Spirit of Bosnia / Duh Bosne

An International, Interdisciplinary, Bilingual, Online Journal
Međunarodni, interdisciplinarni, dvojezični, online časopis

Harmonia Abrahamica: The Spectre of Bosnia and those it Haunts

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Foreword

Bosnia is the name for a thousand year-long tradition of striving for a plural social order within a shared political framework. Its grounds have always been sought in the sacred traditions Bosnia's peoples have adhered to over the past several hundred years. Bosnia's name is also linked to the negation of this, through violence and hatred of the other, through destruction and killing. Bosnia is not this violence, however. It is resistance to violence in the name of the fraternity of the Abrahamic religions in a community of difference. This is why practically every important issue of the contemporary world order is reflected in Bosnia and that country's recent experiences have light to shed on the present condition of humanity and the world.

For a thousand years, then, there has been a Bosnia, related in so many different ways to a constantly shifting order of encirclement through a long history of social upheaval and unrest across the broad lands of the Southern Slavs. For all that time, Bosnia has been the central land of the region. Every variety and variation her neighbours have to offer has been brought together there and flowered, though never so as to overpower the country's own constitutive power.

This is evident from the persistent presence of religious differences throughout Bosnia's history. Reference to "religious" differences in Bosnia's mediaeval and Ottoman history, however, runs the risk of misapplying European concepts of science and religion developed during the 18th and 19th centuries to a pre-modern context and its cultural phenomena. It was only in the 19th century, after the globalized modern concepts of religion and science had been fully worked out, that those of Orthodoxy and Catholicism took on their contemporary aspect. To understand the constellation of the Southern Slavic lands that followed the expansion of the Ottoman Empire and the nature of the religious pluralism that has existed in them since then requires a sustained effort of historical imagination that transcends the ideologized categories of the present. The historical circumstances Bosnia has passed through do not reduce to mere military and political relations between different European blocks. The ideological representation of these relations, however, has always contained a certain justificatory kernel that serves to legitimate assault on that integral and integrated Bosnian reality, a kernel in which the spectre of Bosnia is overlaid with the

spectre of the Turk in Europe.

Bosnia's unity and integrity survived and developed in spite of the political changes brought about by Ottoman expansion into the West and subsequent withdrawal towards the East. According to Hazim Šabanović:

> The Bosnian Pasha ruled over an area greater than any Bosnian King. Within this regional arrangement, which stretched from Šabac to the sea and from Zvečan to Virovitica, the central area of Bosnia acted as a core and consequently gained in importance. This importance of Bosnia grew even greater when she later became a peripheral pashaluk of the Ottoman Empire, with borders on nearly all sides.
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> One peculiarity of the Bosnian Pashaluk was that during the period in question it was the only one whose capital and territories were entirely in southern Slav lands, its core being the heartland of one of our former states.
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> Given that the Bosnian Eyalet occupied a rather broader area than the former kingdom had, so too the idea of Bosnia broadened. [1]

First Bosnia's current Western borders and then its Eastern ones were shaped by conflict between European Christian countries and the Ottoman Empire. Since Catholic and Orthodox sensibilities in Bosnia were emotionally and programmatically informed by links with their wider communities in the Slavic South, military adventures against the Ottoman Empire were experienced and presented as initiatives on behalf of their Catholic and Orthodox fellows in Bosnia, as much as against the Turks, with whom the local Muslims were identified. This resulted in paradox, whereby the heartland of the old Slavic South became a key but peripheral territory for a pair of nationalist programmes – Serbian and Croatian. Within this complex web of sensibilities related to national programmes and interests of state, there unfolded a historical process in which many aspects of Bosnia's social, political, and cultural life, considered as an unity, changed and were reshaped.

As a result, Bosnia remains what it was at the beginning of the 20th century: the central question of the Western Balkans. Bosnia is an internationally recognised state, but one without a functional political constitution. The country has clear international borders, but no clear relations with its immediate neighbours; a plural society, but one split up by force into ethnically and religiously divided territories. And so, two spectres still circle above Bosnia – one, the spectre of redemption as an integral unit, the other of dissolution.

Throughout its history, Bosnian society has been religiously plural. This religious plurality has undergone a transformation into nationalist collectivisms, or rather into structures informed by the will of elites and apparatuses. The ideologies of Serbian and Croatian nationalism took shape around two centres, both outside Bosnia. For both these ideologies, Bosnia is an area in which their adherents face off against each

other. Consequently, allegedly organic elites, ideologies, and apparatuses were promoted and imposed upon the constituent elements of Bosnia's plural society, informing them after their own image. While the various political forms taken by these articulations of nationalist feeling have passed away, each in turn, the ideologies that produced them, whose roots lie for the most part in the nineteenth century, survive.

The architects of these ideologies took the material they needed to achieve their goals from whatever was to hand – "enlightening" and organising the people to raise them to the level of modern nationhood, which is simply the implanting of a comprehensive teleology within the collective consciousness of the people, with reference to a particular territory and a deterministically understood historical destiny. In this construction, reality itself is deconstructed so as to deny or falsify the common heritage. This structure is common to all of the elites, ideologies, and organisations of the ethnic nationalist parts of the Bosnian whole.

Nationalist projects articulated in this way necessarily result in the historical national units becoming homogenized and territorially distinct. In the Bosnian case, over the longer term, this process clearly and inevitably tends to produce the separation required by ethnic nationalist ideology, so that the parts are transformed into self-sufficient entities opposed to the whole. This process is typical of practically all the anti-Bosnian movements – whether ideological or military or bureaucratic or propagandist. The impact is visible everywhere in Bosnia, but most deeply in the consciousness of the people and their attitudes to society and politics.

The ultimate goal of any ethnic nationalist programme is an ethnic nationalist state and it entails the destruction of plural societies as incompatible with the concept of a single homogenous nation on a given territory.

The network of connections that hinders the physical differentiation required for ethnic separation must be destroyed. The ethnic enterprise requires society be divided up into collective subjects that can be institutionalized and framed within the organization of political power. Any aspects of the existing social whole which cannot be extirpated or presented as suppressible otherness to be subjected to the authority of the majority must be refashioned as incompatible and irreducible foreignness, as hindrance, and as a threat to the fetish of unification within an ethnic national state.

The project to destroy Bosnia has a long history. As we have noted, it is built around two central elements, the Serbian and Croatian nationalist structures, acting in concert. These structures have their respective elites, ideologies, organisational structures, and agents. Their main features can be deduced from their destructive activities: (1) denial of the demographic, cultural, and geopolitical integrity of Bosnia; (2) concentration of the Croat and Serb inhabitants of Bosnia on given territories that can be joined up into manageable units; (3) creating linkages between the elements of the Bosnian population grouped into national communities with Belgrade and Zagreb as their political and cultural focal points; (4) designating the Muslims as non-Serb and non-Croat populations which hinder the national integration and separation of the Serbs and Croats; (5) positing the Bosnian question as essentially a matter of wider geopolitical issues; (6) eagerly anticipating any political or other behaviour on the part of Bosniaks/Muslims that can be used to justify the destruction of Bosnia; (7) placing

gains from the most recent war against Bosnia beyond any form of discussion; (8) construing the Muslim as a general threat and promoting forms of thought and behaviour amongst Muslims that can be used to undermine social pluralism in Bosnia; and (9) both implicitly and explicitly stressing the presence and particularly the numbers of Bosniaks/Muslims as a key obstacle to realising European democratic principles within a plural society.

Bosnia's current social and political condition derives from the collapse of Yugoslavia. The collapse of Yugoslavia, however, was already encoded within the very manner of its formation. While the idea of uniting the Southern Slavs, which produced Yugoslavia in the first place, was in essence a desire to be free from non-Slavic tutelage, it took on such great promise as to make the differences between the parties to unification seem small, even negligible. Tensions surfaced, however, during the actual experience of unification, as the holders of political power worked to restructure the plural societies being unified along ethnically separatist lines and institutionalise the resulting divisions within a framework of political domination by the majority.

The problems of the Croats, Albanians, Montenegrins, Macedonians, and Bosniaks were, in fact, the problems of a Yugoslavia that was effectively a variation on the theme of greater Serbia. Yugoslavia never became a collective subject capable of critically questioning itself and so reflecting on itself as on a question to be answered. This incapacity necessarily produced the projection of internal and external enemies to justify an overweening political subject.

The dissolution of the Yugoslav construction culminated in the war against Bosnia. This happened against a background of integration in Europe, as an alternative to the retailoring of existing state borders for the sake of more just relations between nations. Both the Cvetković-Maček (1939) and Milošević-Tuđman (1991) agreements were based on attempts to draw new lines of separation between Serbs and Croats, essentially through the demographic and territorial body of Bosnia. Even the formation of the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918 had involved an implicit denial of Bosnia as a political subject, a denial that would become an important and increasingly visible aspect of both later anti-Bosnian programmes. Indeed, such tailoring of borders remains an open possibility, both ideologically and practically, for certain aspects of Serbia and Croatia's national policies. These anti-Bosnian programmes are thus paradigmatic expressions of the denial of Bosnian integrity to be found in all the forms of ethnic national ideology and the associated political movements over the past two centuries. This is why we use these three anti-Bosnian programmes to illustrate our further discussion of the assault on Bosnia during the 20th century.

These programmes all deny Bosnia's historical continuity as a complex social whole and, as a necessary consequence, that this complexity has been delimited by a single language with multiple standard forms, whose differences are put into play in the determination of collective characteristics. Contemporary Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Montenegrin are indeed one language, but the differences between them and their right to different courses of standardisation have meant they can be treated as distinct languages. In a similar way, the religions present in Bosnia may be considered as mutually opposed or as different developments of the Semitic experience of the

revelation of God, with a common core. With all their syncretistic aspects, Judaism, both Eastern and Western Christianity, and Islam each has its own separate organisational apparatus. In the concreteness of social life, they can be closed to each other or open. The ideological endeavour aims to exacerbate the differences and their interpretation and turn their focus to their various external centres, to close them against each other.

The complexity of Bosnian society, which comprehends these modern articulations of the nation and so of the division, separation, and delimitation of social elements, does not fit the conceptual schemata of the contemporary world. Bosnia appears so complicated as to lack any solution in line with European experience. Theoretical and practical approaches thus range between two extremes – one that advocates her future and the other that questions her sustainability.

The paradox of Bosnian pluralism is simply enough explained by the fact of an autochthonous Muslim presence: throughout Europe's history Muslims have been the external enemy, which cannot be incorporated either theologically or politically in any vision of European unity. Relations between peoples can be built in, but only if they are Christian (no matter whether Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox).

The analysis and critique of modern ideologies figures importantly in this text. Some comments on ideology as a key concept of modernity are therefore required. In discussing this concept today, one should be clear that explicitly ideological political discourses (ideologies in the narrow sense) did not exist in 19th century Bosnian political rhetoric or relations to social reality.

The major European political ideologies developed within a particular framework. The relationship between theology and natural philosophy from the 17th century onwards in the Christian West produced objectified concepts of religion and science. Religion was conceived of as more or less static, science as cumulative and open-ended. As an externalized and constantly growing body of knowledge contributed by individuals from all generations, science offered a conception of history as a clear and determinable development towards a goal, namely complete knowledge of humanity and the world. The drama of the individual, as a matter of salvation or self-realization in accordance with our highest potential, was thus suppressed and excluded from scientific perspective, while the drama of humanity in history, which involved an unquestioned teleology, informed the representations of education and the public sphere, and so of political and social action and its justification.

Science, as this open-ended historical current of development or progress, thus affected the development of ideologies that promised a perfect social order, in which the ideals of the nation would be rediscovered and realised. The myth of individual redemption was replaced by a myth of the collective redemption of humankind. The redemption of humankind, now fully located within history, was no longer an individual drama, because no individual contribution could have a determining impact. Individual redemption mattered little, compared to that of humanity as a whole.

The range of ideological visions and teleologically informed histories is broad and there are many hybrid forms. Ideological elites cannot be considered in isolation from

their ideologies. They attain their goals by power, whether political, cultural, or economic. This process of ideologically articulated development or progress involved changes in consciousness, as well as in relations towards the external world, society, and other world-images. Consequently, the aforementioned national ideologies of Serbhood, Croathood, and Bosniakhood, should not be taken as static categories.

A range of elements, plucked from liberalism and conservatism and from nationalism and socialism, can be discerned within these ideological constructions. These contents have an impact on political, social, and economic change, while also subject to the influence of such change. There is no justification for oversimplifying this complex interrelationship. Indeed, a new understanding of the denial and pillaging of Bosnia requires that we first isolate what is needed for a conceptual map of how both destructive and constructive projects within Bosnia's social pluralism are related.

The attitudes towards Bosnia and Bosniaks/Muslims discernible in the various political parties, movements and ruling elites of the Slavic South take different and changing forms. They range from total denial to total assimilation. Not one ideological perspective within the entire Slavic South, however, accepts the social integrity of a plural Bosnia or recognizes the place of Bosniaks/Muslims as an integral element within it, inseparable from the whole.

1. The denial of integrity and integration

Bosnia is a demographically, culturally, and historically integral whole. This integrity is disputed and denied by the adherents of the nationalist ideologies that aim at a greater Serbia and a greater Croatia as national states for Serbs and Croats, to be established by expansion onto Bosnian territory. These expanded borders are essentially incompatible with the reality of an integral Bosnia, as neither Serbs nor Croats have a culturally or demographically separable presence in Bosnia. The nationalist ideologues have ignored this contradiction in allocating themselves particular areas of Bosnian territory. It is important, therefore to stress that these historical communities are present in all areas of the country.

