

**THE INTERNAL PLURALIZATION OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY
OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA:
FROM RELIGIOUS ACTIVATION TO RADICALIZATION**

Sarah J. Schlesinger

Master's Research Paper

International Relations and Religion

Advised by Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou

Submitted April 19, 2011

Boston University

I would like to thank my mentor and advisor, Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou, for providing me with invaluable guidance, insight, and support, not only during the thesis process, but throughout the entirety of my graduate school experience.

I would also like to thank my family for their support, encouragement, and love during my two years in graduate school and especially this past semester as I have been completing this thesis.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	3
Chapter One: Introduction	4
Chapter Two: Current Methodological Frameworks	9
<i>Bosnian Muslim versus Bosniak</i>	10
<i>Traditional Moderate Bosnian Islam versus Salafism/Wahhabism</i>	11
<i>The Ethno-National Framework</i>	14
<i>The Global Security Framework</i>	17
<i>The Need for a Different Perspective</i>	20
Chapter 3: The Historical Background of the Muslim Community of Bosnia	21
<i>The Origins of Islam in the Balkans</i>	21
<i>The Early Islamic Community of Bosnia</i>	23
<i>Islam in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia</i>	25
<i>The Bosnian War: 1992-1995</i>	29
<i>The Islamic Community During the War</i>	35
<i>After Dayton</i>	39
Chapter Four: From Religious Activation to Religious Pluralization.....	42
<i>The Internal Consolidation of Muslim Identity in Bosnia</i>	43
<i>External Factors Affecting the New Muslim Identity</i>	50
<i>Radicalization Appears in the Muslim Community</i>	54
<i>The Moderate Majority in the Bosnian Muslim Community</i>	57
Chapter Five: The Voice of Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina.....	59
<i>The Central Figures in Pluralistic Muslim Bosnia</i>	60
<i>The Salafi/Wahhabi-Moderate Struggle Over Education</i>	67
Chapter Six: Conclusion	70
Bibliography	73
Appendix: Research Proposal	82

Abstract

Since the Bosnian War of 1992-1995, there has been a significant amount of work examining the breakdown of inter-group relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, approaching the issue from two perspectives: ethno-national or global security. Both of these approaches view the Bosnian Muslim community as a monolithic, static bloc: either completely secular, with Muslim identity only existing as an ethnic marker to indicate membership in a “nation”; or completely radicalized, with Muslim identity having been co-opted entirely by foreign influences seeking to spread radical Islam. Rejecting such essentialist notions, this paper uses a two-level analysis to demonstrate that the Bosnian Muslim community has experienced an activation of religious identity resulting in pluralization, which is currently manifested in the co-existence of a small group of radical Muslims who embrace Salafism/Wahhabism and a majority of Bosnian Muslims who adhere to a unique, Bosnian form of Islam. A series of internal conditions were created in the period prior to and during the Bosnian War that provided the necessary atmosphere for an activation of Muslim identity; these conditions included the repression of religiosity under socialism; marginalization by Serbs and Croats of Bosnian Muslims as the “Other”; and mobilization and consolidation of Muslim identity by charismatic political and religious leaders. In the period during and following the war, a number of external factors, the success of which was contingent on the existence of the internal conditions, combined with the activated religious identity of Bosnian Muslims to pluralize the population. These external factors were the influx of veteran *mujahedin* and Islamic agencies that arrived in Bosnia assist the Muslim community. Pluralization has resulted in a struggle for dominance of the Muslim community between the traditional moderate Muslims and the Salafis/Wahhabis, both of whom see themselves as the true voice of Islam in Bosnia. This paper illuminates the intra-group dynamics of the Bosnian Muslim community, examining the role of religion within one “nation” in Bosnia rather than focusing on how religion has been instrumentalized in inter-group relations.

Chapter One: Introduction

In the early 1990s, Eastern Europe became an object of intense interest for Western observers. As former totalitarian regimes crumbled, new states emerged from the ruins to embrace democracy. For some nations, however, the transition was far from ideal. For almost four years, the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was embroiled in a bloody war of secession centered in the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Bosnian War raged from 1992 to 1995, ending abruptly with NATO intervention and the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement in December 1995. Although the legal basis of the conflict was the secession of states from the former Yugoslavia, the nature of the war defied easy explanation, complicated further by the identities of the three parties involved: the Orthodox Christian Bosnian Serbs, the Roman Catholic Bosnian Croats, and the Bosnian Muslims, also known as “Bosniaks.”¹ The very listing of these categories illustrates part of the confusion. The Bosnian Serbs are Orthodox Christian, while the Bosnian Croats are Roman Catholic. The Bosnian Muslims, however, seemed to be missing part of the identity equation: they possessed no separate ethnic marker such as “Serb” or “Croat” and were identified solely by their religion.

Under the socialist regime of Josip Broz Tito, religious identity was repressed to near non-existence; although “Muslim” by tradition, the Bosnian Muslim population was moderate in practice and minimally observant. By the time the SFRY began to dissolve, most young people in this community had little understanding of what it meant to be Muslim. Due to the unique, syncretic nature of Bosnian Islam, which interweaves Slavic cultural traditions and regional history with Muslim practices, it was difficult for Bosnian Muslims to conceive that this would set them apart from their Christian neighbors. However, by the end of the Bosnian War, a series of internal factors had created conditions in which Muslim religious identity was “activated,” resulting in a revival of Islam for a population that was long considered non-religious.

¹ The ethno-political connotations of the category of “Bosniak” will be explored in Chapter Two.

To many observers,² the story of the religious revival of Bosnian Muslims ends with the signing of Dayton. With the war over and Muslims no longer targeted as a result of their religious designation, it appeared as though Bosnian Muslims settled back into their secular traditions. However, by the end of the war, the process by which the religious identity of the Bosnian Muslim community was activated – the catalyzation of internal conditions which provided the necessary contingencies for successful external influence – had taken place. The result of this process was the internal pluralization of a Muslim community that had previously seen very little religious variation. One manifestation of the pluralization of the Bosnian Muslim community is visible in the radicalization of a small but vocal portion of the Bosnian Muslim population, which has embraced the conservative form of Islam known as Salafism.³ Pluralization, however, suggests that there are multiple outcomes from the activation of religious identity: radicalization of a small group was accomplished, but it is incomplete to focus only on this aspect of the Bosnian Muslim community, as the majority of the population has experienced a religious revival within the borders of traditional “Bosnian Islam.” Thus it is also inaccurate to posit that the Bosnian Muslim community is an entirely secular entity, devoid of religion and only ethnically Muslim.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the process and manifestations of the religious pluralization of the Muslim community of Bosnia.⁴ Through analysis of the mechanics of pluralization, it is possible to recognize the factors which contribute to the revival of religious identity and the conditions which are necessary to initiate radicalization of this religious identity. Very little work has focused on this specific process in the Bosnian Muslim community. Rather, the community has primarily been the subject of analysis from two perspectives: ethno-national, insofar as “Muslim” is considered the ethnic identity of a wholly non-religious population; or global security, in that analysts focus on the development of Islamic terrorist organizations in Bosnia during the war and examine the possibility of Bosnia as a future nexus of terrorist networks. The results of this limited analysis are a variety of monolithic, static assumptions about the Muslim community of Bosnia: Muslims are depicted as either a wholly secular, ethno-national group

² There is minimal English-language work addressing religiosity in post-Dayton Bosnia.

³ The precise nature of the forms of conservative Islam in Bosnia will be investigated in later chapters.

⁴ Henceforth “Bosnia” refers to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

which functions primarily as a political unit and in which there is no internal pluralism, or as a Muslim “bloc” which has been thoroughly penetrated by radical Islamic influences and thus presents a wholesale danger from the global security perspective. This paper rejects such universal and essentialist claims about the Bosnian Muslim community. Instead, it seeks to demonstrate that the Bosnian Muslim community has experienced division as a result of religious factors, and the pluralism now present necessitates that the community be viewed as fluid, dynamic, and irreducible to a monolithic bloc. As such, general assumptions about Bosnian Muslims as a secular ethnic-national group or a security threat must be altered to incorporate a deeper understanding of the complex religious landscape at play.

