist parties of the Serbs, Croats, et al.

As the studies pour from the press the examples multiply, and only some do not prove the point they claim to: the progressive development and secularization of a Bosnian Muslim identity, and then

its translation into what looks very much like a national identity.

Who Speaks for the Muslim Nation?

This Bosnian Muslim historiography and accompanying sociology is not, however, as monolithic as the above outline has so far made it appear. There are, in fact, three distinct schools, and they in turn reflect the divergent interests of three rival claimants to leadership and representation of the "Muslim nation." These are the Party and its fellow-travelers, the clergy and its lay supporters, and those whom the Party calls "traditional bourgeois-nationalist intellectuals"—although, as a further and typical Yugoslav complication, representatives of each group can also be found in the ranks of the others.

The "Party line" no longer attempts, as it once did, to reduce the role of Islam in the shaping and essence of Muslim nationhood in Bosnia-Herzegovina to a minor factor. The "clericalists," however, insist that Islam is *the* determining and constitutive element. Islam and nation are identical, and the nation is Islam. This thesis, in one sense a consistent modern ideological derivative of traditional Islamic concepts of the relationship of Islam to society and the state tainted by European concepts of nationhood, is also a political claim with serious implications. If it is true, who has a better right to speak for this people, and to represent them in dealings with other social and political agencies, especially the (Communist) state, than their clergy? And does such a nation not naturally have closer and more meaningful links with other Muslim societies and with Pan-Islamic ideals than with the other and secular nations with which it is joined in the Yugoslav "socialist commonwealth"?

Convinced that this is what the clergy and other clericalists are up to, the regime has lately become hypersensitive to straws-in-the-wind like articles in the Yugoslav Muslim religious press that seem to be extolling the exclusive and superior virtues of Islam; or to a statement by a Muslim priest, at a quasi-public meeting in Bosnian Bugojno in 1980, that "those who eat pig come to resemble the animal they eat." This is clearly one reason why the large number of young Bosnian Muslims studying at Al Azhar in Cairo and

other Muslim universities in the Middle East, heretofore proudly touted as an example of Yugoslav Communism's liberal attitude to religion and Islam in particular, was being subjected to critical re-examination—which is in turn one reason why the regime supported the recent establishment of a Muslim theological faculty connected to the ancient *medresa* in Sarajevo. This is also why the wartime collaboration of many of the Muslim clergy with the occupiers and the *ustaše* is being dredged up again after being strictly banned from public discussion for many years—leading to polemics between the Party-controlled press and *Preporod*, the fortnightly journal of the Association of the Islamic Community in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in 1979...and so to abrupt changes in *Preporod*'s editorship.⁸ As one Party official told me during a discussion of this affair, "They are not going to get away with the myth that they, and not the principled position of the Party on the national question, saved the Muslim community at that time."

This, and perhaps a lurking fear of infection from the implicitly anti-communist ferment sweeping the Muslim world, is why the Party and Party-minded scholars and writers respond so vehemently to another argument that has occasionally appeared in the Bosnian Muslim press and scholarly writing. This argument claims that the way the Yugoslav Muslim nation has been construed and inculcated by the Party line (and also by the "bourgeois-nationalist" Muslims) betrays a "Eurocentric" and anti-Islamic philosophical and political bias on the part of those who invented it. Bosnian Muslims would do better to look east rather than to Europe for the philosophical basis and content of their identity. Such a claim also has other dimensions, however: as part of an on-going Bosnian Muslim concern with the specific nature, mission, and purportedly special purity of "frontier Islam" in places like Bosnia and Indonesia, and as a Bosnian analogue to disputes between "modernizers" (or "Westernizers") and "neo-traditionalists" in many "Third World" societies.

The third or "bourgeois-nationalist" line, which actually seems to have as many adherents in the Party as outside it, poses a different sort of

challenge to the establishment's view and purposes. It is called *Bosnjaštvo* (Bosnianism). If the Bosnian Muslims are a nation, equal to all the other South Slav nations, is it not logical that they, too, should have a Republic in the Federation as a nation-state of their own? The Serbs have Serbia, the Croats have Croatia, and so on, although other nationalities live in Croatia (including Serbs as 15% of Croatia's population), Serbia, and the rest. The Muslims are a plurality, if not a majority, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and in any case the other two nations represented there—the Serbs and Croats—have Serbia and Croatia to look to as their protective motherlands. Let Bosnia-Herzegovina therefore become the state of the Slav Muslim nation (better called the Bosnian nation), a state in

which the rights of the Serbs and Croats to participate in political and cultural life will be as respected as are those of the Serbs in Croatia.... The explosive potential of this thesis, in terms of both Serb and Croat reactions to its widespread acceptance, hardly needs elaboration.