The Serb, Croat, and Bosniak populations in Bosnia are organically interwoven throughout the territory of the country, as is their cultural heritage. If the ideological goal of establishing a given people exclusively upon a given territory (territorialization) is to be achieved, this integration must be denied, deconstructed and destroyed. Milorad Dodik, the President of the Republika Srpska, a political entity that came into being during the war against Bosnia between 1991 and 1995, expressed this goal, in 2011, as follows: "Bosnia and Herzegovina is at this time a divided country. No chemistry can unite it, as its own history confirms. For us, Bosnia and Herzegovina can function as a successful confederation or union, whose entities transfer some of their own statehood and jurisdiction to common organs – for example military, foreign, and monetary policy." [2]

As an ideological construction, divisible Bosnia rests on a number of assumptions. First is that a situation established by war, on the basis of expulsions, killings, and destruction, must be accepted as irreversible and that the political ideology derived from it is an inevitability everybody simply has to live with. Second is that their

democratic mandate places the ruling elites in that part of Bosnia beyond ethical question. Third is the claim that Bosnian culture does not exist. This claim, as old as the nationalist movements on Bosnian territory, is part of all the anti-Bosnian programmes but is unsupported by any evidence or proof except force and confabulation.

For most people in Bosnia, Dodik's divisibility is artificial and forced. It is used to promote the deconstruction of their Bosnian identity and strip them of both past and future. It is division imposed by violence and crime. The cultural unity of the majority of Bosnian people cannot be sundered in this way, however, given that every single area of Bosnian territory contains the common and simultaneous historical presence of all the elements that constitute Bosnian plurality.

Even where the inhabitants, their graves, their mosques and other forms of cultural existence have been destroyed to make way for the homogenous ethnic-national presence of one nation, even there, the inalienable heritage of those others, no longer physically present, remains. Insofar as all the collectivities of Bosnia have an indisputable right to exist, they can hardly forget their own cultural presence throughout the entire territory of their own country for more than 1000 years, precisely because a people exists through its memory. So long as that memory lasts, so does the people, even when its physical presence has been to some degree eliminated.

The more that Bosnia is denied a presence within these political constructions, and the Republika Srpska is just one amongst many, the more pressing and more crucial will be the need to promote the dignity of everyone and everything that presence should embrace. Like every similar phenomenon, the Republika Srpska, through its very denial of its cultural and historical indivisibility with Bosnia, is harming itself, as well as others: it steadfastly opposes exactly that idea of Bosnia that does not exclude any of the individual aspects of Bosnian identity, offering them instead an ideal framework nothing can exhaust or wear down.

Milorad Dodik's claim that the country's own history confirms the irreconcilability of its divisions is simply incorrect. The truth to be found in the historical record is quite different. In 1918, Bosnia disappeared as a political entity. The greater Serbian elite of the day used every resource at its disposal to ensure its dismantling. But Bosnia survived as a plural society, for all that.

A breakdown of Second World War casualty numbers as percentages of the various peoples shows the percentage of Bosniaks/Muslims killed was second only to that of Bosnian Jews. [3] Bosniaks were decimated in order to create territories with homogenous Serb populations. This goal was given precise articulation by Stevan Moljević, one of the ideologues of the Četnik Movement during the Second World War. [4] survived this criminal endeavour too, however.

Between 1991 and 1995, Serbia and Croatia expended all available resources on the attempt to destroy Bosnia. They were following the old patterns of the Cvetković-Maček Pact and the methods applied in the Karadžić-Boban programme were

essentially the same as proposed by Moljević. This attempt did not go according to plans either.

To provide some historical cover for the division of Bosnia, they had to produce at least two fabrications. The first was the possibility of dividing Bosnia; the second the history required to support that possibility. While such attempts have been made for years, both fabrications are devoid of the least dreg of wisdom, which is to say of any sense of placing things where they need to be to accord with their own nature.

All the peoples that live on the territory of Bosnia share in the country's statehood, but none can point to a particular territory and claim to have established exclusive authority over it by acceptable means. Wherever authority has been established on an ethnic basis to the exclusion of the rights of others, it has been violent and anti-Bosnian and consequently unacceptable. No matter how the wielders of such power convince themselves and others of the objectivity of their imaginings, their authority is inadmissible. To do so would mean that criminals who expelled and killed Bosnians and destroyed Bosnian political and cultural objects, for which many have been tried and sentenced, would, after judgement and even death, have won. This is not, unfortunately, an unknown outcome in earlier cases of the destruction of social pluralism in the Balkans.

Killers and destroyers present themselves as saviours and builders and those they killed and drove away as killers and destroyers. The idea that some form of final victory over the truth is possible on the basis of such post factum reconstruction of the historical landscape is an integral part of modern ideologies, but offers no guarantee for the future of humankind. This inversion, whereby the lie becomes truth and good evil, is simply unacceptable, both universally and in each particular case. To agree to such an inversion is no different from allowing Hitler and his criminal associates victory long after their deaths.

Tolerating something is not the same as accepting it. Milorad Dodik's claim that the Bosnian entities can transfer some part of their statehood elsewhere is baseless. If the entities do carry out functions of state, it is because they have received them from elsewhere. The only place they could receive such functions from is the Bosnian state. If it has not, then they have assumed those aspects of statehood through illegal manoeuvrings or the imaginary constructions of their leaders. To claim that this is an achievement of the people is to attribute crime to the people as an achievement. Such an attribution or an attempt to impose one on the popular consciousness offers no guarantee for that people's future. An unethical politics necessarily has a destructive impact on the individuals and the peoples it is imposed upon.

Each time plans to divide Bosnia and reallocate its parts to an imagined national state fall through, the situation produced by war is then represented as transitional. Names are given that favour the next phase in the destructive endeavour. Plans for a confederation or union fit well into such endeavours to destroy Bosnia. Since no absolutely homogenous ethnic territories are possible within Bosnia, they must be assumed and imposed through policies that include apartheid and violence and anyone who stands in the way is painted a trouble-making source of tensions and conflict. Most importantly, any unity of Bosnian culture must be denied.

The Serbian nationalist agenda regularly presents Kosovo's cultural heritage as central to everything Serbian, so that it can hardly be allowed to be remain or be kept in a non-Serb national polity. On the other hand, Bosnian cultural heritage, particularly in its Muslim forms, is simply denied, neglected, and destroyed, particularly as it cannot be concentrated within an isolated and confined territory within the Bosnian state. The cultural heritage of all the parties to Bosnian society may be found throughout Bosnia, so that it cannot be separated or fenced off. Whenever an ethnic community is territorialized, its territory necessarily contains cultural heritage of all the others, even if only as archaeology.

This heritage is indelibly incorporated within the collective memory of the peoples it belongs to. Even after being destroyed, as so much of it has been, thanks to the criminal exploits of the anti-Bosnian militaries, this heritage still belongs to Bosnia and to her peoples. Popular or folk memory cannot be maintained without it. Cultural heritage does not cease to exist in the memories of those who have survived just because it has been physically destroyed. Memory is often more important and more powerful for the survival of the people than actual buildings. Ethnic territories cannot be homogenized so long as the memory continues to exist of the destroyed property of the others. It is when they lose their collective memory that peoples cease to exist.

In Kosovo, the Serbian nationalists denied and destroyed the presence of any others. For them, the land was exclusively Serbian in all respects. Review the results of this policy, however, and it becomes clear how anti-Serbian it has been in practice. The denial of all others and their persecution brought about the retaliation whereby Kosovo became what it is today. Which makes our question all the more pressing: Isn't the elite whose spokesman is Mr. Dodik working against its own future?

2. Territorializing the Croat, Serb, and Bosniak populations of Bosnia

One could cite any amount of evidence of the direct or indirect denial of Bosnia's current borders, behind which stands either the Republic of Serbia or the Republic of Croatia in a number of different ways. Both states are endeavouring, through their own central authorities, to bring about integration in the politics, culture, and economies of the Bosnian, "Serbian", and "Croatian" elements and to strengthen the authority of the Belgrade and Zagreb authorities over events in those parts of Universal Serbdom and Universal Croatdom.

Funds have been allocated from the government budgets of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia to assist the Serb and Croat projects. Serbs and Croats from Bosnia have privileged status in the Republics of Serbia and Croatia, as well as in Bosnia itself, given the support they receive on ethnic criteria from the budgets of those neighbouring countries. In this way, these two states both directly and indirectly support the segregation of Bosniaks/Muslims and discrimination against them (denial of their rights) within a state that belongs to them just as much as to their Serb or Croat neighbours, as citizens in this plural society.

Under the approaches taken by both the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia towards Bosnia, its state borders both are and are not recognised. They are recognised when it suits the promotion of the long-term policy of not recognising

them. They are not recognised when that serves to undermine the sovereignty of the Bosnian state. Interfering in the internal affairs of the Bosnian state is simply part of the political (lack of) culture that prevails in those neighbouring states. Whenever non-interference is stressed, it merely serves as a confirmation of the constant interference in Bosnia's internal affairs.

As he repeats the mantra about not interfering in the internal affairs of the Bosnian state and of recognising its sovereignty and of rejecting any division, Boris Tadić, the President of the Republic of Serbia, always adds that he recognises any agreement reached by the three peoples and two entities, in accordance with the arrangements established under the Dayton agreement. He justifies his political position on the grounds that the Republic of Serbia is a signatory and guarantor of the Dayton agreement. These grounds differ not a jot from those of Slobodan Milošević, his predecessor as President, or his cohorts in implementing the Milošević-Tuđman agreement made in 1991 at Karađorđevo.

These principles of government policy in both the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia are grounded in the conditions produced by the war against Bosnia. The main participants in that war were in Belgrade and in Zagreb. When the war came to an end that was where the leading criminals involved in the project of destroying Bosnia found refuge and protection. President Tadić talks of the Serbian Republic's relationship with Bosnia as if those facts simply did not exist or were subject to an inviolable taboo. The ongoing territorialisation of ethnic communities in Bosnia is against the interests of all Bosnia's people. It makes impossible equality of rights for Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks and everyone else, in accordance with the principles on which the main proponents of European Union built their vision of a European future.

In contrast to President Tadić's political rhetoric, Latinka Perović has, in an assessment of realities in the Republic of Serbia, under current government policy, described that policy in terms of a consistent paradox – as a state that doesn't know where its borders are, saying: "At the beginning of the 21st century, Serbia still doesn't know where its borders are, preferring to view the reality of new states existing in the Balkans as an improvisation of history; she pursues a state strategy that goes back to the Garašanin programme, the restoration of the mediaeval state. A good example is how she approaches population censuses in the countries of the region, particularly in Montenegro. A matter of routine is elevated to an unacceptable level! A message is sent from here to Serbs: Declare yourselves, it's important. But wait, who is it important for?! Obviously, the census is viewed as an asset in future events and future relations." [5]

In a notorious set of minutes from a meeting between President Franjo Tudjman and Croatian military commanders on the 5th of August, 1995, on Brijuni, Tudjman said: "So, the plan is to deal with the South and North, you see. In that way, we will have Croatia and tourism next year, and at the same time we will free up forces to tailor the Croatian border in Bosnia, to mark it out. Consequently, the decisions we make now and their implementation are of enormous historical importance." [6]

According to Dobrica Ćosić, the establishment of the Republika Srpska as an ethnic

Serb territory within Bosnia is a major victory of Serbdom, for which Radovan Karadžić deserves most credit. In July 2008, Ćosić wrote: “Karadžić’s contemporaries in Serbia, drugged by Hague propaganda and NATO ideology, have been slow to realise, still do not realise, that thanks to the fighters and officers of the Army of the Republika Srpska, the people and the leadership of the Serb liberation movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the first Serb state across the Drina River has been created. Amidst a series of severe national defeats, this was a great victory for the Serb people in the final decade of the twentieth century.” [7]

Dobrica Ćosić is intoxicated by this war gain, in spite of his fellow advocates and executants having brought about the greatest suffering and destruction in all of Bosnia’s history, and never mind that practically all his champions stand accused and/or sentenced for war crimes of the worst sort. Ćosić does not understand that precisely his delight in the Republika Srpska is a form of admission and encouragement of war crimes. Is there anything ethical in his enthusiasm? With shameless irresponsibility, he wrote:

> More than a few Serbs are blinded, mentally disabled, and cannot see themselves through the eyes of historical reason in “time and space”, do not understand that the European “Commissars” and “experts” are ideologically brainwashing them, reducing their identity, dictating their historical consciousness, national duties and social goals, and this to a people with eight centuries of its own culture… In this national regression, both imposed and embraced, we have yet to become fully conscious that after the Ustasha genocide and expulsion from Croatia and the ethnic cleansing of Bosnia, after the loss of Kosovo, the secession of Montenegro, which we believed was inhabited largely by Serbian people, after the most unjust and most unequal war in European history with NATO and America in 1999, which, one must face it, we lost – in other words, after a series of national defeats which are not simply a result of our own misunderstandings and political mistakes, we nonetheless have one great historical victory: through massive sacrifice the Republika Srpska has been established; I repeat: the first Serb state across the Drina River which must become a democratic, legal, civilised state. And its chief creator is Radovan Karadžić. [8]

This act of creation, which according to Dobrica Ćosić rehabilitates the ideal of eight centuries of Serb history, separates off a part of Bosnian territory as material for the realisation of a fantasy regarding Serb territory. What remains to be completed, and therefore a threat, is the task of dividing up the rest of Bosnian territory, designated as the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. While the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia stress their recognition of the territorial integrity of the state that lies between them, the general project of division continues, long after the formal ending of their war against Bosnia, waged from 1991 to 1995. There is a persistent demand to establish the Croat people on a given territory, and the attempt is being made with the full political cooperation of the leadership on both sides – from both the

Republika Srpska and from the Croat political community in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Croat Democratic Union of Bosnia-Herzegovina (HDZ BIH) identifies, even equates itself with that political community. This is a political party whose organisation was established by and, from its inception, subordinated to the party of the same name in the Republic of Croatia. This active identification excludes any idea of independent political participation on the Bosnian political stage as illegitimate from the point of view of the Croat national interest. One cannot consider the party's policies in isolation from its wartime record, when it provided the infrastructural support for the destruction of everything Bosnian, in line with the aforementioned Milošević-Tudjman project.