Muslim identity in Bosnia was susceptible to activation given the appropriate conditions. The internal conditions, created by marginalization of the Bosnian Muslims by the Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats as well as the manipulation of Muslim identity by Muslim leaders, converged with external factors whose ability to alter the religious identity of Bosnian Muslims was contingent on the presence of the pre-existing internal conditions. The result of this process was a progression from religious activation to religious pluralism within the community, as manifested in the appearance and increasing influence of a conservative form of Islam which co-exists with traditional Bosnian Islam. This progression occurred, therefore, as a result of both internal and external factors.

The internal factors arose from inter-religious dynamics of the Yugoslav landscape prior to and during the war, including repression of religiosity under socialism; marginalization by Serbs and Croats of Bosnian Muslims as the “Other”; and religious mobilization and Muslim identity consolidation by charismatic political and religious leaders. A series of external factors came into play during the years of 1992-1995, which acted upon the activated religious identity of Muslims. These external factors include the influx of veteran *mujahedin* and Islamic agencies that arrived in Bosnia to defend, assist, and ultimately rebuild the Muslim community. Both the foreign fighters and the agencies introduced to Bosnia the heretofore unknown brand of Islam known as Salafism, and more specifically the Saudi version of Salafism, Wahhabism.

This paper will begin in Chapter Two with a review of the most common methodologies used to analyze the Muslim community in Bosnia, as means of contextualizing this work. These frameworks tend to fall into two categories: the “ethno-nationalist” analysis, a political science-oriented approach which argues that the religious aspects of Bosnian Muslim identity have become subsumed within a larger “national” Bosniak identity, which is primarily ethno-national and only nominally Muslim in nature; and the “global security threat” analysis, a security studies-oriented approach which identifies the Muslim population of Bosnia as a monolithic entity that has been infiltrated and radicalized as a whole by foreign influences and therefore poses a major security risk to the stability of both Bosnia and Europe. These approaches have been useful for assessing the role of the Bosnian Muslim community in the new ethno-political schema in Bosnia and the place of Bosnia in regional and global terror networks (respectively). In the post-Dayton period, the governance of Bosnia has been split among three parties – the Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Croats, and Bosnian Muslims – who have been designated as such based on their ethno-national identification, thus highlighting the need for understanding the political divisions between ethno-national groups in Bosnia. Likewise, the investigation of radical Muslim groups within Bosnia through the lens of global security has become increasingly important as connections with terrorist organizations have been uncovered.

However, these methodologies do not address the complex development of the Bosnian Muslim community from the perspective of the factor which resulted in its marginalization in Bosnian society: its religious identity. Ethno-politics are an ethno-nationalist phenomenon which has been conflated with religion in the former Yugoslavia; this is an epiphenomenon resulting from heavy emphasis in the SFRY on divisions among nations based on ethnic identity, or *narod* (“nation”). When viewing this community from an ethnic perspective, the importance of religion tends to fall out of the equation or become subsumed within the framework as part of ethnicity. The global security perspective tends in the other direction, suggesting that religion has created a community overrun by religious fanatics and susceptible to terrorism. The errors in this approach are twofold: not only is religious radicalism limited to a specific

sector of the population, it is also a different phenomenon from religious terrorism, and although the two frequently are linked, these phenomena should not be conflated.

Although Islam is linked to the ethno-politics present in Bosnia and the potential for terrorist activity, these methods instrumentalize Islam and Muslim identity, focusing on it as a means by which other elements of identity have come to the fore. But Islam is not simply a vessel for other agendas in Bosnia; it is first and foremost a religion, and therefore the process of activation and pluralization should be analyzed from the perspective of the study of religion.

The purpose of this paper is not to prove the existence of a minority⁵ of radical Muslims in Bosnia or to evaluate the influence of this group on inter-group relations, but rather to investigate the process by which this minority developed within the Muslim community, resulting in internal pluralism, and how this pluralism has complicated communal relations within the Bosnian Muslim population. Therefore it is essential to establish the context in which Islam spread to Southeastern Europe and how the Muslim community has developed historically. Chapter Three will present an historical overview of the Muslim community in Bosnia. This history provides a picture of the foundational community as a baseline from which the dynamics of the current community developed. The history also illuminates, in a clear chronology, the recent events which gave rise to the internal and external factors related to pluralization. Chapter Four then examines the sociological process by which Bosnian Muslim identity was consolidated, activated, and pluralized in the context of this historical period. This two-level analysis first will investigate how internal factors created the conditions in which the activation of Muslim identity occurred, and then how external factors acted upon these internal conditions to result in the pluralization of the Muslim community. Chapter Five will examine the manifestations of pluralism as they have

⁵ According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life's October 2009 survey, there are approximately 1.52 million Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The number of Bosnian Muslims who embrace a "radical" form of Islam is estimated to be in the low thousands. See: "Mapping the Global Muslim Population," Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (October 2009), <http://pewforum.org/uploadedfiles/Topics/Demographics/Muslimpopulation.pdf> (retrieved 4 April 2010) and Mirnes Kovac, "Bosnia-Herzegovina," in *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, 2009 edition, eds. Jørgen S. Nielsen and Samim Akgönül (Lieden: Brill, 2009).

appeared in the Muslim community since the end of the Bosnian War and how the different forms of Islam in Bosnia have come into conflict with one another. Chapter Six will provide conclusions.

Chapter Two: Current Methodological Frameworks

In order to support the claim for the need to analyze the development of Muslim identity in Bosnia through the lens of religion, it is necessary to review the current methodological frameworks in which the study of Islam in Bosnia has largely occurred.⁶ Conventional work on this community has focused on two perspectives. The first is ethno-national, assuming that Islam and Muslim identity in Bosnia have been subsumed under the ethno-national identification of “Bosniak” and that Islam no longer has relevance apart from its role in designating those who belong in this category. The second perspective is the global security lens, which interprets the sudden presence of a more conservative form of Islam in Bosnia as applicable to the entirety of the community, such that Bosnian Muslims as a whole now constitute a security risk due to the presence of Salafism/Wahhabism. Both of these approaches reduce the Bosnian Muslim community to a monolithic, homogenous bloc – of either totally secularized ethno-nationalists or radicalized Islamists who have been co-opted by foreign influences.

Before exploring the specifics of these two dominant methodological frameworks for examining the Bosnian Muslim community, it is necessary to define some terms which are common to these methods and will be used in this paper. In most cases, these terms are contested as to their applicability to Bosnian

⁶ Two important points bear noting. First, the work that falls within these two methodological frameworks is often excellent in its academic rigor, and some of the information contained therein is therefore utilized in this paper; the criticism of these books is not that they contain erroneous information but rather that their focus often omits religion in favor of ethno-nationalism. The second point is that the ethno-national and global security lenses are dominant but not completely inclusive of all work on inter-group relations in Bosnia. It is also important to stress that the vast majority of work on inter-group relations in Bosnia relates to the war period and does not extend into the post-Dayton period. There are some notable exceptions to these frameworks, which do indeed focus strongly on religious identity in Bosnia both within and beyond the Bosnian War. Tone Bringa’s work in this field is exemplary, as her specific focus is on an anthropological examination of Bosnian Muslim identity, and thus her work is often expanded beyond the narrow timeframe of the Bosnian War. In addition, Rusmir Mahmutcehajic’s work is dedicated overwhelmingly to the exploration of religion as the root of conflict in Bosnia. However, I have purposely avoided using his work in this paper as it is undeniably biased due to his close relationship with Alija Izetbegović, a long career entangled in the Bosnian Muslim political network, and a very specific rendering of Bosnian history. His work is designed to promote what he refers to as “Traditionalism,” or the religious unity and coexistence in Bosnia which he sees as the true tradition of Bosnia. For a strong critique of his approach, see Mitchell Young, “Religion, Community, Identity: Rusmir Mahmutcehajic and the Future of Bosnia” (paper presented at the Kokkalis Program Graduate School Workshop, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 5 February 2004), <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/kokkalis/GSW7/GSW%206/Mitchell%20Young%20Paper.pdf>.

Muslims, and depending on the perspective of the author, different terms may be used instead, or the same term may be used but with an alternative meaning.