Caught between these two fires, those who "affirmed" the Muslim nation in Yugoslavia are attempting to control the national and nationalist sentiments that they encouraged, if they did not invent them, to solve old problems and not create new ones. Their current slogan is "differentiation and togetherness" (*diferencijacija i zajedništvo*), which may be like trying to square the circle. The "clericalist" faction is right about at least one thing: all are

trapped by "Eurocentric" definitions of nation and nation-state.

One other thing is also hard to dispute. By most current definitions of a nation—particularly "subjective" definitions that emphasize the need for a critical mass or quality of persons who regard their community as a nation (who possess "national consciousness")—the Slavic community in Yugoslavia that is called "Muslim" has indeed become a nation. The implications of that proposition for the wider question of the relationship of Islam to modern nationalism, and for those who maintain that Islam and nation are incompatible concepts, are less clear.

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NOTES

1. For this reason a discussion draft of this *Report* was commissioned for a conference on "Islam, Communalism, and Modern Nationalism," organized for the American Universities Field Staff (now the Universities Field Staff International) by Charles F. Gallagher, the AUFS Director of Studies, at the Rockefeller Foundations's Villa Serbelloni in Bellagio (Italy) in April 1981. Also participating, with a parallel paper on Yugoslavia, was Professor Sulejman Grozdanić, Director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Sarajevo (Yugoslavia), to whom the present writer is particularly indebted for comments and criticism to his conference draft.

2. A point particularly emphasized by Prof. Grozdanić at the Bellagio conference cited in the previous footnote.

3. The number of Muslims as a religious category (*muslimani*) is harder to determine since postwar Yugoslav censuses do not ask about religion. Estimates, however, have been produced by the Islamic Religious Community of Yugoslavia, the official organization of the faithful, for the four administrative districts into which it is divided. These claim about 1,850,000 Muslims-by-religion in the district comprised of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia, almost all of whom are in Bosnia-Herzegovina; about 1,350,000 in Serbia, including the Autonomous Province of

Kosovo and the Vojvodina (primarily Albanians in Kosovo; also Slav Muslims in the Serbian part of the Sanjak); about 450,000 in Macedonia (mostly Albanians and Turks); and about 150,000 in Montenegro (again primarily Albanians in the south and Muslim Slavs in the Sanjak): a grand total of about 3,850,000 Muslims, more than 17 percent of Yugoslavia's present population of 22,350,000. Their total also represents 90 percent of the 1971 census total of the four nationality categories to which virtually all religious Muslims are likely to belong: Muslims-as-nationality, Albanians, Turks, and Gypsies.

4. This does not correspond to the undifferentiated total of 808,921 "Muslims" cited for that census in more recent Yugoslav Statistical Yearbooks and English-language sources based on them, but I do not have access to the detailed original 1948 reports from which the data provided me in Sarajevo were presumably taken. Nor did my informants explain the source of their curiously precise figures for the numbers of Muslims who registered as Serbs or Croats.

5. The proposal to this end was officially tabled and justified by Nisim Albahari, a distinguished Bosnian prewar Communist, holder of the highest medals for Partisan heroism, and postwar senior Party and state

official, who happens to be a relic of the once glorious Sarajevo community of Sephardic Jews rather than a member of any of the three "interested party" nations.

6. Some had presumably been siphoned off by another new category and sign of the times that attracted 32,774 registrations in 1971: "Did not declare themselves nationally, in accordance with Article 421 of the [1963] Constitution of the SFRY."

7. I was told, when I was provided with a copy in Sarajevo in January 1981, that this is the first time such specific instructions and lists have been issued. They also contained some other items of significance for those interested in the Yugoslav national question in general. "Did not declare" or "did not designate" are still permissible answers, guaranteed by the Constitution of 1974. As for "Yugoslav," the instructions would appear to discourage this answer even more firmly than in 1971: "If a citizen wishes to record Yugoslav as an answer to this question, the census-taker is obligated to record even that answer, although the citizen does not thereby declare himself concerning adherence to a nation or nationality." Finally "ethnic groups" as an addition to "nations" and "nationalities" as census categories makes its first appearance here, but on the basis of Republican

rather than the Federal Constitution, and is therefore not admissible in the two federal units—Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro—whose constitutions written in the 1970s do not provide for it. The others are themselves to specify what they mean by “ethnic group.”

8. The focus of this polemic was a book by Dervis Sušić, a Muslim writer and ex-Partisan, which strongly criticized the behavior of the Muslim clergy and politicians before and during World War II, and which was serialized in the quasi-official Sarajevo daily *Oslobodjenje*.