Both states, the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia, are committed under their highest-level instruments of government to looking out for Serbs and Croats in Bosnia. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, Croats in Bosnia are considered a diaspora, for which the state of Croatia has a permanent duty of care. The Republic of Serbia plans and realises its governmental presence in Bosnia in a number of different ways. One example is the "Law on the diaspora and on Serbs in the region", approved in draft form by the government of the Republic of Serbia. [9]

The territorial division of Bosnia planned under the joint political programme of Messrs Dodik and Ćović ejects Bosniaks/Muslims from an integral Bosnia, forcing them towards territorialisation, with a view to creating the conditions required for agreement over confederation or union. This casts some light on the attempt to nationalise Bosnian heritage. The Christian aspects, according to this conception, may be divided into eastern and western, Orthodox and Christian. Once such a division has taken place, they may then be allocated to the appropriate area of homogenous ownership.

The Bosniaks or Muslims are allowed no such possibility, as they neither have nor could possibly have any continuity in a cultural or historical sense under any of the ideological constructions of united Serb and Croat peoples. In a discussion of how the Bosniaks/Muslims of the central southern Slavic area became separate from the unquestionable units of Serbdom and Croatdom and so of the need to re-subordinate them through a process of secession and apostasy from and betrayal of everything they actually belong to, Milorad Ekmečić blames the Yugoslav communists for the very fact that these Muslims even exist and so for their anomality. He states: "The mass form of nationalism would triumph amongst the Muslim population in Bosnia, the Rascian region, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Macedonia only after 1960. This was when Yugoslav communism opened the floodgates to the creation of a Muslim people/nation, to the separation of Muslims from the ethnic frameworks within which they had been coming to be from the fifteenth century." [10]

Within this ideological scheme, as formulated by Milorad Ekmečić, we see delineated the key claim regarding Bosniaks/Muslims within the nationalist historiographies. Their historical existence is not and cannot be unbroken in either diachronic or synchronic terms, according to this viewpoint. The very form of their existence is discontinuity, interruption, parting, seen as taking place within the ideologically

postulated realities of Serbdom and Croatdom. Moreover, in this view, Muslims, bedecked with the full palette of names given them in European tradition – Arabs, Ishmaelites, Agarians, Saracens, Turks, Ottomans, etc – are an exception to the principle of minority toleration in a Christian world.

Where Muslims have been fully eradicated, it is presented in the historiography as the legitimate liberation of European and Christian lands from the non-European and infidel presence of a foreign and unacceptable body. Their presence is regularly reduced to a fantasy representation of the body of the occupier, enemy, and infidel. This body is represented as warlike and hostile, an absolute threat in the struggle for life. Nothing about it deserves to survive. Accordingly, surviving Bosniaks/Muslims were and remain expected to accept that their history began with the Ottoman occupation and that they are an after-effect of "Oriental-Islamic", "Ottoman", or "Turkish" culture.

In such constructions Bosniaks/Muslims are separate within their own country, with their own language and their own state. By playing along, they are playing into the hands of anti-Muslim deconstructions of Bosnian integrity. They contribute to such deconstruction whenever they accept that their involvement in a diachronically and synchronically plural Bosnia can be isolated and objectified. Whenever anyone steps beyond the limits determined by the concepts of Ottoman hostility and destruction of Christian history, that individual is accused of mystification and of attempting to appropriate something to which Bosniaks as Muslims have no right.

This plan to territorialize Bosniaks/Muslims entails accepting history as construed by the destroyers of Bosnia, so that their own country in no way belongs to them and they are at best to be tolerated as an historical anomaly. There is no room for equality, and they are not to be extended the right to the democratic principle of "one man – one vote", as each and every denier of Bosnian pluralism will repeat ad nauseam.

3. Homogenisation around two gravitational poles

In every discussion of the political tensions within the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, later renamed Yugoslavia, from the moment of its creation in 1918, it has always been understood that the Bosnian question would have to be solved before a reformed Yugoslavia could be created as a federative Republic in place of the Karađorđević monarchy. Its founders during the Second World War understood that such a state would need sufficient cohesive force not to fall apart like its historical predecessor.

In this federative construction, Bosnia was recognised within its historical boundaries/borders as an equal Republic of the Yugoslav federation. The country's neighbours, Serbia and Croatia, were also designated as republics with the same level of statehood as Bosnia. In all her subsequent constitutions, Bosnia-Herzegovina has been defined as a state of equal peoples – Serbs, Croats and Muslims – and of her citizens, in accordance with the principles proclaimed at the wartime sessions of the National Antifascist Council for the People's Liberation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The phrase "within her historical borders" is used to designate borders containing most of the territories that had comprised the Bosnian state from its first appearance on the

historical scene.

While there have been migrations both in and out, most of the current population of Bosnia has direct genetic descent from an ancient demographic core, going back the best part of a millennium. This has taken religiously plural form and, on that basis, a tripartite ethno-religious structure has been given to that ancient population. Modern plans to tear Bosnia apart assume these peoples can be territorialized, assumptions which go hand-in-hand with the proposals offered for confederation, union, or consociation.

The first two proposals, confederation and union, suppose some form of territorialisation of the ethnic communities that make up Bosnian society. Encouragement and coordination come both directly and indirectly from Belgrade and Zagreb, the ethno-nationalist centres of all Serbs and all Croats respectively. From a maximising perspective, Bosnia is imagined as either entirely Serb or entirely Croat. For an apparently more realistic perspective, the country is partly Serb and partly Croat, but so as to correspond to physical parts of Bosnian territory, parts no one has ever precisely defined. Distinguishing a supposedly Croat from a supposedly Serb part would entail homogenisation of the territories to render them annexable to the projected national states of all Serbs and all Croats.

In Stevan Moljević's programme, this would be carried out as follows: the goal – "to create and organise a homogenous Serbia to encompass the entire ethnic territory on which Serbs live"; the means – "the resettlement and exchange of populations, particularly Croats from Serb and Serbs from Croat areas, this is the only way to bring about clear borders and to create better relations across them". [11] This was the procedure applied by Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tudjman to the letter in their articulation and conduct of the war against Bosnia (1991-1995), to which they committed all available resources. Execution in the field was entrusted to Radovan Karadžić and Mate Boban, as well as to countless others in the organisations developed for this criminal enterprise.

Territorialisation was not, however, feasible. There are too few areas on Bosnian territory which are not marked by the living demographic or centuries-long historical and cultural presence of each and all of the participants in Bosnian social plurality. Despite countless attempts to nationalize the Bosnian Muslims, their connection to the historical and cultural tradition of Bosnia taken as a whole, in all its complex interrelationships with its immediate neighbours, remains strikingly resilient.

It is only since one Bosnian ethnic community has staked an exclusive claim to one part of Bosnia's territory that insoluble difficulties have arisen regarding that community's rights in areas outside that territory and the rights of other communities on it. In fact, any territorialisation of any of the three ethno-religious collectivities, however imagined or implemented, on any part of Bosnian territory will necessarily reintroduce the image of the whole within it, because there is no territory in Bosnia on which the elements of the country's collective whole do not all coexist.

To render this ideological reimaging of the parts concrete, this proposed and actually emergent, but essentially imaginary division must be institutionalized. The ethnic

elites' apparent incapacity for democratic consensus provokes a withdrawal into an imaginary ghetto where majority rule seems to offer a refuge from the chaos of political conflict within democratic institutions. Ensuring that such fantasies become an imaginary overlay over political realities necessarily takes the form of the incapacity of state structures to function, which requires a fantasy of the enemy, an enemy who is always there, seen or invisible, at work undermining the stability and happiness of the nation.

Union is another name for extreme separation. Under this conception, each ethnic community can be given its own territory, Serb, Croat, or Bosniak. Thus, a purely ethnic state is established on each ethnicised territory, with the capacity to unite or separate within supra-state forms of integration. There is no room in such a picture for an integral Bosnia: what is Bosnian is composite and so may be decomposed, as nothing Bosnian has any value that supersedes the sovereignty of the ethnic community on its own territory.

As no territorial division in line with this supposed right of the ethnic community is actually possible, however, in order to deal with the problem of smaller groups that remain outside the ethnicized territory and to preserve ethnicized cultural goods and hasten the destruction of Bosnian integrality, the next step has been to propose the idea of consociation – three ethnic communities formed into separate political communities, which then receive institutionalisation. According to the proponents of the consociation solution, it is only on the basis of such a division, which can be non-territorial, that the shared structure required for union can be established.

The current states of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia came into being on the basis of different and complex historical traditions. Their current forms were given to them during the Second World War, on the basis of a decision of the Antifascist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia. Those parts of the Serb and Croat populations that live in Bosnia are not to be separated from the Serb and Croat peoples more generally. But plans for all Serbs in one and all Croats in another state cannot be realised without destroying the existing historical fabric across a wider area, particularly within Bosnia.

Such a criminal intent presupposes the denial and destruction of all and any Bosnian social cohesion. Serbs and Croats in Bosnia must, under this programme, be directly related to the proper centres of their wider ethnic groups, as well as encouraged to engage in the dismantling of Bosnian society. This dismantling necessarily leads to the isolation of Bosnianhood, Bosniakhood, and Muslimhood, as anti-Serb or anti-Croat elements rightfully contemned, denied, damaged, and destroyed as obstacles on the path towards the goal of national unification.

These plans and proposals for the unification of all Serbs into one and all Croats into another neighbouring state, in accordance with long-established programmes, can be realised only with or through the disappearance of Bosnia as a state. Given the failure of the three historical attempts during the 20th century to divide Bosnia by agreement between Serb and Croat national elites – better known as the creation of the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918, the Cvetković-Maček pact in 1939, and the Milošević-Tudjman plan in 1991 – Bosniaks or Muslims are represented as the main

obstacle. Every time they advocate a plural society, the preservation of the historical achievement of a common life, and the search for solutions not based on inequality, it is presented as a dangerous illusion, hiding anti-Serb and anti-Croat intentions.

The Serb and Croat questions in Bosnia are articulated as inseparable from a mono-centric conception of both these nations. Thus, Bosnia finds itself between two political centres, a Serb one in Belgrade and a Croatian one in Zagreb. The unitary nature of the cultures of all Serbs and all Croats excludes any possibility of an integral Bosnia, which does not support national differentiation. The same is true for religious affiliation. The Serbian Orthodox Church is unitary, with its centre in Belgrade. The Catholic Church in Bosnia is organised within the borders of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian state, but is unthinkable outside of the context of Croatian national unity.

Thus, the national and religious cultures of the Serbs and Croats are congruent with their ecclesiastical structures. Left outside these unities, Bosniak Muslims implicitly return the compliment by imitating both these forms of church-hood. In nearly all its organisational aspects, the current condition of the "Islamic community" reflects the condition in the churches, aspiring to territorial jurisdiction in areas uncovered by the existing church apparatuses. And this condition is precisely the goal of the devotees of Bosnian division and of those who deny the feasibility of a common state in any meaningful sense of the word.

The doctrinal unsustainability of such organizational aspirations on the part of Bosniak/Muslim clerics is manifest in the excess of political rhetoric from religious leaders and the deficit in concern for ethical issues of interest to believers amongst the Bosniak nation who live within a plural society. In this way the bipolar policy is legitimated. The unitary nature of both the Serb and Croat nations, with their focal points outside of Bosnia, is reinforced by the Bosniak/Muslim aspiration for a Bosnian centre from which to view the neighbouring states as centres of influence and religious authority.

4. Muslims as others

Ivo Josipović, the President of the Republic of Croatia, said, in his address to Pope Benedict XVI: "I have found willing partners in forgiveness and reconciliation in the other religions with whom we have contact in Croatia and in neighbouring countries, particularly Orthodoxy and Islam." [12] This claim is very unclear. It does not make specific the type of contact in question. President Josipović elaborates his projection in the same speech as follows: "the unification of Europe is in essence a Christian project." [13]

To be in contact with them, one must first reify Orthodoxy and Islam. Once given imaginary form, such contact can be assigned all sorts of contents – positive and negative, friendly or hostile, as fantasy has no stable form. One loses sight of concrete individuals. They become simply Orthodoxy and/or Islam. One loses sight of concrete individuals even when the religious communities are hypostatised through their representatives, personified in the clergy or one or other of their apparatuses. In this

way, one loses sight of one's responsibility towards living individuals, and so towards their pain and suffering, or any guilt for them. One assumes the power to recognise or deny their rights and even their names.

The Muslim population that once lived on the area that is now the Republic of Croatia was destroyed, along with everything that belonged to it, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. One can still find, even today, churches that are in fact converted mosques or built on their ruins. It is enough to mention the churches in Osijek, Đakovo, Drniš, Klis, and Imotski. [14] destruction of every Muslim trace on those territories cannot count as contact. In fact, one talks of Muslims in Croatia today in ways that imitate the constitution of the Other as a problem for Europe and of Europe as a problem for the Other.

The Muslims of Dalmatia, Slavonia, and Lika, when there still were some, didn't come from somewhere else – any more than the Catholics did. It was the same old population that had, at different times in its history, under different political regimes, adapted and changed its witness of humanity, the world and God. The Muslims disappeared, in a way impossible to justify, except by descending to the lowest level of humanity. They disappeared as a result of programmes of murder, persecution and forced conversion. [15] Similiarly, the Muslims in contemporary Bosnia, and in other parts of the Balkans, did not come from somewhere else, any more than their Christian neighbours.