Bosnian Muslim versus Bosniak

“Bosniak” was a term previously used by both Ottoman and Habsburg authorities to designate those who lived in Bosnia (the region)⁷; it fell out of use in the early 20th century but was revived in the early 1990s by Bosnian intellectuals seeking to counter increasingly nationalist Serb and Croat rhetoric.⁸ The debate over the use of the term primarily revolved around the desire to create a separate designation for Bosnian Muslims which would settle the question of whether “Muslim” was a religious or ethnic designation. Bosnian President Alija Izetbegović⁹ was a proponent of the term, as it would definitively exclude Bosnian Muslims from being considered Serbs or Croats. According to anthropologist Tone Bringa, the use of the term Bosniak organized the Muslims into “a near ethno-national category its neighbors and the international community can deal with and understand. They have been forced by the war and the logic of the creation of nation-states to search for their origins and establish a ‘legitimate’ and continuous national history.”¹⁰ The term Bosniak, thus, is one which Yugoslav authorities imposed upon Bosnian Muslims in order to give them national coherence as separate from Serbs and Croats and inherently Muslim. The problem “Bosniak” is twofold: it deemphasizes the importance of the practice of Islam to Muslim identity in Bosnia while concurrently setting apart all those who are not legally defined as Serbs or Croats as Muslim, emphasizing the legal gulf between Muslims and other national groups. Bosniak has also become a primarily political division: it is the formal name for the ethno-national group of Bosnian Muslims, and legal and political rights are embedded in the identification with this group.¹¹

⁷ Tone Bringa, *Being Muslim the Bosnian Way: Identity and Community in a Central Bosnian Village* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 237n.25.

⁸ Bringa, *Being Muslim*, 34.

⁹ Izetbegović became the first president of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1990 and served in this capacity until 1996, when he became part of the first rotating presidency as mandated by the Dayton Accords of 1995. He served on the presidency of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina until 2000.

¹⁰ Bringa, *Being Muslim*, 35-6.

¹¹ For more information about the legal distinctions between the governing ethnic groups, see the full text of the Dayton Peace Agreement at the State Department website at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/or/dayton/52607.htm> (retrieved 1 April 2011).

Additionally, the term “Bosniak” has now expanded beyond the borders of Bosnia and is used in reference to any ethnic Slav who is Muslim, significantly enhancing confusion over the term.¹² The World Factbook of the Central Intelligence Agency now uses the term “Bosniak” instead of “Bosnian Muslim” in its listing of main ethnic groups, noting that “Bosniak has replaced Muslim as an ethnic term in part to avoid confusion with the religious term Muslim - an adherent of Islam.”¹³ Given that this paper emphasizes the development of the Muslim community in Bosnia through a religious lens, Bosnian Muslims will be referred to as such in order to specify this particular religious community, unless the term “Bosniak” is warranted for political reasons.

Traditional Moderate Bosnian Islam versus Salafism/Wahhabism

“Moderate Islam” as it pertains to Bosnia requires careful clarification, as this terminology refers to a particular syncretic practice of Islam that combines traditional Islamic teachings and practice with local customs and traditions. Islam arrived in Southeastern Europe with the invading forces of the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century.¹⁴ With the exception of some small Sufi brotherhoods, the majority of Bosnian Muslims historically have been Sunnis who follow the Hanafi school of Islam. The mandate of the Islamic Community of Bosnia, which is the official organization of the Muslim population in Bosnia, specifically states that it adheres to the Hanafi madhhab (one of four schools of Sunni Islamic law).¹⁵ Hanafi Islam is associated with a strong reliance on opinion and use of reason and “is called the most liberal of the Sunni madhhabs.”¹⁶ In addition to adherence to Hanafi law, Bosnian Islam owes much to the theological teachings of Muhammad Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, a 10th century Persian scholar and pioneer of Islamic jurisprudence and theology, and a favorite of Gazi Husrev Bey, the 15th century Ottoman administrator who founded the largest *madrasah* in Bosnia. As Bosnia’s primary clerical training

¹² For example, Muslims in the Sandzak region of Serbia are called “Bosniaks.”

¹³ “Bosnia and Herzegovina,” *The World Factbook 2009* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2009), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html>.

¹⁴ See Chapter Three for detailed explanation of Islam’s establishment in Bosnia.

¹⁵ Ahmet Alibasić, “Traditional and Reformist Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina” (C-SIS Working Paper No 2., Cambridge Programme for Security in International Society, 2003),

http://www.iseef.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=42.

¹⁶ Juan Eduardo Campo, “Hanafi Legal School,” in *Encyclopedia of Islam* (New York: Facts on File, 2009), 287.

institution since its establishment in the late 15th century,¹⁷ the curriculum of the *madrasah* emphasized the teachings of al-Maturidi as the theological basis for Bosnian clerics. The Maturidi school is “keen to use reason within the limits of Orthodoxy, and shun[s] literalism.”¹⁸ Current Grand Mufti of the Islamic Community of Bosnia Dr. Mustafa Cerić has said that “the vitality of Bosnian interpretation of Islam in light of the rationality of al-Maturidi’s kalam [theology] and the practicality of Hanafi fiqh [jurisprudence] has played a major role in the process of an Islamic reformation in Bosnia.”¹⁹

Bringa notes that this information describes “Islam” in Bosnia, but that this differs greatly from what she calls “Muslim customs” in Bosnia. That is, there is general knowledge about Islamic law and its proper application among Muslims in Bosnia, gained through books, schooling, and local teachers. However, Bringa discovered that the “definitional overlap of the [Islam as a religious system] did not fit the actual practices and experiences” of local Muslims.²⁰ Ideas of what constitutes Muslim customs, therefore, differ among localities within Bosnia and incorporate a wide variety of traditions related to gender roles, lifecycle rites, and community organization that are locally Bosnian, or Slavic, in nature. She concludes by asserting that Bosnian Muslim identity “has to be considered in terms of a specific Bosnian dimension which for Bosnian Muslims has implied sharing a history and locality with Bosnians of other non-Islamic religious traditions.”²¹ For Bosnian Muslims, Islam provided a cultural heritage, a historical legacy, and a set of customs and practices, as well as an annual calendar organized according to holy days.²² “Bosnian Islam,” therefore, is best described as a syncretic form of Islam that incorporates local cultural customs and traditions and adheres to moderate legal and theological schools.

During the Bosnian War of 1992-1995, foreign fighters (*mujahedin*) arrived in Bosnia to assist the Bosnian Muslim population; these *mujahedin* embraced a conservative form of Islam which they

¹⁷ Willem B. Drees and Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld, *The Study of Religion and the Training of Muslim Clergy in Europe: Academic and Religious Freedom in the 21st Century* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2008), 24.

¹⁸ Abdullah Saeed, *Islamic Thought* (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), 70.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Bringa, *Being Muslim*, 228.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 231.

²² Tone Bringa, "Islam and the Quest for Identity in Post-Communist Bosnia-Herzegovina," in *Islam and Bosnia: Conflict Resolution and Foreign Policy in Multi-Ethnic States*, Maya Shatzmiller ed. (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 24-34.

attempted to impart on local Muslim communities in Bosnia.²³ Many of the *mujahedin* promoted a conservative branch of Sunni Islam known as Salafism. Salafism has become very difficult to pin down as an ideology, as it is highly fragmented and “has become a movement with mixed, and recently even contradictory tendencies which have sprung up in different regions.”²⁴ The major doctrinal appeal for believers of Salafism’s unique form of Islamic interpretation and jurisprudence is in its perceived absolute purity; it promotes a return to the basic study of the sources of Islam, the Qur’an and the hadith; it rejects adherence to one of the four traditional schools of Islamic law (one of which is Hanafi); it accepts *ijtihad*, the practice of individual interpretation, but within very strict guidelines; and most notably, it is literalist, rejecting attempts to adapt Islam to modern life,²⁵ which is in stark contrast to the Hanafi school of Islam and its anti-literalist stance. Salafism in general is considered to be “radical” in that it deviates uncompromisingly and unrepentantly from other strains of Islam and is strongly associated with radical Islamic terror groups, as *jihadist* ideology finds its basis in Salafi teachings.²⁶ Its rigid theology and strict adherence to law has provided the foundation for numerous Sunni *jihad* movements, including Hamas in Gaza and the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan.²⁷ There is thus a tendency to assume that a Muslim who adheres to Salafism is also a *jihadist*.

The most prominent form of Salafism today – and the form most important for this paper – is Wahhabism. Wahhabism is a religious phenomenon that is rooted in Saudi Arabia; it finds its origins in the 18th century, with Arabian scholar Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Working from the Hanbali school of law, al-Wahhab emphasized a purification of Islam:

Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab’s writings are generally on issues about which a number of key reformers of the twelfth/eighteenth century were concerned: the return to the pure Islam of the Qur’an and the Sunna; the rejection of popular religious practices such as the veneration of saints and treating their tombs as shrines; the rejection of the blind following of earlier scholars; and an emphasis on *ijtihad*. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab argued for a return to the methodology of the salaf and the literal reading of the Qur’an as far as the names and attributes of God were concerned. He rejected Sufi practices almost entirely as heretical and

²³ Chapters Three and Four explain this process in detail.

²⁴ Roel Meijer, *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁶ Juan José Escobar Stemann, “Middle East Salafism’s Influence And Radicalization Of Muslim Communities In Europe,” *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (September 2006).

²⁷ Juan Eduardo Campo, “Salafism,” *Encyclopedia of Islam*, (New York: Facts on File, 2009), 602.

against Islam...the Wahhabi movement highlighted a 'return to pristine Islam,' calling for a strict observance of and adherence to the teachings associated with the idea of unity of God. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab also called for the strict observance of the shari'a and did not hesitate to bypass the formulations of the four schools of law (madhhab).²⁸

Al-Wahhab joined a local tribal chief, Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, to create an alliance which would facilitate the spread of his form of Islam throughout the Arabian Peninsula. The region they conquered – and converted to Wahhabism, as it became known – would eventually become the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.²⁹ The government of Saudi Arabia today enforces its official interpretation of Islam, Wahhabism, and discriminates heavily against those who do not adhere to it. Although the form of conservative Islam found among a small portion of the Bosnian population today is often referred to as Wahhabism, it is also sometimes referred to in the context of the broader movement of Salafism. In order to avoid confusion, this paper will refer to the conservative form of Islam in Bosnia as Salafism/Wahhabism or, alternately, "radical Islam," in that it deviates radically from the majority-practiced form of Hanafi Islam.

The Ethno-National Framework

The first common methodological framework for analyzing the Bosnian Muslim community revolves around ethno-national designation.³⁰ This body of work began to gain precedence during the Bosnian War, with the increasing exposure of the divisions in the former Yugoslavia. It is true that historically, religion and nationality were tied together in the Balkans, particularly under the millet system of the Ottoman Empire which organized subjects of the empire according to religious confession. It is also true that religious practice was forcibly repressed during the nearly fifty years of communism in

²⁸ Saeed, *Islamic Thought*, 131-2.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ For examples of literature which look at the Bosnian Muslim community through the ethno-national lens, see: Neven Andjelic, *Bosnia-Herzegovina: The End of a Legacy* (London: Frank Cass, 2003); Aladin Baljak, *Bosnia: The Security Dilemma That Did Not Exist - An Investigation Into the Causes of Ethnic Violence* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2008); Sumantra Bose, *Bosnia After Dayton: Nationalist Partition and International Intervention* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Steven L. Burg and Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999); Alastair Finlan, *The Collapse of Yugoslavia: 1991-99* (Oxford: Osprey, 2004); and Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804-1999* (New York: Viking, 2000). It bears noting that these are all excellent works on ethnic conflict in Bosnia; they are listed here due to their focus on ethno-nationalism as the divisive factor in Bosnia and a lack of focus on religion.

Yugoslavia. When the Yugoslav authorities designated “national groups,” or *narod*,³¹ as a means of dividing territory and political control in the federation of republics, the five original *narod* corresponded to specific ethno-national groups –Croats, Serbs, Montenegrins, Slovenes, and Macedonians. The Bosnian Muslims, however, were Slavs like the other ethno-national groups of Yugoslavia, differentiated only by their religious confession, as the other five *narod* were all Christian (Orthodox or Roman Catholic). This proved problematic for the Yugoslav authorities. In order to place this population (well over a million at the time) into a category comparable to the other *narod*, Tito granted Bosnian Muslims the legal status of *narod*, officially designating them a separate nation within the Yugoslav state.

This fact, combined with the repression of religious practice under communism, created an impression that the Bosnian Muslim population is an ethno-national group which, though defined by its religious nature, actually has very little to do with the religion itself. This is connected to the issue of terminology to which the CIA World Factbook alluded: “Bosnian Muslim” and “Bosniak” are often used interchangeably, which is erroneous because “Bosniak” no longer includes only Bosnians who practice Islam.³² Thus, when works of political science analyze this community, they analyze “Bosniaks” – the ethnically-identified political entity which functions as one of the three nations in Bosnia.

In addition to the emphasis on this “nation” as a political entity, Bosnian Muslims are, as a nation, often referred to as secular, liberal, and moderate. To some extent, this is true; as previously described, Bosnian Islam adheres to legal and theological schools that are liberal in nature. However, ethno-national literature tends to stress the secular feature of Bosnian Muslim identity, as a means of suggesting that the “Bosniak” identity has a weak correlation with the practice of Islam and a strong correlation with ethnic identification with a group. Francine Friedman³³ demonstrates this approach in her chapter in Paul Mojzes’ *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, in which she quotes a young Muslim soldier:

³¹ *Narod* is the Serbo-Croatian term for “nation” or “a people.”

³² World Factbook.

³³ Friedman, a professor of Political Science at Ball State University focusing on ethnic conflict, has completed extensive work on the Bosnian Muslim community, including a rich, detailed history of the population, *The Bosnian Muslims: Denial of a Nation* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996). However, Friedman’s approach to the study of Bosnia-Herzegovina in general and Bosnian Muslims in particular focuses on ethnicity and nationalism as the cause

I never thought of myself as Muslim. I don't know how to pray, I never went to mosque, I'm European, like you. I do not want the Arab world to help us, I want Europe to help us. But now, I do have to think of myself as a Muslim, not in a religious way, but as a member of the people. Now we are faced with obliteration, I have to understand what it is about me and my people they wish to obliterate."³⁴

The use of this quote exemplifies the ethno-national approach: her intention is to show that these are Muslims in name only, and that the identification of a Bosnian as "Muslim" is not about religion, but about assigning status as part of a specific ethnic nation to obtain political representation. Reliance on ethnic identification removes religion from the equation, which creates a paradox when religion is being used as the defining factor. As will be explained later, regardless of the traditional level of religiosity in a community, being identified and marginalized based on religion may awaken a sense of religious identity which was heretofore latent. The above quote is an excellent example of that process – this soldier never considered himself religious but now seeks to understand more about what it means to be Muslim in order to understand why he has been stigmatized, contributing to a revival of religious identity.

Regardless, the majority of analysis on the Yugoslav wars and the post-Dayton period prefers to treat the Bosnian Muslim community as "Bosniaks" – a discrete political entity that serves as one third of a tripartite system of ethno-national groups in Bosnia. These works can be misleading as they often reference religion as integral to their discussion, but they emphasize the conflation between religion and ethno-national identity. The term "Muslim" is an ethnic, rather than a religious marker, and often is used in conjunction with a caveat explaining that being Muslim in Bosnia is a national designation, not a religious one. This approach had its merits in the early stages of the war. However, the very process of separating out the Bosnian Muslims had enormous repercussions: as illustrated by the quote from the soldier above, Muslims who previously had little connection to Islam were now keenly aware that they belonged to a specific religio-cultural tradition which set them apart and made them different from the other ethno-national groups in the SFRY, who were also Slavic but Christian.

of modern tensions within the region; she renders the history of Bosnian Muslims as an inevitable build-up to the emergence of ethno-nationalism. In this way, her work falls into the ethno-national category in that it subsumes religious identity within a larger "ethnic" identity.

³⁴ Francine Friedman, "The Bosnian Muslim National Question," in *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, ed. Paul Mojzes, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 1-9.

The recognition of this process – the activation of religious identity and the exploration within Bosnian Muslim society of Muslim identity – is notably absent from the ethno-national framework. By focusing on the primacy of ethno-nationalism, this approach views religion as an epiphenomenon that is subordinate to ethnicity and its importance for national identity. With the construction of the tripartite political system split between the Serb, Croat, and Bosniak nations, much post-Dayton work has focused on the difficulty in establishing a viable state in Bosnia given the institutionalized separation of ethnic groups. This has had two consequences for current understandings of the Muslim community: the first is that it has effectively removed religion as a factor worthy of investigation in modern Bosnia because it assumes that it is now absent or irrelevant, with political membership in an ethnic nation being the most important factor; the second is that it has engendered an assumption that Bosnian Muslims, as a homogenous community represented by one voice, are universally secular and therefore unaffected by religious phenomena.