If the European Union project is Christian, as so many, including Ivo Josipović, claim, it raises a number of difficult questions: what about the Jews and Muslims without whom no history, positive or negative, of what we today call Europe is even imaginable? Do they become simply tolerated foreigners/outsiders in a European Union so conceived? May not someone, at some future time, expand this logic: insofar as Christianity is in all its major aspects inseparable from Christ and the land of his birth and upbringing and the inheritance of his birth ancestors, is it not possible that at some future time Christians too may be allocated the status of foreigners in Europe?

Not so long ago the territory of the contemporary Republic of Croatia was called Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia. Is it therefore reasonable to apply the same logic to that fact as Mile Lasić does in saying of Bosnia and Bosniaks/Muslims that: "In this context it might be good to explain how proud Bosniak-Herzegovinians came to be persuaded that they are Bosnians from Herzegovina, and not Herzegovinians from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Someone, it would seem, convinced Herzegovinian Bosniaks en masse that the time had come for them to renounce their closer designation, based on the name of their land and their own identity, for the sake of higher interests." [16]

Mile Lasić is not questioning the construction of the Serb and Croat nations on Bosnian territory out of pre-modern Western and Eastern Christianity. In fact he directly assigns the categories of Serb and Croat a primordial value which per se transcends the merely Bosnian both horizontally and vertically. His concern, based on his construction of a hypothetical individual who persuaded Bosniaks from Herzegovina to be something that transcends the imagination of Mile Lasić, might not

even exist had they simply called themselves Muslims.

This paradox of Herzegovina, a territory whose name derives from the title of a great Bosnian Duke, Stjepan Vukčić Kosača, a derivation that has become taboo, is fully present in Mile Lasić's vision of Herceg-Bosna. Lasić says: "Herceg Bosna was primarily an answer, at a given moment, to greater Serbian aggression, and that should simply be admitted." [17] There was, however, nothing in Herceg Bosna that did not both primarily and secondarily entail the complete destruction of everything Muslim on those territories, territories in which a fascist regime was established under that name. Accordingly, the primary nature of Herceg Bosna of which he speaks can be legitimated only on the premise that Muslims represent a surplus and non-essential presence within a Christian body.

Only when these inhabitants of Bosnia in her historical totality, from all of the territories politically and culturally associated with an integral Bosnianism, define themselves simply as Muslims, can they be acknowledged, albeit even then only as unconscious Serbs and/or Croats, since as such they can lay no claim to any language except one to which they have to assimilate, or to any country except one divided between Serbs and Croats as their ethnic territory. The encirclement of the Bosniak Muslims would be brought to an absurdity without escape, soluble only by the grace of those about them. As Bishop Grigorij has put it: "Today, the Bosnian Muslims remain in some sense surrounded, as they were during the war. On the one hand, by the Croats, turned towards Croatia, and on the other by the Serbs who love Serbia. Naturally, the Bosnian Muslims feel cramped and we must work to relieve that cramp. It is always thus: as the saying goes, one must wear the other's shoes, if one hopes to understand him." [18]

This encirclement is political, cultural, and economic, but it does not arise solely from the popular will of Serbs and Croats in a state that belongs to them just as much as to Bosniaks/Muslims. Both the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia are playing their parts, in accordance with their constitutional mandates, as the protectors and facilitators of those parts of the Serb and Croat peoples that live in a state where they are constitutionally equal to Bosniaks/Muslims and Others. One consequence of this protection and concern is necessarily the inequality of Bosniaks/Muslims and their existential vulnerability. To prevent this obvious fact from being seen requires a constant inversion of viewpoints – it is Bosniaks or Muslims who are a threat to their neighbours, so that any and all negative news regarding them or anyone possibly connected with them is grist to the mill of anti-Bosnian ideology.

5. The broader geopolitical framework

Serbia's national policy clearly supports annexation of those parts of Bosnia that received the name of the Republika Srpska during the war against that country and later, under the Dayton agreement, became a formal element of the constitutional order. Through this support, the Republic of Serbia strengthened its own role as the core country around which the projected state for all Serbs is to be built. The President of the Republic of Serbia, Boris Tadić, stated, on 3 June, 2011, in an interview for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*: "So long as we are pragmatic, we

can solve the problems. I am not saying that a greater Albania is a wonderful solution. I do not believe that a greater Serbia is a good solution. Just as I am against the division of Bosnia. I'm against the policy of creating larger states. But, please, allow us to try and find feasible solutions to these problems." [19]

A great or greater Serbia than the current Republic of Serbia can come into being only by expanding onto the territory of neighbouring states – Bulgaria, Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia or Croatia. President Tadić also makes mention of a great or greater Albania, which is possible only at the expense of its neighbouring states – Greece, Macedonia, Kosovo or Montenegro. The Republic of Serbia does not recognise the state of the Republic of Kosovo, which it considers to be on its own national territory. President Tadić's demand to be "left to find a feasible solution for the problem", made while also stressing the issues of a greater Albania and a greater Serbia, has implications in the face of which it is not well to remain equianimous.

In response to the President's demand, one might do well to ask him and his audience: Who do you expect to discuss a greater Albania and a greater Serbia with and how exactly? And then: Why are those two issues connected? In 1991, at Karađorđevo, Presidents Milošević and Tudjman discussed a greater Serbia and a greater Croatia, reaching an agreement to realise their historical dreams by the worst possible means – through killings and expulsion, terror and destruction. This continues to be reflected in obstacles to proper Bosnian statehood, the many corpses waiting to be exhumed, and the agreements and cooperation between Dragan Čović and Milorad Dodik on reconstructing the Bosnian state after the heritage of Milošević and Karadžić, on the one hand, and Tudjman and Boban, on the other.

The president of the Republika Srpska's National Assembly, Igor Radojčić, has said: "In many ways BiH looks more like the Near East than Europe." [20] Of the political crisis which, in his view, has been continuous since 1991, he said: "Anyone who is counting on a strategic shift to bring about change in Bosnia-Herzegovina is mistaken. Without strong international intervention, nothing will change. Internal political players cannot, because of their strongly opposed political viewpoints, reach agreement. And the international community today rigidly defends the Dayton agreement, because it sees no alternative." [21]

In building his claim about the impossibility of Bosnia as a normal plural society, Radojčić offers us a fabrication regarding the similarity between current circumstances in Bosnian and those in the Near East. Little about his claim rings clear, insofar as circumstances in the Near East differ so widely in themselves – Lebanon and Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, Gaza, the West Bank, Jerusalem and Israel – as to allow us to project any picture we require on the basis of his claim. Precisely how and in what way is Bosnia supposed to resemble one or all of these phenomena? Does he even know how the geopolitical term for that area, the Near East, came to be applied, and the extent to which it has proven to be misapplied?

It might be supposed that Radojčić is concerned to tell his audience that the problem of Bosnia is similar to some distant conflict, which he designates vaguely as in the Near East, because Muslims live there too. In this he is no different from all the other

adherents of the greater Serbian ideology for the past 200 years. Muslims lie at the very heart of the issue of the Serbian national state. Wherever this state is to be established, once sufficient power is attained, Muslims must disappear and be represented in the process as themselves at fault, as themselves responsible for the project of which they are victims.

As a plural society, Bosnia represents the ideal of European unification in its essential aspects. There is nothing that more resembles the Europe of our dreams, the community of peoples that goes under that name, than Bosnia's own history: people of different backgrounds with a right to them in principle; a political order in which each individual is equal before the law and equally responsible for the functioning of that order; towns in which public space belongs equally to all, just as the sky lines of those towns are marked by monasteries and churches and synagogues and mosques.

Clearly, such a claim will sit ill with the majority of believers in the standard historiographical constructions of the horror of Turkish slavery. Under that horror, however, there nonetheless remained a right in principle to survival, as indisputably testified to by those cities in which the "national liberators" did not have the final word. Nowhere that they did, literally nowhere, did any Muslims or any Muslim cultural heritage survive. This principle of survival, as the sine qua non of all humanity, is an inherent part of the Bosnian ideal as long ago established and as it remains inexhaustible. None of its historical realisations, and so none of their shortcomings, can detract from its perennial value: the right to difference and the inviolable dignity of each individual carry equal weight and value at all times and in all places.

6. Bosniak guilt

The war against Bosnia produced a situation which requires political legitimisation, so that any change in it that leads towards reconstruction or normalisation of Bosnian politics must be presented as some form of Bosniak conspiracy that undermines the survival of the state. Thus, Milorad Dodik says: "BiH can survive only insofar as it respects the rights gained by the RS under the Dayton agreement. Bosniaks too should cling to the Dayton agreement, in order to preserve BiH. How they are going about things now is the best way to ensure that the country disappears." [22] The condition for the survival of the Bosnian state is thus, according to Milorad Dodik, to subordinate it to the Republika Srpska as the decisive category in all matters: "We have had no need for a long time now to comfort a tearful Sarajevo with nice presents. We ask of Sarajevo only that they respect our constitutional rights to the same degree as we respect Bosnia and Herzegovina." [23]

Evidently, a primordial validity has been assigned to the situation produced by war, so that everything else in Bosnian reality must be re-construed as subordinate to the hierarchy of this construction. As a constituent element of all national Balkan ideologies, anti-Islamism is included in this ideological vision, according to which separating off Bosniaks/Muslims as dangerous others involves a danger that can be overcome only by institutionalizing division.

This division is not just a synchronic policy leading towards confederation or union, one variant of which is consociation – it is also a diachronic policy. Muslims as a whole are to be separated off in every respect. In practically all European ethno-nationalist and ethno-religious ideologies and their various surrogates, Muslims are presented as a foreign body imposed by violence on a primordially "Christian project of Europe".

This presentation of Muslims as something that comes from outside European cultural and historical processes is practically without exception. The establishment of the Ottoman Empire on the territory of South Eastern Europe is presented in national histories as just such an imposition. This is in direct contrast to the obvious and irreproachable logic of Bosnian Muslim culture as a fully integrated current within a greater whole, as part of which it came into being and has developed. The ideologies of discontinuity were established upon fantasies of the incarnation of Christian presence, on the one hand, and of "Islam" as imposition, on the other, but neither is actually to be found within any cultural or historical unity. Nor is that all. The imposition of Islam is ideologically presented as impure and dangerous, as a double threat – both internal and external.

Petar Petrović Njegoš inherited and assimilated the anti-Muslim contents of the European relationship to the other and the different. In his Mountain Wreath, he wrote:

> Strike for the cross, for heroic pride,
> Shining weapons held aloft,
> Hearts loudly beating in our breasts,
> Those blasphemers against Christ's names,
> Baptise them in water or in blood!
> Drive the leper from the fold!
> Let a lay be chanted of these horrors,
>
> An altar raised upon the bloody stone! [24]

This pattern, however archaic, remains present in the political ideologies advocated by the ethnic and religious nationalists of the current age. A review of the various narratives of the ideologists of the war against Bosnia, which produced in turn the Dayton agreement, makes reasonably clear that they are singing from the same hymn book as Njegoš. Variations of this narrative provide the bases for the performances of Slobodan Milošević, Radovan Karadžić, and most of the others who played a role in the most recent persecution and killing of Bosniaks/Muslims.

"Leprosy" is a form of disease in which a destructive impurity imposes itself upon a healthy body. "The fold" is a fenced area in which the owner gathers and protects his flock. Thieves or wolves may fall upon the flock from outside. Leprosy, however, passes unseen and ravages the flock from within. To "drive" means to purge the healthy flock of an attacker brought from outside as something impure, a sickness. This can be done through the complete excision of whatever has or might become leprous. There is a double judgement contained in this metaphor regarding Muslims. Firstly, they are the external enemy, those who come into Christian space as

conquerors and overthrowers. Secondly, they actually penetrate within the fabric of the Christian community, they are an internal impurity or sickness.

This model of leprosy and the sheepfold appears in a number of different forms in contemporary interpretations of Bosnian circumstances. No advocacy of Bosnia's integrity as a political unity that entails rights to individual and collective difference is acceptable, since, under conditions of ethnic and religious exclusivity, it is considered "Muslim". The only acceptable political behaviour on the part of Bosniaks/Muslims is simple response in kind to Serb and Croat political programmes. And, responding in kind, Bosniak Muslims stress their own right to ethnic or religious territories in which they are preeminent. With this demand, they confirm the accusations of Serb and Croat nationalists, namely that a plural society is impossible in Bosnia, because Bosnia is a Muslim project in which applying the "one man, one vote" principle will lead to the oppression of all non-Muslims. There is no political response available to Bosniak Muslims which will satisfy the Serbo-Croat nationalists. They are guilty when they advocate a unitary Bosnian society, in which all members have equal individual and collective rights, and under which the rights of each individual and each collective are guaranteed throughout Bosnian territory. They are equally guilty when they accept whatever their accusers themselves demand in a united Bosnia. In both cases, their guilt is essentially an attempt to overthrow Bosnian unity in favour of new political units linked with external foci.

In this way, all Bosnian politics ends in schizophrenic tatters: to secure the right to survival under Muslim rule, better not be Muslim; even when Bosniak action is clearly non- and/or anti-Muslim, then it becomes dangerous conspiracy in the eyes of the rest. There is no convincing response to this paradox. None is to be found except in the necessity to articulate a Bosniak/Muslim political philosophy in which the ethical reasons for Bosnian unity can be more convincingly presented, in a way that is fully harmonious with what is best in the worldwide.