The Global Security Framework

The bulk of contemporary work related to the Bosnian Muslim community revolves around the possibility of a security threat.³⁵ The focus of this work is the presence of radical Islam in Bosnia, and it tends to emphasize that this presence is an entirely external phenomenon, resulting from foreign infiltration by outsiders who imposed radical Islam on an unwilling native population. Like the ethno-national framework, this is not entirely inaccurate.³⁶ However, analyzing the presence of new forms of Islam in Bosnia as an exclusively external phenomenon is problematic. It removes agency from the Bosnian Muslims and depicts them as bystanders while others act on them, powerless to intervene in a potential fundamentalist takeover. It also suggests that there were no internal processes within the Muslim community that created the environment necessary for the successful penetration of radical Islam. Much

³⁵ For examples of literature that focuses on Bosnian Muslims in the global security context, see: Christopher Deliso, *The Coming Balkan Caliphate* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007); Evan Kohlmann, *Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network* (Oxford: Berg, 2004); Shaul Shay, *Islamic Terror and the Balkans* (Herzliya: Interdisciplinary Center, 2007); and John Schindler, *Unholy Terror: Bosnia, al-Qa'ida, and the Rise of Global Jihad* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2007);

³⁶ Radical Islam was “imported” into Bosnia, and the population has been largely unreceptive to its presence due to its sharp contrast with traditional Bosnian Islam. This will be further explored in Chapters Three and Four.

like the ethno-national approach, this framework suggests that the community is a monolithic bloc incapable of internal variation – the change had to be imposed from the outside. This has also contributed to an assumption that radical Islam has spread throughout the entirety of the population, and this demonstrates the true danger in examining the community through this lens: although the vast majority of these works do not implicate the entirety of the Bosnian Muslim community, the take-away points from their work is that Muslims in Bosnia present a problem. Indeed, these works tend to focus only on the (admittedly small) radical elements in the Muslim community, ignoring the community as a whole, such that the only picture of Bosnian Muslims presented to the world is one of radicalism. By focusing on only the radical portion of the Muslim community, the internal pluralism of Islam in Bosnia is relegated to the background.

One of the most recent and widely circulated books in this milieu is Christopher Deliso’s *The Coming Balkan Caliphate*, published in 2008. Deliso himself is a well-respected, well-published journalist who works on the Balkans and operates the website *Balkananalysis*. At the opening of his book, Deliso notes that he is only speaking about a small portion of the population, and that the tradition of Islam in the Balkans is one of liberalism and moderation; he is not claiming that “the future Balkan peninsula will revert to a borderless empire ruled by sharia law.”³⁷ This initially suggests a balanced analysis devoid of sensationalist rhetoric. On the next page, however, he asserts that “it is highly likely that, because of [Islamists’] activities, the Balkans will increasingly come to be identified as a spawning ground for terrorists, dotted with no-go areas and concealed urban command centers, together comprising a series of interconnected nodal points in a global network of terrorist and fundamentalist organizations. This is a sort of virtual caliphate.”³⁸ Cato Institute’s Ted Galen Carpenter, who has written extensively on the Balkans, admitted in a review of the book that Deliso’s dire depiction of the situation is “overblown”: “Readers might legitimately question whether the problem is as severe as he portrays it, however. After all, the notion that an Islamic caliphate could be established in the Balkans is alarming in the extreme.

³⁷ Deliso, *Coming Balkan Caliphate*, xi.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, xii.

Even if the radicals have such a goal, and Deliso provides credible evidence that they do, it is likely to prove an overly ambitious goal, since as he concedes, most Muslims in the region are rather secular in their orientation.”³⁹ As Carpenter points out, Deliso’s claims are valid but veer into scare-mongering territory; his first chapter is entitled “Bosnia: Clinton’s Gift to Fundamentalist Islam.” These are the images of Bosnian Islam that stick with readers – not the brief introductory sentence about the liberal traditions.

Deliso, trained primarily as a journalist, underscores the exaggeration to which the global security framework can be prone. This methodological approach has been driven by a combination of scholarly and journalistic work. In the past ten years, a body of work has been produced by security scholars, policy-oriented think tanks, and governmental agencies tasked with assessing global terrorism threats, focusing on the connection of groups in Bosnia to transnational terrorist networks. A report from the Congressional Research Service highlights the elements which are central to global security analysis of the Bosnian Muslim community: “...the region may play a secondary role in terrorist plans, as a transit point for terrorists, as well as for rest and recuperation. Moreover, [experts] agree that the region’s continuing problems continue to leave it vulnerable to terrorist groups in the future.”⁴⁰ Furthermore, much emphasis is placed on possible connections to al Qaeda, such that the primary focus of the work is terrorism and the Muslim population of Bosnia is viewed as an instrument of terrorists to achieve goals.

It must be noted that one book of the global security milieu escapes the pitfall of instrumentalizing the Bosnian Muslim community to a vessel for terrorism. *Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network* by noted terrorism expert Evan Kohlmann does not make any sweeping generalizations about or predictions for Balkan Muslims, but is rather interested in providing a historical and factual background for the process by which radical Islam did penetrate the Balkans. Part of this

³⁹ Ted Galen Carpenter, “The Coming Balkan Caliphate: The Threat of Radical Islam to Europe and the West (review)”, *Mediterranean Quarterly* Volume 20, Number 1 (Winter 2009: 151-154), 153-4.

⁴⁰ US Congressional Research Service. Islamic Terrorism and the Balkans (RL33012; 26 July 2005), by Stephen Woehrel. Received through the CRS Web; accessed 4 April 2010.

history, elaborated throughout the book, is the clash between the remaining *mujahedin* or those who embraced radical Islam and the remainder of the moderate Muslim community.

The Need for a Different Perspective

In the introduction to his brief work on the Islamic revival in Bosnia, Harun Karčić makes an observation which summarizes the need for analysis of the Bosnian Muslim community from a different perspective:

Although there has been much talk about the revival of Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the last decade, only a handful of serious academic studies have been done on this topic. Apart from this, there have also been a number of rather misleading analyses and reports written by foreign journalists who clearly missed out on the major driving force behind the greater visibility of Islam in some parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and disproportionately centered their attention most often on Saudi activities in the country. Although the impact of foreign factors is by no means to be neglected, in order to attain an all-encompassing picture of Islam in post-communist Bosnia and Herzegovina, *all* the factors need to be accounted for.⁴¹

While the ethno-national and global security approaches to studying the Bosnian Muslim community both have their merits and provide important insights into past and current circumstances in the community, there are three major problems with these methodological approaches. The first, as previously noted, is that they present the Bosnian Muslim community as a unified, univocal bloc: it is either a secular population which identifies as Muslim only as a political designation, or it is a population which is under the control of Islamists or at risk of becoming so. Neither approach gives a significant (if any) voice to the moderate religious majority or speaks about the internal variation of the community. This contributes to the second problem with these approaches: changes in the community are depicted as totalizing and all-encompassing. The shift from a predominantly, fairly homogenous moderate Islamic character to one in which other forms of Islam are present is seen as an indication that the entire community is embracing radical Islam; it is not conceivable that a revival of religiosity could proceed in a moderate fashion or that the community could split and embrace different perspectives. Finally, these approaches emphasize different factors in shaping the character of the Bosnian Muslim community –

⁴¹ Harun Karčić, “Islamic Revival in Bosnia-Herzegovina: 1992-2010” (working paper, Center for Advanced Studies in Sarajevo, 8 January 2011), http://www.iseef.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=122&Itemid=92.

ethno-nationalism, politics, foreign infiltration – but they omit what Bringa calls the most important part of Bosnian Muslim identity: Islam.⁴² These analyses exclude any discussion of the evolution of the community from a religious perspective. They do not seek to uncover how the community internalized the events around them – the processes which led to a religious awakening in the community which, contrary to belief, has resulted in a population that is much more aware of their Muslim identity than perhaps ever before in history.

Instead, I propose a methodological approach which analyzes the internal dynamics Bosnian Muslim community from the perspective of religion, focusing on the development of Muslim identity as integral to understanding the pluralism within the largest population in Bosnia. This approach will utilize two levels of analysis: first, examining the processes internal to Bosnia which resulted in the activation of religious identity in Bosnian Muslims; and second, examining the external factors which acted upon these pre-existing internal conditions, resulting in internal pluralization of the Bosnian Muslim community as manifested in the acceptance of a new form of conservative Islam by a small portion of the Muslim population. This analysis posits that the ability of external factors to successfully alter the religious landscape of Bosnia was contingent on the presence of a set of internal conditions, namely the process which resulted in the activation of Muslim identity. Importantly, this new perspective will look at the community on a broader level: pluralism in the Bosnian Muslim population means that there is religious diversity, and thus equal attention should be paid to the non-radicalized portion of the community. This facilitates an inclusive understanding of the intra-group dynamics of Bosnia's largest *narod*.