7. Preserving the gains of war

Milorad Dodik, the President of the Republika Srpska, has said: "The problem here isn't Serbs, Croats, or Bosniaks. The problem here is reality. It is not possible here to build a society that can function on the principle of 'one man – one vote'. That would necessarily result in an automatic and arrogant majority of the most numerous people, the Bosniaks. BiH can only be preserved by compromise reached by the representatives of the three peoples at the level of the state, on condition that those representatives are themselves from the strongest parties of each of the three peoples." [25]

That this is an example of endemic nationalism whose principle is anti-Islamism is clear from even the most rudimentary analysis of the political circumstances in which the statement was made. The Republika Srpska was planned and realised through war as a Serb majority on territories which, both historically and under the Constitution, are an area of the indivisible and plural political presence of Serbs and Croats and Bosniaks. On that territory, the principle of "one man – one vote" can be fully valid, because, in the spirit of the above statement, Bosniaks/Muslims are a minority there ruled over by an ideological majority. Thus, they are assigned an irredeemably lesser

value and consequential incompatibility with an ethically-founded democracy. They can be tolerated only as a minority, and that only in so far as necessary.

In this political vision of Milorad Dodik, the Republika Srpska is a territory nationalised as a result of war on which both Croats and Bosniaks will forever be outnumbered. Their cultural heritage and return are not, on this view, of any importance to them. This is why it is important for them – given the actual denial of rights to Croats and Bosniaks throughout the territory of Republika Srpska – to promote mistrust and conflict between Croats and Bosniaks, because that is the only way for the Milošević-Tuđman project to survive.

That this is the case is confirmed by a statement from Boris Tadić, the President of the Republic of Serbia: "It may seem somewhat unusual for me to raise the Croat question here in Brussels, but as President of Serbia I am also concerned regarding the Croats living in Bosnia-Herzegovina, who are leaving that country in great numbers." In the same address, he stipulated that there had previously been around 800,000 Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while there were now just 500,000, saying: "This is an unbelievable, very dangerous process, as it might well happen that there end up only two ethnic groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Consequently, we must find a solution for the issue of the Bosnian Croats. Once Croatia joins the European Union, the Croats from Bosnia-Herzegovina will have a motive to leave their country and cross over into Croatia." [26]

Instrumentalisation of the Croat question in Bosnia is an integral part of the greater Serb ideology. It has found practical expression in, amongst others, all three aforementioned anti-Bosnian political agreements – the first in 1918, the second in 1939, and the third in 1991. All three agreements were presented as historical attempts to solve the Serb and Croat questions in Bosnia. They produced three catastrophes for all the inhabitants of the country as their direct consequences. It was on the groundwork of these first and second and third agreements that the Republika Srpska came into being as a Serb ethnic territory on which all non-Serbs are subjugated to the greater Serb ideology or expelled or killed.

President Tadić has nothing to say about these consequences of the war against Bosnia. His influence in the Republika Srpska is indisputable, but there is nothing in his political constructions beyond continued patronage for "the greatest achievement of Serbian national policy in the 20th century", as the Republika Srpska has been described by his friend Dobrica Ćosić. It is almost as if they were unconcerned by the fact that precisely this "achievement" lies at the very root of the greatest tragedies of the Bosniak and Croat peoples during that very same century. And from this it is clear that the politics of which Tadić, Dodik, and Ćosić speak have no ethical grounding. On the contrary, they are absolutely unethical. This is why, whether they like it or not, they are just as anti-Serb as they are anti-Bosnian and anti-Croat. How will they, or anyone else, through such advocacy for the Republika Srpska, free it from the burden of the condemned crimes of its founders?

It is not difficult to show that Tadić's concern for Croats in Bosnia is just a way of promoting the destructive consequences of Serbian national policies. He is entirely at one in this with President Milorad Dodik. Thus, in amoebic, but nonetheless

recognisable form, the dismantling of Bosnian unity through the joint action of Belgrade and Zagreb, as poles of the national policies of all Serbs and all Croats, continues, as does the quest for any and all forms of Bosnian problem whereby these long-term goals may be legitimated and supported.

If the Cvetković-Maček and Milošević-Tuđman agreements and the wars to implement them are not the cause of the demographic devastation of the Croat presence in Bosnia; if neither the Republic of Serbia nor the Republic of Croatia have any responsibility in this regard – whether in terms of an earlier guilt or their current wardship over the gains of crime; if the structures built on the basis of these attempts and then built into the contemporary political architecture of the country do not lie at the foundations of the Bosnian tragedy, then there remains only one possible cause that explains the situation that has the heirs to Milošević's and Tuđman's policies in such hypocritical paroxysms of concern – the Muslim spectre which can be used, directly and indirectly, to explain pretty much everything.

To this we may contrast the views of Bosnian Croats who remain committed to the ideal of coexistence within an integral Bosnia. On 3 July, 2011, Brother Luka Markešić, the president of the Croat National Council, said regarding the very same issue: "According to the information of the Catholic Church, there are now 435,000 Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the majority of them Croats. Before the war there were 760,852 (according to the 1991 census). Where are they now, these 325,852 Croats who have fallen entirely by the wayside, thanks for the main part to the catastrophic policies of the HDZ?! Nor is it any different with those who left Bosnia-Herzegovina even before that." [27]

In his discussion of the destiny of his country as a whole, Brother Luka Markešić determinedly points out that this situation is not a result of ideological constructions, but of their violent application to Bosnian unity. He states:

> As regards the general division of Bosnia-Herzegovina into entities, this is an entirely misguided policy that came about as a consequence of the recent war here. So, the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina into two entities is contrary to the geographical and historical nature of the country, and such an organisation of the state is, moreover, not functional, inequitable, and undemocratic for all the peoples and citizens. It is a means for carrying out discrimination and preventing equality and the community of peoples and citizens in BiH, which is particularly harmful for Croats as the smallest of the constitutive peoples, dispersed across the entire territory of the state. A three entity solution of Bosnia-Herzegovina would be even worse than the two entity one, which in itself is unjust and non-functional for Croats, who are settled in different ways throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Such a constitutional organisation of the country would render most Croats a national minority in entities of the other two peoples, lead to their isolation within the Croat entity itself, and in the end stimulate emigration and disappearance, which is already happening. None of the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina can or should accept a life of inequality under the exclusive authority or domination of another

> people. [28]

It is worth adding to his conclusion that the crime of the destruction of Bosnia as a cultural and political unity has a long history and that the orgies of killing, expulsion, and destruction are simply its most visible expressions. Such a crime would not be possible without entire structures that incorporate criminal elites, criminal ideologies, criminal organisations, and direct agents of crime. The impacts of these crimes affect all Bosnian people, but most of all perhaps, in the long-term and from an ethical point of view, those who commit them.

The unquestionable status of the Republika Srpska is a postulate of Serb national policy. The return of Croats to the Republika Srpska is not, from the perspective of that policy, an issue that should be put to the leadership of that war-creation. On the other hand, political leaders in Belgrade and Zagreb and Banja Luka and Mostar stress in symphony the problem of relations between Bosniaks and Croats, through which Croat interests are subject to cataclysmic threat. Ivica Lučić has written the following about this pattern of relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina:

> The roots of the friction and conflict between ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina are unresolved ethnic or national relations. Most of the Bosniak political elite see BiH as their national or ethnic state, though they may differ in how they think the state should be organised. The Serb political elite is doing its best to preserve and reinforce the Republika Srpska, while the Croat political elite is fighting to preserve identity and political subjectivity. Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina have lost even the ability to elect their own political representatives. It is clear to Bosniaks that it is not possible to "get rid of" the Republika Srpska, so they are increasingly taking issue with Croats within the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The logic is clear, if they cannot make their own ethnic state out of BiH as a whole, then they can at least have their own ethnic or national entity in the Federation of BiH. This is the context in which to interpret Lagumdžija's statement that he will turn the Federation of BiH into West Germany, as well as the entire programme being pursued by the parties of the so-called Platform, led by the Red-Green coalition of the SDP/SDA. This is the nub of the problem for Croat-Bosniak relations today, which the Bosniak elite will neither speak about nor discuss. Anyone who does draw attention to it should expect a tsunami of anger and hatred. [29]

From these three positions one may draw the conclusion: Bosniaks/Muslims are the reason that the principle of "one-man-one vote" cannot be applied. Nobody has ever bothered to explain why that should be the case. The unexpressed reason is clear: Bosniaks/Muslims are simply not to be accorded the same level of humanity as others. And this is why the solution to the Croat question, which has Messrs Dodik and Tadić so concerned, lies in territorialization of the Croat community, in such a way that they, like the Serbs, will be enabled to apply the principle of "one man, one vote" within

their own territory, at least.

That crime provides a good and acceptable means for encompassing the requirement that the "one man, one vote" principle be applied only where Bosniaks/Muslims are in the minority is clear from Dodik's unrestrained treatment of the theme during the celebrations on St Vitus' day, the Saint's Day of the Army of the Republika Srpska, 20 June, 2011: "Time has shown that we were right in 1992 when we sent the VRS [Army of the Republika Srpska] to the defence of Serb territories in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This is why the Republika Srpska must never be brought into question, because without it on these territories there would be no Serbs here either, or there would be the same number as there are now in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina [FBiH]. It was a colossal endeavour by the then political and military leadership who worked together to do all they could to create a state for the Serb people on this side of the Drina." [30]

8. The Muslim threat

There are two central issues for the history of the European nationalist movements – the determination of historical and natural boundaries and the question of others. For one nation to be divided properly from another, there must not just be some assumed historical or natural right to a certain territory. The people to whom it is to belong must be bound together. Since there are not and cannot be territories with homogenous populations, there are three approaches available for achieving this: (1) to awaken the unconscious part of the population on the given territory and show them that they are not what they think they are, so that they cease to be what they think they are, and accept to become what they thought they were not; (2) to present this unconscious or unenlightened part of the population on the given territory with the reasons their presence there is unsustainable, while opening the paths of emigration to somewhere they do belong; and (3) to produce and maintain a fear in the majority of the minority, while constantly fostering a sense of insecurity with regard to others, whether constructed as imagined by the conscious majority or as they themselves objectively actually are. Even once established in a separate entity, these others remain a threat, as they are "incapable" of democratic life on rational principles and so cannot be counted on to coexist peacefully with the neighbouring states. It is a logic that leads from segregation to eradication.

In the case of Bosnia, these three possibilities have appeared as a purposely constructed mechanism with a variety of political consequences. Given that Croats in Bosnia are presented with the Republic of Croatia as something they cannot be separated from and a decisively important element of their sense of security, their fear of others takes the form of a resolve to deal with the problem by emigration to Croatia or of demands for internal division and borders so that that fear of others may be removed. It is the same with the Serbs in Bosnia. They justify the need for borders with regard to Bosniaks and Croats through the impossibility of living together with the other as equal, so it is emigration to Serbia and/or cutting oneself off from others in order to establish borders within which a political structure free from imaginary and/or real danger can be constructed.

There is in these relations of Croats and Serbs in Bosnia both a direct and indirect consensus that some form of separation is possible. The proof of this is in the

Cvetković-Maček, Milošević-Tuđman, Boban-Karadžić, and Dodik-Čović agreements. Thus, in these constructions – as well as in the expansion of Serbia and Croatia onto areas of Bosnia and the reduction of Bosnian pluralism to the institutionalisation of ethnic territories – the problem of the Bosniaks/Muslims rears its ugly head as a common threat. Bosniaks/Muslims have no territory within their own borders they can posit or construct as a haven in which to be safe from fear of others.

The absolute encirclement of the Bosniaks/Muslims and the lack of any positive or negative experience of being neighbours with anyone but the Orthodox Serbs and the Catholic Croats incites in them too a certain fantasising about remote friends – Turks and Arabs, Persians and others of whom they know very little, but who meet the need to rely on someone similar. Consequently, their own mental identification with an unknown other becomes yet another justification for the articulation of anti-Islamism within Serb and Croat national ideologies.

The anomaly of the Bosniak attitude towards these processes in which Croats and Serbs from Bosnia both actively and passively participate finds expression in a variety of ways. One is by stressing their collective rights to all of Bosnia, but in a way that excludes the other Bosnian collectivities. Thus, the Islamic construct within the anti-Islamic anti-Bosnian national ideologies becomes a reality which Bosniaks/Muslims themselves justify and feed.

The determination of a specific Bosniak nation also presupposes separation within the whole. From a diachronic perspective, Bosniaks/Muslims establish their beginning in a time and in events which have an entirely different meaning and value for Serbo-Croat interpretations of history. To be demonstrated, the Bosniak threat must be reduced to its indissoluble link with Serb and/or Croat servitude under the Turkish yoke, the suppression of Serb and/or Croat Christian culture, etc. Thus, Bosniaks/Muslims remain an unresolved reality – what they think of themselves, on the one hand, and what can never be allowed them by the nationalist ideologies of their neighbours, on the other.

In so far as they assume radical opposition to everything the national ideologies of the Serbs and Croats construe as self-consciousness, the Bosniaks/Muslims justify the fear of them. For Catholics and Orthodox, there are two possibilities for dealing with this fear – the first lies in flight from its source, the second in fighting against it. For Bosniak Muslims, however, flight from their own Bosnian nature would entail death in terms of both political and cultural existence, so they are left with only one solution as a precondition for survival and being happy: to deconstruct the imposed understanding of history and the future, in ways that maximally increase their engagement with their Orthodox/Serb and Catholic/Croat neighbours: It may be hoped, at least, that fully realised relations between these three groups them will prevent them from being unknown and dark areas to each other from which such fears flow.

The history of Bosnia is normally construed as either entirely Orthodox, which is to say Serb, or entirely Catholic, which is to say Croat. Both constructions, which are contradictory in their radical forms, treat the appearance of the Muslim as a general tragedy – in the one for Serbdom as a whole, in the other for Croatdom as a whole.

Each of these historical constructions assigns itself the perennial role of the "rampart of Christianity". Insofar as the rampart was taken, the Muslim presence is a constant internal and external danger – internal as a form of leprosy within the Christian world, external as a fifth column that threatens the world.

Dobrica Ćosić describes this obsession with the Muslim threat, as both corner and keystone of Serb history, in its connection with a similar danger from the "Vatican Catholic conspiracy" against the essence of Serbdom: "I will try to mark only some of the causes and factors in the Bosnian war, in particular those which arose from Turkish rule between 1461 and 1878, when Islam conquered Bosnia and the conquerors, by violence and by giving certain privileges, islamicised a significant section of the mediaeval Serbs or Orthodox. During the period of the Austro-Hungarian occupation, 1878–1918, the occupying authorities and Vatican missionaries converted Serbs to Catholicism, so that during this time Catholicism became a strong, official religion." [31]

Postscript

The question of the "Bosnian Muslims" or "the Muslims in Bosnia" is inseparable from the question of the country. This inseparability, however, is under assault in many contemporary images of the one and the other. This European people has never fully succeeded in creating its own image of itself, and so it sees itself largely on the basis of feelings determined by the traumas of a long history of suffering that places it amongst the peoples with the most tragic pasts.

Practically any discussion of the current condition of humanity and the world includes the opposed pair of Islam and the West. This opposition is expressed in any number of phrases like Islam and Europe, Islam and Modernity, Islam and Democracy, Islamic terrorism, Islamic radicalism, Islamic Revolution, etc. These linguistic constructions are the products of the modern ideological images of the world and they signify contents which belong to ideological discourses and are generally remote from the social reality they are supposed to indicate. There are of little if any help in coming to know the phenomena of the contemporary world.

In this modern ideological discourse, the word "Islam" and the epithets derived from it have taken on a fundamentally different meaning from that given by their semantic position in the formative texts of the tradition in which they were originally established. Understanding the differences between the modern meanings of the concept "Islam" and its position within the semantic fields of the traditional texts is a precondition for understanding many of the phenomena of contemporary societies and their politics and cultures.

Islam is a verbal noun which signifies the relationship between human beings and God. God is Peace (as-Salam) and is reflected throughout the totality of creation and in all its facets as such. The world is, as a whole, related to God as Peace through being-at-peace, as is clearly stated in the Quran itself: "All things that are in the heavens and on the earth abide in peace with Him". [32]

As beings of free will and so party to a covenant with God, human beings are capable

of participating voluntarily within that being-at-peace and of living as recipients and givers of peace (*muslim*). To any such individual God is both source and refuge. Nothing is worthy of being associated with God. This is contained in the key and conclusive confession of being a person-of-peace (muslim): “I confess that there is no God but God and I confess that the Praised is His servant and His apostle.” This confession is the essence of all the teachings of humanity and the world as created and guided towards the Creator.

The two aspects of this confession, the first about the unity of God and the second about the apostolate of the Praised (Muhammad), are indivisible. The unity of God is revealed through the totality of existence. The entire manifold which makes up the world reveals the unity of God, while the Praised is the perfect gathering together of all existence within a human being, who has received everything he or she has from God, and so as a recipient of praise is related through the act of praising to God as Donor. Consequently, the confession that there is no God but God and that the Praised is His apostle is encapsulated within our relations as human beings, who are peaceful/at-peace with God as Peace, through being-at-peace, but also through the perfect potential and most beautiful example of humanity that was the Praised, who was related to God the All-Praised through the act of praising Him.

Such a point of view is anthropo-cosmic. Human beings and the cosmos are two inseparable aspects of one and the same existence, to which God reveals Himself as source and refuge, as absolutely near to humanity and to the world, while at the same time absolutely remote from them. A number of possible ways exist in which this vision may be expressed. Depending on the language, meanings, and symbols in which it is expressed, the vision becomes a concrete tradition, but always so that its perennial core is not betrayed. Judaism and Christianity are, according to this viewpoint, different but faithful forms of that same tradition of which the Muslim way is just another expression.

In the modern world view, which excludes the simultaneous transcendence and immanence of God, the traditional interpretation of Islam has, in a great global movement of ideologization of the world view, transformed from its meaning of a relationship between humanity and God into a reified whole to which the attributes of God have been associated. In this ideological reduction, Islam takes on the divine attributes of command, forbidding, assignment, guidance, authoritative discourse, etc. It becomes a political, social, and cultural body which is assumed to have clear boundaries with regard to modernity, the West, democracy, Christianity, and so forth.

Thus, the word “Islam”, which was revealed by God, as those who accept it believe, becomes a plastic word of modern ideologized discourse. Knowledge is read into it according to the needs of ideologized sentimentalism and in straightforward reaction to the binary relations of elements in an ideological movement – friend and enemy, progressive and backward, us and others, etc. In fact, it is hollowed out, stripped of the power of its authentic meanings, snatched from the semantic fields to which it properly belongs. These are the predominant characteristics of contemporary discourse in which the concepts of “Islam” and “Islamic” are deployed.

Insofar as Bosnia is a whole shaped by Muslim Bosniaks, Catholic Croats, Orthodox

Serbs and others, including the Jews and the Roma, no discussion of the situation of Muslims within the country can be true to the social, political, cultural circumstances if it does not take into account the images prevalent in the world, particularly in all the direct and indirect ways they relate to Muslims. Pretty well all the journalistic, political, geostrategic, and economic images of the contemporary world include this ideological representation of reified Islam and a more or less homogenous Muslim corpus.

It can be established today that Islam is incorporated in the leading interpretations of Bosnian unity-in-difference as an isolated and objectified phenomenon clearly related to the other and the different. The deeper that isolation is worked into the representations of its adherents, the more powerfully it supports the sense of Bosnian unity's division into its ideologically postulated parts – Catholicism/Croatdom, Orthodoxy/Serbdom, Islam/Bosniakism.

The presence of three adulterated ideological systems in the individual and collective identities that make up contemporary Bosnian unity-in-difference – post-communism, nationalism, fundamentalism – contributes to this political and cultural outlook. One can determine elements within each collective identity and today's Bosnia which belong to the aforementioned ideological dispositions. They are incorporated into knowledge, opinions, and behaviour in the public sphere.

No explication of social, cultural, and political conditions in Bosnia is possible without taking these elements into consideration, at the level of their presence in the individual identity and through social stratification as determined by those very conditions. One should add the perception and use of prevalent images of Islam in the world and so of social, political, and cultural relations within Bosnia.

The range of peoples considered to be Muslims is so broad, ethnically, racially, linguistically, geostrategically, politically, etc, that reducing it to some global whole is the most effective way of disabling any proper cognitive modelling with regard to them, whether as particulars or as a whole. Consequently, in speaking of the Muslims of Bosnia, one must first distinguish their indivisibility from the Bosnian whole, on the one hand, and from the fantasy of a universal Muslim-hood, on the other.

It can be shown how, in the political rhetoric of the present, the concept "Bosnia" appears increasingly abstract, while the concept "Islam" has an increasingly concrete aspect. In fact, concretization of the concept "Islam" in political rhetoric has become a means of denying Bosnia: the clearer the presence of reified Islam, the more clearly questionable, for such sentiments, Bosnia becomes. This is a commonplace in the nationalist rhetoric of contemporary Bosnia and the representation of Bosniak Muslims.

Such a situation has not come from nowhere. It is not the exclusive result of some external factors of the social and political order. It is possible to recognise here factors related to the individual and collective psyche. If our relationship with God as absolutely transcendent and necessarily and absolutely immanent is a way to realise or straighten humanity, then any reification of that relationship, with the establishment of unquestionable guardians, is a threat and an obstacle to freedom as

the world in which the inviolability of human dignity flowers.

In the Communist vision, Bosnia was not derived from its traditional elements. They were simply considered an inheritance, an internally insoluble problem when the inherited patterns of national unity were applied to them. However, given that the Communists saw the solution of the national question in the transcendence of such heritage, they assigned all the contradictions and traumas of this experience precisely to those traditional elements and sought a solution through the realisation of revolutionary goals based on the historical role of the working class and the avant-garde. For such a view, human beings may be reduced to finite measurable quantities, which may be included within the ideologically delineated current of history.

Contemporary neo-Communists, who do not present themselves as such, but are already included in a variety of more or less evident collective actions and ideological advocacy, interpret the difficulties of Bosnian society in terms of its faithlessness to those patterns in the past which made it more secure and more just. For them that past is the period of the Communist totalitarian system after the Second World War. Their rhetoric embraces the advocacy of human rights, democratic legitimation of government and social justice, but it does not transcend the fundamental schemata of secular dogmatism in the approach to individual and collective identity, the sources of human dignity, and freedoms in plural societies.

In the visions of the Serb and Croat nationalists, Bosnia remains an “irregular territory”, “an historical anomaly”, “an unresolved drama”, “a problem of unresolved identities”, etc. According to this vision, Bosnia is divided by two centrisms – the Serbian, for which Belgrade is the key political symbol, and the Croatian, for which Zagreb is. This vision of Bosnia was given comprehensive articulation in programmes of destruction three times during the twentieth century.

The first time, during the project of unification of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in a kingdom with Belgrade as its centre and the Karađorđević dynasty as the common royal family, Bosnia was practically excluded from the political vision of the elites which imagined and realised that new state. The heritage of anti-Muslimism was incorporated into the venture as a whole as a constitutive element of the ideology, the nation, and the state. This may be demonstrated in a message delivered in 1917 by Stojan Protić, one of the leading politicians of the People’s Radical Party: “When our Army crosses the Drina, I will give the Turks 24 hours, perhaps even 48, in which to return to the faith of their grandfathers, and any who do not wish to, I will cut down, as we did in our time in Serbia.” [33]

The second time the programme of division was articulated was in 1939, under the Cvetković-Maček agreement. According to it, Bosnia was divided into “Serb” and “Croat” parts. In this division, the Muslims were simply presented as a non-political factor which might, in the best case scenario, be afforded a certain element of cultural, religious, or folkloristic autonomy. In this way, institutionalisation of the Muslim problem was posited as resolved in and through Serbo-Croat relations. This was, however, simply an instance of the continued destruction of whatever belonged to the Bosnian Muslims, and so anything Bosnian that did or might weaken the programme. It is quite legitimate to consider the crimes and destruction carried out

during the Second World War – in which more than 100,000 Bosniak Muslims were killed and the greater part of their cultural heritage destroyed – as simply a continuation of these anti-Muslim programmes.

The third time this programme of destroying Bosnia within the framework of these two centrisms was re-initiated was in 1991, under the Milošević-Tuđman agreement. The same old nationalist elements were to be found in this division, as well as specious ecumenical reasons for the agreement and separation of these two Christian peoples. In this picture, the problem of these peoples boiled down to the presence of Muslims as an incompatible factor preventing agreement on peace between Christians of different churches.

The presentation of this Muslim factor in as foul and vile a character as possible was part of the anti-Bosnian strategy and its implementation during the 1991-95 war, but also since. That the essence of this programme is the same anti-Muslimism as was to be met with in previous centuries is clear from one of the documents of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, according to which Sveto Veselinović, the president of the Serbian Democratic party in Rogatica, stated: “A third of the Muslims will be killed, a third will become Orthodox, and a third will flee.” [34]

Nor should one forget that the many internal confrontations between Muslims, whether in the form of radicalism or violence, have served the interests of the nationalist elites that participated in the war against Bosnia. There are many indicators to suggest that these elites have quite directly supported such developments. Consequently, a proper study of these anomalies amongst and between Bosnian Muslims, which arise from out of their historical trauma and which have been taken advantage of by their ethno-nationalist and ethno-religious elites, and a proper debate about them are preconditions for proper explication of the Bosnian question.

Fundamentalism is a modern ideology. It cannot be reduced to a given tradition, since it is a general characteristic of the modern world. Its birthplace was in Europe and America, and its adherents are simply responding to the attempt to absolutize instrumental reason and to the secularisation and ideologization of the world. The adoption of science as the only reliable source of knowledge and the reduction of knowledge to the quantifiable world, along with the projection of human action as an ongoing project of building a world without conflict or tyranny, which entails placing humanity at the centre of all existence, while also rendering it independent of God, has produced an equally rational response for which God and the Revelation are located fully within the framework of the quantifiable world. This is the ideology of fundamentalism. As an image, this reaction excludes any possibility of an open self whose achievements are transcended by God, Who is simultaneously near and remote.

During the final decades of the twentieth century, religious rhetoric developed in response to Communist anti-religiosity. But this response, like every other, took on various elements and attributes of what it was opposing and negating. It is, therefore, understandable that rational and sentimentalist projections within this rhetoric become more important than reality. There follows an obvious insensitivity towards human suffering, social injustice, and all forms of violence.

In Islam, Catholicism, and Orthodoxy as they appear today, in their fundamentalist interpretations, at least, one may recognise a number of different symbioses with nationalism and communism. Given the superficial compatibility of the European Christian heritage with the modern vision of the political order in the secular state, anti-Muslimism and anti-Judaism have become a very regular element of European nationalisms, as well as of European fundamentalisms. It's worth adding that anti-Muslimism is also to be found within communism. This is because nationalism, fundamentalism, and communism share a common core, regardless of the difference of their external forms. In all these ideologies, the multiple levels of being are reduced to one only, while transcendence is excluded.

Neo-communism and nationalism offer significant resources for shaping anti-Muslimism as content in anti-Bosnian programmes, as may be seen on the Bosnian social scene today. This is evident in many aspects of the Muslim collective consciousness, as well as in many aspects of others' relations/attitudes towards Muslims. When various forms of religious freedom which were denied during Communism are displayed in public, Christian forms bring Bosnia closer to the European ideal of individual and collective rights. Muslim ones, however, are experienced in the predominant representational systems of Europe as distressing anomalies.