Chapter 3: The Historical Background of the Muslim Community of Bosnia

The Origins of Islam in the Balkans

The Muslim population of Bosnia has existed as a community since the conversions of Orthodox Christian Slavs to Islam in the 15th century. The history of Islam in the region is complex and has resulted

⁴² Bringa, *Being Muslim*, 231.

in complicated and contentious relations. As a “frontier land” at the far reaches of multiple empires, the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina experienced a particularly tumultuous history, torn between empires and traditionally split along religious lines.

Until the mid 15th century, the Balkans comprised the center of the Byzantine Empire, or the Eastern Christian Roman Empire. In 1453, the capital of the empire, Constantinople, finally succumbed to a relentless Ottoman onslaught, effectively bringing the slow decline of Byzantium to a close. This signaled the official arrival of Islam in Southeastern Europe, as the Balkan region – once the epicenter of Christianity – now became the Western frontier of the largest Muslim empire in the world. Sultan Mehmet II was acutely aware of the slow decline of the Byzantine Empire, due in large part (he believed) to the empire’s inability to quell religious differences within its peoples. To avoid complications within the enormously diverse population his empire had just inherited, Mehmet instituted a system which would organize Ottoman subjects according to their religious confession. The millet system, as it was known, conflated religion with nationality, and granted each religious community relative autonomy under the authority of its highest religious official. The Islamic concept of the *dhimmi* formed the cornerstone of the millet ideology: *dhimmis* were non-Muslims living under direct Muslim rule, and were afforded a protected status.⁴³

Despite its guarantee of protection, the millet system was far from egalitarian. In essence, the Muslim millet enjoyed complete freedom and the highest level of rights under the Ottoman government. The other millets (Jewish, Armenian, and Christian) had curtailed rights as a means of keeping them under the sultan’s control. These restrictions took the form of exclusion from political participation, limits on marriage and clothing, and “exemption” from the military, for which non-Muslims had to pay a special tax. Most notable was the *devshirme*, a human “tax” levied upon the Christian millet in which the Ottoman authorities took the most promising young boys from local villages, converted them to Islam, and placed them in the household of the sultan, where they were trained to be pages or members of the

⁴³ Kemal Karpat, "Millets and Nationality: The Roots of Incongruity of Nation and State in the Post-Ottoman Era," *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York City: Holmes & Meier, 1982), 149.

elite janissary corp.⁴⁴ This restriction of rights provided the impetus for the conversion of Balkan peoples – predominantly Orthodox Christian south Slavs concentrated in Bosnia and Albania – to Islam in the 16th and 17th centuries. With their conversion, these new Muslims were now privileged to the highest socio-economic status in the empire and formed the foundation of the now centuries-old Muslim community in the Balkans.⁴⁵

The Early Islamic Community of Bosnia

A period of approximately fifty years in pre-socialist Bosnian history proves most essential to the development of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and its institutional framework. This period began in the late 19th century with the Congress of Berlin⁴⁶ and came to an end in the late 1920s with the brief emergence of a progressive Muslim movement in Bosnia. The signing of the Treaty of Berlin signaled a turning point for the entirety of the Ottoman Empire, as it altered the political status of much of the Ottoman holdings in the Balkans. Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania were recognized as independent states, and Bulgaria became autonomous of Ottoman control. Bosnia-Herzegovina, which had served as the Ottoman frontier and its most Western possession in Europe, found itself in a peculiar position. Though it remained a *de facto* part of the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian (Habsburg) Empire was granted the right to occupy and administer the territory. This was a traumatic experience for residents of the Bosnian territory, as they were caught between two empires struggling for territory.⁴⁷ Bosnian Muslims were disconnected from the central Muslim leadership of the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul. The

⁴⁴ Sir Steven Runciman, "'Rum Milleti': The Orthodox Communities Under the Ottoman Sultans," in *The Byzantine Tradition After the Fall of Constantinople*, ed. John J. Yiannis (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991), 6-8.

⁴⁵ John V.A. Fine, "The Various Faiths in the History of Bosnia," *Islam and Bosnia: Conflict Resolution and Foreign Policy in Multi-Ethnic States*, ed. Maya Shatzmiller (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 7.

⁴⁶ The Congress of Berlin, convened in 1878, resulted in a treaty (the Treaty of Berlin, July 1878) signed by Russia, Britain, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, and the Ottoman Empire, which established Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro as fully independent states. Bulgaria was also given autonomy. Most importantly for this paper, Austria-Hungary was given the right to administer and occupy Bosnia-Herzegovina. For more information, see Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan States, 1804-1920* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 156-7.

⁴⁷ This struggle is immortalized in *The Bridge on the Drina*, the Nobel Prize winning work of historical fiction by Ivo Andrić. Although the book spans four centuries of Ottoman rule in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a central portion of the novel takes place during the establishment of Austro-Hungarian rule in the territory. See Ivo Andrić, *The Bridge on the Drina* (New York: Macmillan, 1959).

community which had once occupied a position of privilege⁴⁸ in the Ottoman Empire was now the subject of the Roman Catholic Austro-Hungarians. Although the Sheikh-al-Islam in Istanbul initially attempted to retain control over the Muslim population in Bosnia, he eventually relented and appointed Hilmi ef. Omerović of Sarajevo as the chief Bosnian mufti; on 17 October 1882, the emperor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire officially declared Omerovic the *rais-ul-ulema*, or grand mufti, of the Bosnian Muslim community. With the legal transference of authority over all religious affairs (including the selection of judges and clerics, administration of *waqfs*, and appointment of the *ulema*) to the *rais* – known as *menshura*, or charter – the independent Islamic Community of Bosnia (IZ) was officially created.⁴⁹ Despite this momentous occasion, the newfound independence of the community also ushered in a dark period: no longer part of a ruling majority, the Bosnian Muslims were now a minority under Christian rule. The Austro-Hungarian administration regularly interfered in matters of the IZ, so that in 1899 the Bosnian Muslims began the Movement for Religious and Educational Autonomy of Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, led by Mufti Fehmi ef. Džabić. This movement sought “autonomy and independence in terms of their right to manage their religious affairs...[it] epitomized the first organized struggle for the Muslim's cultural-political rights and their religious and *waqf-mearif* autonomy.”⁵⁰ This autonomy was granted in 1909 under the Statute for Self-governing Administration of Islamic religious and *Waqf-merifs'* Activities. Thus, despite being subject to political control by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it was during this period that the Bosnian Muslim community gained religious autonomy.

The period from 1909 until 1930 saw a rapid increase in activity in the Muslim community of Bosnia. Through such Muslim cultural organizations as *Gajret* (Effort), the community was able to publish books, establish schools and cultural centers, support educational grants for Muslim students, and promote intellectual and theological work. This was a time of contest and conflict within the community, due to the proliferation of a broad spectrum of beliefs, ideals, and visions for the future of the Muslim

⁴⁸ As part of the Muslim millet in the Ottoman Empire, Bosnian Muslims were exempt from certain taxes and privy to certain civic and political advantages. For more information, see Karpat (note 40) and Runciman (note 41).

⁴⁹ “History,” Website of Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, last modified 16 October 2008, accessed 28 Nov 2010, http://www.rijaset.ba/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=70&Itemid=62.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

community of Bosnia. Although it is outside the scope of this paper to fully investigate the nature of this intellectual debate, it is important to note that this period demonstrates that the community was both able and willing to engage in internal diversity regarding Islam. A tradition of pluralism within the Muslim community was established as different Muslim groups promoted their strains of thought. This diversity of thought peaked in 1928, as the Muslim community prepared to mark the 50th anniversary of the Congress of Berlin and the 25th anniversary of Gajret with the Congress of Muslim Intellectuals.⁵¹

The situation of the Bosnian Muslims began to deteriorate post-World War I; the Austro-Hungarian Empire dissolved, and in its place, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes came into existence in 1918 as a “Yugoslav” or pan-Southern-Slavic state.⁵² The Bosnian Muslims were subsumed within the kingdom as a minority population. Anti-Muslim sentiment abounded during this time; agrarian reforms, introduced in 1920, dealt the death blow to formerly wealthy Muslim landowners, weakening the community’s economic and political leadership and further marginalizing Muslims as a minority group.⁵³ As a group, Muslims began to be treated as “Others” or outsiders within the predominantly Christian kingdom and, as such, they were also treated as a monolithic entity – a foreign “bloc” within the region. In 1929, the Kingdom officially became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which essentially constituted a dictatorship under the rule of King Alexander. Alexander repealed the Statute for Self-governing Administration of Islamic religious and *Waqf-merifs'* Activities in 1930. The Islamic Community of Bosnia would not possess official autonomy over its religious affairs again until the new Constitution of the Islamic Community of Bosnia in 1997.