The collapse of the Communist order, as marked by the destruction of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, was reflected in Bosnia in the form of a war which was initiated and conducted in concert from Belgrade and Zagreb. This ideologically-based war found expression in the establishment of at least four social and political movements within the social body of Bosnia.

Two of these four movements were centrifugal. They contained ethno-religious ideologies associated with supposedly ethnic territories. Thus, the ethno-religious elites of the Serbs made their demand for the delineation of a "Serb" part of Bosnia. The Croat ethno-religious elites did the same. The establishment of such imaginary ethno-religious territories was understood as a step towards unification with the mother-communities – a new, proper Croatia and a new, proper Serbia. In both these movements, Bosniak Muslims were considered a hindrance to be removed one way or another.

The third of the four ideological movements that incorporated this deep collective emotionalism was centripetal. Bosniak Muslims, who have referred to their ethno-religious ideology in recent times as Bosniakism, shaped most of their political efforts in the form of a struggle for Bosnian integrity. These efforts were often ideologically informed as a reaction to the aforementioned centrifugal activities, and often served to legitimate, emotionally, politically, culturally the centrifugal nationalism of the Serb and Croat nationalists. In this way, they too contributed to the weakening of the joint forces of Bosnian unity-in-difference.

The fourth political movement was the aspiration to present Bosnian society and preserve it as a whole in which a harmonious relationship of religious and cultural differences was possible and which could be organised into an harmonious political order on the basis of the democratic principle of "one-man, one vote", while ensuring

that neither the individual nor collective rights of specific individuals or groups in that order suffer. The first two movements, and often the third represented this programme as unrealistic and idealistic. The adherents of the first and second movement represented the fourth as a mask for Bosniak national interests, while for the third movement this approach to Bosnian reality was represented as giving in to Croat and Serb nationalism and an attempt to restore the Communist principle of brotherhood and unity.

The elites of both of the centrifugal nationalisms, Serb and Croat, endeavour to reduce the entire problem of Bosnian society and its state to the "Muslim question". By reference to the "Muslim problem", these elites put in question practically every European principle on which consolidation of the Bosnian state might possibly be implemented. Milorad Dodik, the President of the Republika Srpska, summarises this approach as follows: "We here will not be an area on which the most internationalist of ideas, however acceptable from the point of view of principle, are put into practice – we cannot, for example, accept the introduction into Bosnia of an electoral system on the basis of 'one man, one vote'. That would allow the Bosniaks, as a relative majority, to become a political one." [35]

Accordingly, the projection of a unitary Islam universally opposed to the democratic principle is a fundamental interest of those who would preserve the current incapacity and devastation of Bosnian society and of the state that was so hard won by war. For the advocates of this ideological construction, the deviant behaviour of individuals and groups amongst Bosniak Muslims that can be represented as "Islamic" is both desirable and necessary.

This division of Bosnian society by political ideology and the exploitation of religious and ethnic affiliation took shape under an imposed constitutional order. The gains of war, in which the adherents of all four aforementioned political ideologies and the four associated movements all have their share, were legalised under the imposed constitution. The Republika Srpska is a result of the war against Bosnia, but so, in a very similar manner, is the Federation of BiH. Under cover of the political frameworks of these two administrative/governmental orders, activities are still being pursued that are in essence indistinguishable from the war against Bosnia. Their forms are both implicit and explicit and they are difficult to distinguish and describe phenomenologically.

Any sense of community is deeply imbued with the aforementioned ideological elements, as well as with contradictory emotionalisms, informed by a sense of suffering for which others are responsible. Croats and Serbs and Bosniaks all speak of their own suffering as greatest, something to which the suffering of others cannot be compared. All of them, in their various ethno-religious ideologies, are looking for grounds for the political articulation of this feeling of priority in suffering and a way to integrate it into public political discourse. It is on this ground that particular political programmes have been built for each of the areas ruled as an ethno-religious polity.

Under such circumstances, attitudes towards Bosniak Muslims are regularly related to European and American discourses on "Islamic fundamentalism", "Islamic terror", "Islamic radicalism" and so forth. Speakers from within the framework of Serb and

Croat nationalism try to identify Bosniak Muslims with this “Islam”, which is troubling the entire world. Offering his interpretation of contemporary European conditions to a group of European diplomats, one Serb nationalist politician from Bosnia told them: “We in Bosnia don’t have any problems that you don’t have too, in every European country. You have a problem with Islam – and we have a problem with Islam.”

It is easy to recognise the attempt here to appropriate the ideological incarnation of the ideological interpretation of the world through the West-Islam relationship and use it to reinforce the construction of an image of Bosniaks/Muslims, an image which is indistinguishable from (a) global “Islam”; (b) radicalism and the radical incompatibility of “Islam” with democratic ideals; (c) radicalism and political totalitarianism in Muslim countries; and (d) social deviations that developed in European societies due to the presence of immigrants from countries with Muslim majorities.

Looked at from the perspective of Bosniak Muslims, the range of social, political, and cultural phenomena which might be so designated embraces differences of all sorts, from the radical behaviour of Saudi Wahhabism to true mysticism from the tradition of enlightened intellectuality. There is no traditional image of this division, even though there are more Muslim intellectuals in Bosnia today than ever before who would be capable of conducting a public debate about such phenomena. The permeation of traumatised Bosnian society by emotionalism continues to favour political discourse over any other form, however.

The luxuriant cultural Bosnian unity in difference, whose continuity is to be found above all in un-reified and various forms of human approach to God, still remains unknown to the majority and subject to the ideological and emotionalist interpretations of nationalist propaganda. This is the reason why speakers with religious insignia are as a practical rule imbued by political and ideological motivations. This is why so many secular speakers hypocritically court the supposedly religious leaders and the sentimentality of the public.

Under such circumstances one may certainly state that Bosnia suffers from a lack of serious intellectual discussion between representatives of different views on humanity in the world. One-sided statement of one’s own ideological viewpoint still predominates, without any real willingness to listen to questioning from the other side. It is not uncommon to hear that the situation in Bosnia today is very similar to that of Bosnian society and political life in 1990-91, out of which the war started. Evidence for such a state is sought in journalistic images of Muslims worldwide, in the rationale and goals of the anti-terrorist coalition, in the various deviant forms of social expression that can be associated with Muslims.

There is no clear response to such presentations that would make clear the distinction between realistic images of matters in society and their ideological representation. There are various responses which can without difficulty be described as “Muslim” or “Islamic”. They include various connections between the political and religious elites, as well as the political rhetoric of Muslim religious leaders. The advocates of the anti-Bosnian programmes use such behaviour on the part of religious leaders in public as evidence to legitimate their opposition to any consolidation of the Bosnian state or

dismantling of the gains of war and crime.

There is a consensus that the condition of society and politics in Bosnia today is poor. One can however propose an alternative thesis: there has never been a less bad period in Bosnia's recent history. Only such a thesis can stimulate a search for reasons that would uncover the meaning of "Bosnianism" as an inclusive framework for the full variety of rational and emotional articulation of individual and collective identity.

The free expression of belonging or not belonging, whether religious or political, does not lead directly to privilege or disadvantage. To sort out the relationship between the state and collective identities is an endeavour which requires time and help. All four religious communities in Bosnia differ both in doctrine and in historical form. It is up to Bosniak Muslims to find a way to find a fit between their peculiarities and the social and political whole that is Bosnia.

The current situation in which ethno-nationalist and religious affiliations are identified is not in the interests of either Bosniak Muslims or Bosnia. The faithful have both the need and the right to organise, but not in a way that identifies with an ethnic or national unit or with any other form of political organisation within a democratic state. This caveat has become dangerously inverted, however. Most articulations of religious issues either directly or indirectly dismiss any need to differentiate between the general affiliations of their conscious adherents.

If the Bosniak Muslims have inherited cultural goods previously managed through institutions of the theocratic Ottoman sultanate, this does not mean that they have inherited the politics of that now extinct sultanate. Particularly dangerous for their social consolidation and the establishment of good relations with others in wider Bosnian society is the tendency to identify that Ottoman heritage with their religious organisation and their religious leaders.

Since such phenomena of identification are regrettably numerous, attempts and moves within the religious organisations to act in the place of the state are frequent enough. Distance from such an emotional inheritance could allow Muslims to accept that they should have no privileges beyond the privileges accorded to the other religious communities. This would mean that they, like the rest, could exercise their rights in exactly the same way throughout the entire territory of the state and that those rights would in principle be established under law and equal for all. Understanding and acting on this fact is one of the important preconditions for a political settlement of the Bosnian state and disabling the destructive tendencies whose disappearance it is difficult to forecast otherwise. It is one of the important preconditions, but there are many others.

9. Dangerous Constructions

One cannot say of any individual or collective images of the world that they are a perfect fit with reality. It has proved fortunate for humanity that such images, once adopted, can never be so firmly established as to exclude all possibility of change, as to become immutable. In a ceaseless process, reality undermines such images, revealing them as mere reflections in its own irrepressible flow. One may think of any

given ideology as simply an attempt to establish such an image of the real as of greater importance and of greater power than reality itself. In this way, grotesque phenomena are born, in which the real and its image can no longer be distinguished.

Humanity experiences the worst forms of violence when ideological elites, using the powers at their disposal, attempt to subordinate reality to their ideological programmes. Individuals who are aware of the relativity of their own and other people's world images, vis-à-vis reality itself, and so of the constant room for improving both their worldviews and their own selves endeavour consistently to question the absolutized ideological representations of humanity, the world, and God. The presence and action of such individuals is considered, in all ideological programmes, to be a hindrance and a threat to the realisation of the projected ideological order. Consequently, for a given ideological image, certain individuals, groups, and peoples necessarily become anomalous, internal or external enemies from which the world and its people must be saved.

Anti-Muslimism is a constitutive and inherent element in all the Balkan nationalist ideologies. The eradication of anything Muslim from within the ideologically postulated nation is, as may easily be seen, a precondition for all the ethno-nationalist teleologies of the Balkans. The ideological forms taken by anti-Islamism may change, but the essence lives on across the centuries. A number of such essentially anti-Islamic forms may be found in contemporary ethno-political rhetoric, and if there is to be any form of political action that leads towards a culture of dialogue, they will first have to be deconstructed. Let us run through the most common forms of ethno-political rhetoric which act as ideological representations of anti-Muslimism.

The Ottoman Empire is equated with age-old representations of Islam as the essence of a damned and corrupt Agarianism [a derogatory epithet for Muslims], as declared in so many references to Muslims, so that the struggle against them is simply the struggle for the liberation and political emancipation of the Christian European nations. The ideological torso of Islam, in which one can make out all sorts of threats, impurities, and dangers, thus offers the best way for converting the reality of living individuals into an ideological representation. Any assault upon this image is an assault upon the advocates of liberty and democracy, of justice and unity, of Christian values and so forth.

As part of this long-standing anti-Bosnian programme, a number of patterns have been developed to legitimate the de-legitimation and dismantling of everything Bosnian. One such construction is the comparison between Bosnia and Yugoslavia, while another is stressing the Bosnia cannot exist as a "unitary country". It is possible to detect anti-Muslimism as an important element in both these constructions.

Many Muslims, alongside many other of their fellow Bosnian pluralists, are committed to the survival of Bosnia as an integral political, cultural, and economic entity, in which they and their Serb and Croat fellows, and everyone else can realise their futures as they choose. But that is not possible, the spokesmen of the aforementioned elites exclaim. It is not, because Yugoslavia disintegrated. How then can Bosnia be possible? Two homogenous states came into being with the disintegration of Yugoslavia – Serbia and Croatia, but there can be no Bosnia, because there are

Muslims, and so it too must disintegrate, so that some form of Muslim territory may be carved out of it as precisely the means for burying any possibility of plural Bosnian society. Were Bosnia not to disintegrate, it would mean that it could be Muslim in the same way as Serbia is Serbian and Croatia Croatian. Thus, anti-Islamism is a constituent element of anti-Bosnianism, as well as of the advocacy of ethnic and national homogenisation on territories to be determined by the balance of political power.

Amongst the anti-Bosnian mantras is that which President Tadić repeated in Brussels, namely that Bosnia-Herzegovina represents Yugoslavia in little and that Yugoslavia was a complicated country. [36] In this claim, in line with the ideologically constructive image of Bosnia of the greater Serbian programmes, Boris Tadić consciously ignores the fact that the plural society of Bosnia has survived through practically 1000 years – during the first half of that period as an ecclesiologically and Christologically plural society, and during the second half as more generally religiously plural. Thus, Boris Tadić repeats the mantra of practically all the ideologues of anti-Bosnianism. As his friend and mentor Dobrica Ćosić has written: "A conviction has taken root in the consciousness of Croats and Serbs: if a multi-ethnic Yugoslavia could not survive, the conditions, the reasons, do not exist for a multi-ethnic Bosnia to exist." [37]

Of the countries which were combined to make the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians in 1918, which would later become the kingdom of Yugoslavia, Bosnia was the least like that kingdom, or indeed communist Yugoslavia. In fact, it was Serbia which was most like Yugoslavia in its historical forms. It is understandable that Yugoslavia should be considered a construction that incarnates the historical idea of Serbia as a Serbian national state which should, eventually, according to its ideologues, come to embrace many territories outside the borders of any previously existing Serbia.

For all of its history, Bosnia has been a united country, with one language, one territory, one ethno-genesis, etc. It has never included non-Bosnian territory or non-Bosnian ethnic groups. Serbia, which the historian Latinka Perović reminds us that even today does not know where its own boundaries are, includes territories on which there live Albanians, Hungarians, Bosniaks, Croats, and Romanians/Vlachs. None of these peoples arrived on those territories at some later date than the Serbs themselves, and they cannot consequently be denied either a historical or a natural right to be there.