Islam in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

The era of socialism in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was crucial for the development of inter-group dynamics in the region. With religious practice for all citizens all but illegal, Bosnian

⁵¹ Fabio Giomi, “Reforma - The Organization of Progressive Muslims and its Role in Interwar Bosnia,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (December 2009, 495-510).

⁵² Jelavich and Jelavich, *Balkan States*, 300-303.

⁵³ Giomi, “Reforma,” 496.

Muslims gradually ceased to identify themselves through Islam and instead embraced the identity of the Muslim *narod*, or nation, a concept devoid of religious significance.

The period leading up to the establishment of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was complex. After the assassination of King Alexander in 1934 and in the muddled landscape of ideologies sweeping across Europe, power struggles erupted between nationalist, fascist, and Communist groups within Yugoslavia. In addition to the resistance to Nazi forces during World War II, the Yugoslavs fought bloody internal wars. These conflicts were integral to the escalation of animosity between Serbs, Croats, and Muslims in particular, resulting in the creation of historical narratives of atrocities based on religion and ethnicity. The Croatian ultra-nationalist group known as Ustashe, allied with the Axis Powers, embraced a policy calling for the extermination or expulsion of Serbs from the theoretical Croatian state; the Serbian nationalist group known as the Chetniks originated as a resistance movement but allied itself variously with the Axis Powers and the Allies, depending on political advantage; the Muslims allied themselves with the Axis Powers.⁵⁴ John Schindler speaks of the “mutual admiration between Islam and Nazism”:

Heinrich Himmler, the SS Leader, was something of an Islamophile, seeing in that combative religion the martial virtues he admired, in contrast to effeminate Christianity. For many Muslims, the Nazi ideology was not without appeal, and Hitler’s enemies – Jews, Communists, Western colonial powers – were theirs...What the Muslim elite wanted was autonomy under the Third Reich, separately solidly the Muslim areas of central Bosnia from the NDH and attaching them to Germany. This would protect Muslim rights and privileges in an Islamic state. The bridge to do this was the creation of Bosnian Muslim units of the Waffen SS, Himmler’s private army.⁵⁵

Atrocities were committed by Croats, Serbs, and Muslims alike during WWII. For the purposes of this paper, the most important point of the inter-Yugoslav conflict during WWII was the impact of the alliance of Bosnian Muslims with the Nazi occupying forces. Muslims were branded as collaborators, and future nationalism within the Muslim *narod* was perceived as a threat reminiscent of their activities during this period. In addition, a group known as the Young Muslims (Mladi Muslimani, modeled on the Muslim Brotherhood) was an outspoken political ally of the Nazis, and when its best known member,

⁵⁴ John Schindler, *Unholy Terror: Bosnia, al-Qa'ida, and the Rise of Global Jihad* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2007), 33-5.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 36.

Alija Izetbegović, came to power in Bosnia in 1990, both Bosnian Serbs and Croats would remember the group's collaboration with the Nazis and its use of Islamist rhetoric.⁵⁶

WWII ended in Yugoslavia with the triumph of Josip Broz Tito's Partisans, a coalition of Serb, Croat, and Muslim parties which had staged a resistance against the German occupiers and were led by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. By 1946, with the support of Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union, Tito had consolidated power and established the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Tito and Stalin fell out in 1948 and Yugoslavia formally split from the Soviet sphere, and by the 1950s Yugoslavia was a unique state: socialist, but not Communist, non-aligned with any major power bloc, and geographically and ideologically situated directly between East and West on the fault line of the Cold War.⁵⁷

Until his death in 1980, Tito remained committed to the Yugoslav ideal. Remembering the deadly consequences of clashes between national groups during WWII, he constructed a new state that carefully balanced power among the different national⁵⁸ groups so as to prevent domination by any one ethno-national group, hoping to avoid the tensions which had prevailed during World War II.⁵⁹ Tito's Yugoslavia consisted of six federal republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Within Bosnia, three "peoples" or nations (*narod*) shared control of the territory: Orthodox Christian Bosnian Serbs, Roman Catholic Bosnian Croats, and Muslim Bosnians.⁶⁰ Bringa notes although all citizens were Yugoslavs, the concept of nationality and membership in a national group was "the tool by which the federated state sought to secure peace and a balance of power between its constituent parts and to legitimate its structure and thus its existence."⁶¹ Thus it was essential to preserve a strong sense of one's nationality in this multiethnic state, as an individual's rights and political representation were embedded in this affiliation of nationality. There were six nations in Yugoslavia:

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Twentieth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 314-339.

⁵⁸ *Narod* is a Marxist term used to designate a "nation"; it is derived from the Russian word *narod*, which means "people" or "nation." See page 43 for a detailed discussion.

⁵⁹ Bringa, *Being Muslim*, 23.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 9.

⁶¹ Ibid., 25.

Serb, Croat, Slovene, Montenegrin, Macedonian, and, as of 1971, Muslim. The addition of the Muslim *narod* in 1971, though welcomed by Muslims throughout Yugoslavia, formalized the process of setting Muslims apart as a people entirely “Other” from the rest of the Yugoslav population.

Despite the formal designation of a Muslim nation, however, religion was still repressed (though not oppressed) as a matter of course in the socialist state. Although there was technically “freedom of religion” according to Yugoslav policy, there were distinct limits to this:

No public display of religious beliefs or rituals was permitted, and devoutness was not compatible with holding membership in the Yugoslav Community Party (which was a prerequisite for advancing within the state career system). For Muslims there were no designated areas at work, school, or university for performing collective prayers, and canteens would not respect the Muslim dietary requirement of avoiding pork. Furthermore, in the 1950s and 1960s Muslim Communist Party members were discouraged from giving their children traditional Muslim names. The “Yugoslav” authorities’ curb on the expression of religious belief in public was a combination of the basically atheist outlook of their communist ideology and their fear of any expression of separatist nationalism. The authorities were well aware that for many “Yugoslavs” adherence to one particular religion was intimately linked to their identification with one national community.⁶²

Through the 1960s and 1970s, the Yugoslav state decentralized and transferred power to the federal republics, which not only emphasized the insularity of the republics but also heightened awareness of inter-*narod* competition for power within the republics.⁶³ This dynamic evolved uniquely in Bosnia, home to three distinct nations which shared power, where the distinctions were drawn between the nations based primarily on religious identification. As communism began to falter across the region, nationalism that had been building throughout the 1980s stood ready to take its ideological place. Although it appeared during the 1980s that the situation of the Muslim nation improved, these improvements were quickly checked. The Islamic Community of Bosnia saw the return of some of its powers, stifled under communism; the *rais-ul-ulema* was theoretically on par with the religious leaders of other communities and had regained its “voice.” But due to the conflation of religion and nationality, the exercise of this newfound voice on behalf of the Muslim nation was construed as a form of nationalism, antithetical to the communist project, and the state clamped down. In 1983, eleven Bosnian Muslims were charged with the

⁶² Bringa, “Islam and the Quest for Identity,” 28-9.

⁶³ Bringa, *Being Muslim*, 27.

promotion of chauvinistic nationalism; included among these was Alija Izetbegović, the future president of Bosnia.⁶⁴

By the time the Berlin Wall tumbled down in 1989, Yugoslavia was already in the grips of nationalist conflict. In 1991, Slovenia and Croatia seceded from the SFRY. Fearful of being the victim of land-grabbing as the republic further disintegrated, Bosnia-Herzegovina declared independence in March 1992; within a month, all-out war had begun.

The Bosnian War: 1992-1995

When war broke out in Bosnia in early 1992, the events attracted little worldwide attention. As a non-aligned country during the Cold War, Yugoslavia fell between the cracks: it was not a long-time ally suddenly sprung free from the clutches of communism, nor was it an infamous enemy state finally embracing liberal democracy. Within a year, a conflict over the legal right of Yugoslav republics to secede from the state had turned into a bloody civil war within Europe's borders.