Moreover, the Serbian national programme assumes the assimilation of various other territories – Macedonia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Croatia, for example. As to Yugoslavia, it was made up of various territories, nations, and ethnic groups involving extremely different ethnogeneses, experiences, languages, etc. This is why the bromide of "Bosnia like a Yugoslavia in little" is a construction deployed within plans to dismantle the country.

Through the mechanism of Yugoslavia, Bosnia was stripped of its state-hood and so subject-hood. In the context of the new state, Bosnia disappeared, while her people, territory, and culture were fragmented, in order to fit better into the supposed units of

the new state. In repeating this anti-Bosnian position, President Tadić is simply making clear that the government policy of the Republic of Serbia remains as shaped by Ilija Garašanin. Obviously, few people like to hear this claim. If we are going to discuss principles, however, then its correctness is indisputable. The forms change, but the essence remains the same.

Yugoslavia was an ideological project. It was originally developed within an ideological image of reality. Then that image was imposed upon geographical, cultural, and religious realities of the area contained within the Yugoslav borders. Bosnia is a very different phenomenon. It is the reality that the ideological image of Yugoslavia negated, onto which ideological division and separation were imposed. That this is the case is clear from the fact that the cohesive energy of Bosnia has proved more powerful even than the joint military action of two state structures intent on breaking it up.

Throughout the history of Yugoslavia, there was tension between its parts and the centre. Practically all those parts had come into being through long historical processes, so that their integrity superseded that of Yugoslavia as a composite. Serbia and the Serb national programme were central phenomena of this process. Belgrade, the royal dynasty, the Serbian army and the Serbian national ideology were considered by Serbs to be the very core of Yugoslavia. Resistance took the form of tendencies towards the preservation of Slovenian, Croatian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Albanian, and Bosnian subject-hood. Gradually, resistance to Yugoslavia developed to the point of promoting those subject-hoods that made it up. Yugoslavia became, for everyone except the Serbs, a Serbian project.

Only Serbian nationalists and their allies advocated a unitary Yugoslavia. Resistance to such a unitary state came from everyone who saw in Yugoslavia an order in which the survival and development of their historical, cultural, and political forms of subjectivity might be possible. This is why dismantling Bosnian subject-hood was, for the greater Serbian nationalists, a precondition to the realisation of Yugoslavia as a Serbian project. No area of the former Yugoslavia was so exposed to such denial as Bosnia suffered throughout its history within Yugoslavia.

Even though this was an integrated and united society, that had come into being through unbroken historical process, with a culture and a language marked by both major and minor differences, which had, however, never been such as to split that whole into physically separable parts, any attempt to articulate that integrity was represented as “Bosnian unitarism”, while splitting it up was represented as simply a striving for equality and constitutive status. Whenever anyone says that normalisation of the Bosnian state order is only possible on the basis of more fundamental considerations – two entities and three constitutive peoples, citing in evidence the Dayton agreement, they are simply affirming their own destructive perspective on Bosnian integrity.

Those who stress the impossibility of the Bosnian state, or in a relativized version its impossibility on the basis of European democratic principles, regularly posit the “Muslim question” as the reason. This position takes shape in claims regarding the impossibility of applying the principle of “one man, one vote”, of the dangers of

unitarism, regarding a civic state, etc. At the heart of all these statements is the anti-Muslim view that the presence of Muslims is simply incompatible with European, which is to say Christian, ideas regarding the democratic state. One cannot even explain the nature of the recent war against Bosnia without taking this fact into consideration. This is because there is not and cannot be any implementation of genocide without the ideological positioning of the people as a whole, or at least a majority, in preparation for that criminal endeavour.

Every European state is organised in line with its particular characteristics, but never without due regard for the principles that facilitate both survival and political coherence. Consequently, they are all "unitary" insofar as they can only survive if they bring all their different elements together around a common principle. No state can survive without a clear definition of the centre in relation to which its cohesion is secured. Various answers can be given as to how the different parts should be connected to the centre. If there is no connection, however, if there is not a sufficient degree of unitarism in the concept as a whole, then the state is condemned to dissolution. Contesting unitarism is, accordingly, a reasonable and recognisable element of anti-Bosnian programmes. [38] To accuse the advocates and the defenders of Bosnian integrity of unitarism is the same as to advocate the dissolution of the state itself.

Whatever the constitutional articulation of a given state order, from the level of the individual to the highest organs of the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary, for political structures to be related to one another, there must be a centre from which political power is distributed to the furthest edges of the state order. In the absence of such a centre and connections, dissolution of the state is inevitable. Moreover, the action of connections to external centres, to which state structures are related, whether visibly or invisibly, fosters and reinforces such dissolution.

The presence and influence of such external centres, the most important of which are Belgrade and Zagreb, are justified as an ideological necessity of Serb and Croat national integration, as well as on the basis of a duty of care for the position of Serbs and Croats in neighbouring countries. Such an attitude with regard to Serbs and Croats in Bosnia entails, both directly and indirectly, protecting them from factors which may be considered to threaten them. And what might those factors be, if not the Bosniaks/Muslims, since there is nobody else in Bosnia for the Serbs and Croats to be in relations with. This is the basis on which the constructions regarding the sources of this danger are developed – Muslim radicalism, numbers, unitarism, etc.

Two further statements we will quote in closing may appear benign enough at first glance, but they merge dangerously with anti-Muslimism as a covert, but politically destructive and negative approach to Bosnia. In a well known and widely discussed statement given to the Reuters news agency, Ivo Josipović, the President of the Republic of Croatia, stated that "there is a lot of Muslims" in Bosnia. [39] Josipović has never explained in what way there is a lot of them or where his agreement comes from with those who have spoken and acted against Bosnia, explaining it in terms of the threat from so many Muslims in Bosnia. Is not precisely this assertion at the root of all the tragedies of the Balkan Muslims?! It is irrelevant whether President Ivo Josipović's

remark is the result of his lack of understanding regarding issues of the past, present, and future of the geopolitical space within which the Republic of Croatia, whose president he is, finds itself, or actually reflects his view of Bosnian plurality. It is clear that anti-Muslim sentiment informs, both implicitly and explicitly, the political sentiments, thought, and action of practically all Balkan politicians. We offer one further clear proof that this is the case: "For a series of reasons, Croats find themselves in a position where they lack a proper basis for real influence. For the Serbs, the Republika Srpska, which is, whatever one may think of it, well-organised, provides that. For Bosniaks, it is their numbers. But Croats have no such basis for political influence." [40]

Paper presented at International Colloquium, "KOSOVO'S FAITHS AND KOSOVO'S FUTURE: CONFLICT, COEXISTENCE OR COOPERATION?", Prishtina (Kosovo, from 14th to 17th . 2012. May)

Notes

1. Hazim Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk: Postanak i upravna podjela*, Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1982, 79-80. ↩
2. Milorad Dodik, "Nema hemije koja može ujediniti BiH", *Politika*, 30th of May, 2011, http//www.politika.rs/republike/Politika/178084.sr.html. ↩
3. These percentages are based upon the research presented in: Vladimir Žerjavić, *Gubici stanovništva Jugoslavije u drugom svjetskom ratu*, Zagreb: Jugoslavensko viktimološko društvo, 1989, 36, 61. For more on the genocide of Bosniaks/Muslims during the Second World War see also: Bogoljub Kočović, *Žrtve Drugod svetskog rata u Jugoslaviji,* Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1990; Vladimir Dedijer and Antun Miletić, *Genocid nad muslimanima*, 1941-1945: *Zbornik dokumenata i svjedočenja*, Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1990. For an overview of the assault on Bosnia's demographic integrity during the most recent war against Bosnia (1991-95) see: Rusmir Mahmutćehajić, *The Denial of Bosnia*, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University press, 2000, 75 – 78. ↩
4. See: Stevan Moljević, "Homogena Srbija", 141; in Božo Čović, ed., *Izvori velikosrpske agresije*, Zagreb: August Cesarec, 1991, 141-150. ↩
5. Latinka Perović, "Srbija i dalje ne zna gde su njene granice", interview by Tamara Nikčević, *e-Novine,* http://www.e-novine.com/intervju/intervju-politika/46612- Srbija-dalje-zna-gde-njene-granice.html. ↩
6. "Brijunski transkript", Brijunski transkripti akcije "Oluja", http://www.camo.ch/brijunski_transkripti.htm ↩
7. Dobrica Ćosić, "O Stvaranju *Republike Srpske* i njenom piscu", in: Nikola Koljević, *Stvaranje republike Srpske: Dnevnik* 1993-1995, Beograd: Službenik glasnik, 2008, 35. ↩
8. Ibid., 36. ↩
9. See: www.mzd.gov.rs. ↩
10. Milorad Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja, Istoria Srba u Novom veku* (1492-1992), Belgrade, Zavod za udžbenike, 2008, 204. ↩
11. Stevan Moljević, "Homogena Srbija", 141. ↩
12. www.hrt.hr/Index.php?id=48&tx_ttnew… ↩
13. Ibid. ↩

14. See: Tade Smičiklas, *Dvjestogodišnjica oslobođenja Slavonije, I: Slavonija i druge hrvatske zemlje pod Turskom i rat oslobođenja,* Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1891, 102. ↩
15. See: Hizvija Hasandedić, *Muslimanska baština Bošnjaka 2: Herceg Novi i okolina. Vrgorac i okolina. Imotska krajina. Makarsko primorje. Zapadna Hercegovina,* Mostar: Islamski kulturni centar, 1999: Radoslav Lopašić, ed., *Spomenici hrvatske krajine*, 3, Zagreb: For sale at L. Hartmann's bookshop (Kugli i Deutsch), 1889, 29, and Stipan Zlatović, *Franovci Države presvet. odkupitelja i hrvatski puk u Dalmaciji,* Zagreb: C. Albrecht's Printers and Lithographers, 1888. ↩
16. Mile Lasić, "Kako su Turci daleko od Balkana", *Slobodna Bosna*, 761/17 (2011): 38-41, 38. ↩
17. Idem, "Hrvatima ne treba guverner iz Sarajeva", interview with Jurica Gudelj, *Oslobođenje*, 22nd of November, 2011, 5. ↩
18. "Bosnian Muslims remain surrounded, even today", a speech by the Bishop of Zahumlje, Herzegovina, and the Coast, by Vladika Grigorij at a session of Krug 99, on the 19th of June, 2011; in *Oslobođenje*, 20th of June, 2011, 3. ↩
19. "Ko je učestovao u zaštiti Mladića moraće da odgovara", *Politika*, 4th June, 2011, 5. ↩
20. "Dialog slomio sablju OHR-a", Politika, 30th of May, 2011, 8. ↩
21. Ibid. ↩
22. "Nema hemije koja može ujediniti BiH"; Politika, 30th of May, 2011, http://www.politika.rs/republike/Politika/178084.sr.html. ↩
23. Ibid. ↩
24. Petar Petrović Njegoš, *Gorski Vijenac*, Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1981, 57-58. ↩
25. "Nema hemije koja može ujediniti BiH"; *Politika*, 30th of May, 2011, http://www.politika.rs/republike/Politika/178084.sr.html. ↩
26. "Moramo naći rješenje za bosanske Hrvate", *Oslobođenje*, 8th of June, 2011, 5. ↩
27. "Gdje su sada 325.852 Hrvata?", an interview with Brother Luke Markešić by Mimi Đurović-Rukavina, Oslobođenje, 3rd of Jula, 2011, 5. ↩
28. Ibid. ↩
29. "Ni posljednim ratom nisu riješeni nacionalni problem u BiH"; u Večernji list: Obzor, 399 (2011): 14-17, 17. ↩
30. Kliker.info, http://www.kliker.info/index.php?id=15746. ↩
31. Ćosić, "*O Stvaranju Republike Srpske* i njenom piscu", 10. ↩
32. Qur'an, 3:83. ↩
33. Cited in: Ivan Meštrović, *Uspomene na političke ljude i događaje*, Buenos Aires, Knjižnica Hrvatske revije, 196, 73; taken from Ivo Banac, *Nacionalno pitanje u Jugoslaviji: Porijeklo, povijest, politika*, trans. Josip Šentija, Zagreb: Durieux, 1995, 84. ↩
34. KDZ051 testimony, *Krajišnik*, T.11278. Krajisnik case, ICTY Archive; cited in: Edina Bećirević, "The Issue of Genocidal Intent and Denial of Genocide: A Case Study of Bosnia and Herzegovina", *East European Politics & Societies,* 24/4 (2010): 480-502, 486. ↩
35. *Globus*, 17th August, 2007, 81. ↩
36. See: Boris Tadić, "Moramo naći rješenje za bosanske Hrvate", *Oslobođenje*, 8th of June, 2011, 5. ↩
37. Ćosić, "*O Stvaranju Republike Srpske* i njenom piscu", 29. ↩
38. Those who contest Bosnia as a state, culture, or political entity regularly accuse the

country's defenders of advocating a unitary state. This is a very frequent cover to disguise the responsibility of the neighbouring states for destructive action against this country. Nor is it difficult to discern the anti-Muslim contents of this construction, which is comparable to the European heritage of anti-Semitism. According to this construction, a unitary Bosnia would mean enabling the majority, which is inadmissible, because that majority is "Muslim". See, for example: Darko Tanasković, *Neoosmanizam: Doktrina i spoljnopolitička praksa*, Belgrade: Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije, 2010, 29. ↩

39. *Oslobođenje*, statement reported on the seventh of April, 2011. ↩
40. In: "Nije lako, ali Srbija ne treba da stane zbog Kosova", an interview with Vesna Pusić, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, with Julijan Mosjilović Dežulović, *Novi magazin,* the 19th of January, 2012, 22-25, 24. ↩

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