Countless books have addressed various facets of the Bosnian war, and a complete thesis paper could be written about any one of these minute topics. A major issue of debate has been whether the Bosnian War can be considered a "religious conflict"⁶⁵; the fundamental nature of the war is not the topic of this project, though certain aspects of the war related to religious identity will be investigated vis-à-vis their impact on the development of identity in the Bosnian Muslim community. At present, a brief sketch of the course of the war will be provided to illustrate the role of Bosnian Muslims during the conflict. A more detailed analysis of those aspects of the war which constitute internal and external factors related to Bosnian Muslim identity will be presented in the next chapter.

The descent into war in Bosnia was rapid. After the declaration of independence by Croatia and Slovenia in 1991, the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) attacked both republics in an attempt to maintain

⁶⁴ Friedman, "National Question," 5-6.

⁶⁵ For an example of contending views, see Michael A. Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998) and Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1995). Sells argues that the Bosnian War was primarily a religiously-motivated genocide perpetrated by Christians against Muslims; Woodward argues that the war was a result of the disintegration of political and economic institutions which had previously held together disparate groups.

the integrity of the Yugoslav borders. By late 1991, the JNA was already primarily associated with Serbian forces, which had assumed the role of the central Yugoslav authority.⁶⁶ In short order, the JNA came to represent the Serbian nationalist cause, which promoted itself as the protector of the broader Yugoslav state – albeit with Serbia in a dominant position under the leadership of president Slobodan Milošević. After a massive seizure of land from Croatia and intervention by the international community, the JNA agreed to cease hostilities.⁶⁷ The European Union recognized both Slovenia and Croatia in January 1992, and it appeared as though the fighting had ended. In reality, however, the tensions had spilled over into Bosnia, where two of the three nationalities involved in the previous hostilities were represented – the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs.⁶⁸

By early 1992, Bosnian authorities of each representative nation recognized escalating tensions. Bosnian Serbs, under leader (and later Republika Srpska president) Radovan Karadzic, were aligning themselves with the JNA in Belgrade and Serbian ambitions to maintain the Yugoslav state; Bosnian Croats supported the independence of Croatia and resented the seizure of land from the new state by the JNA.⁶⁹ Bosnian Muslims, under President Alija Izetbegović, understood the precarious nature of their position: unlike the other nations of Bosnia, they possessed no national ties to the other republics or new states and could not call on their ethnic compatriots to come to their aid in a power struggle. After the previous months' fighting between the Croatians and Serbs, Bosnian Croats did not want to live in a state controlled by Belgrade; Izetbegović flatly refused to make any move that suggested an alliance with Serbia. Thus, against the express desires of the Bosnian Serbs, the Bosnian Croats and Muslims announced their intentions to seek independence for Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Bosnian Serbs interpreted this as an attempt to gain control of the region; in an independent Bosnian state, the Serbs would now

⁶⁶ Lenard J. Cohen, *Broken Bonds: Yugoslavia's Disintegration and Balkan Politics in Transition* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), 230.

⁶⁷ After a series of failed negotiations by the European Union, the UN stepped in as the lead negotiator in Yugoslavia. The UN took over peacekeeping operations in the region and brokered a cease-fire. See Cohen, *Broken Bonds*, 240.

⁶⁸ Cohen, *Broken Bonds*, 240-2.

⁶⁹ As the capital of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Belgrade viewed their control of this land as protecting the integrity of the existing state.

represent a minority, and the Muslims, led by Izetbegović, would comprise a plurality. Tensions between the *narod* skyrocketed.⁷⁰ Izetbegović, meanwhile, was prepared to defend the integrity of the Muslim nation by every means possible; the interests of the Bosnian Muslims would come before all else for him.

Unlike the leaders of the other political parties at the time of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Alija Izetbegović did not emerge from the socialist-elite milieu, but rather from an oppositional bloc which perceived itself as oppressed and disenfranchised by the socialist regime. Although Izetbegović came by his political power legitimately – his party, the Bosnian Muslim Party of Democratic Action (SDA), was a bona fide political entity registered with the state – he had a long history of active involvement in the Muslim community of Bosnia, some of which is questionable as to its integrity. He was primarily affiliated with the Young Muslims (Mladi Muslimani), the youth organization developed at the beginning of WWII, which was best described as Islamist⁷¹ in nature and modeled on (and reportedly connected to) the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt.⁷² Izetbegović was arrested and briefly imprisoned for his involvement with the Young Muslims in the late 1940s but rejoined them upon his release. Izetbegović, who became a lawyer, remained out of trouble until 1970, when he published his infamous “Islamic Declaration.”⁷³ Sells characterized this manifesto as “an anticommunist assertion of religious rights” which “spelled out the conditions for a just Islamic society and contained several provocative statements concerning the incompatibility of Islam with other systems.”⁷⁴ Izetbegović was arrested by authorities and brought to trial for the publication of this document, which was interpreted by the regime as a call for an Islamic state in Bosnia with shari’a law at the exclusion of other ethnic groups. Regardless of his religious leanings, which were unknown to many Bosnian Muslims, he established the SDA in 1989 and was elected president of Bosnia in 1990. Even though his party was characterized as secular, he was

⁷⁰ Cohen, *Broken Bonds*, 242-3.

⁷¹ “Islamist” is used here in its most benign sense, meaning the practice of Islam combined with an element of activism. This activism manifests itself through political activity, aggressive proselytization, and advocacy for the incorporation of Islam into the state. This does not necessarily imply the use of terrorism or violence. See Asef Bayat, “Islamism and Social Movement Theory” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 6 (2005), 891-908.

⁷² David H. Gray and Fred A. Tafoya, “Bosnia’s ‘Jihad’ and the Development of Al Qaida: Past, Present, and Future,” *Research Journal of International Studies*, Issue 7 (March 2008: 67-81), 69.

⁷³ Alija Izetbegović, *The Islamic Declaration: A Programme for the Islamization of Muslims and the Muslim Peoples* (Sarajevo: 1970, published 1991).

⁷⁴ Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 117.

immediately pegged as an Islamist by the more radical members of the opposing Serb and Croat nations.

⁷⁵ Izetbegović, therefore, was already a polarizing figure by the time the collapse of Bosnia-Herzegovina was imminent and would be a major factor in the consolidation of a separate Muslim identity for Bosnian Muslims.

At the end of February 1992, Bosnia held a referendum on independence, which was boycotted by the Bosnian Serbs. Muslims and Croats voted overwhelmingly – 99.7% – in favor of independence. Refusing to accept the possibility that the Serbs in new states would be cut off from the remnants of Yugoslavia, the JNA, Milošević's government in Belgrade, and the Bosnian Serbs united in an effort to stem what they perceived as a Croat-Muslim plot to seize Bosnia. Izetbegović, for his part, derailed European Community-moderated talks between representatives of Bosnian Serbs, Croats, and Muslims in Lisbon which would have partitioned the state by *narod*. The Serbs now placed blame for the secession of Bosnia squarely on the Muslims, and the Serb diaspora in Bosnia refused to accept that the Muslim Izetbegović would be its leader.⁷⁶ The Serbs launched their offensive in April 1992, shortly after Western recognition of the new Bosnian state.

Although there was a short-lived alliance between the Muslims and Croats against the Serbs during the war, the violence was tripartite, and all three nations undoubtedly were guilty of aggression, war crimes, and, to a certain extent, ethnic cleansing. Though nationalist tensions ran high between all three groups, the Serbs bore a particular animosity for the Bosnian Muslims.⁷⁷ The Bosnian Serbs had at their disposal the resources of the Yugoslav government in Belgrade, the JNA, and notoriously virulent and well-armed nationalist militias⁷⁸; among these groups was the infamous paramilitary organization known as Arkan's Tigers, led by Belgrade-underground native and Serbian warlord Zeljko Raznjatovic,

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Cohen, *Broken Bonds*, 244-7.

⁷⁷ This animosity arose from Serbian nationalist rhetoric which characterized Muslims as a foreign, enemy entity in a traditionally region. See Chapter Four for a detailed discussion.

⁷⁸ Various Serb nationalists controlled their own militias, including Vojislav Seselj, Vuk Draskovic, and Dusan Vukovic, which were peripherally connected to the Serbian government. For a detailed account of the activity of militias, see Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 66-81.

known by his *nom de guerre*, Arkan.⁷⁹ It was these nationalist groups which sparked – and sustained – early campaigns of ethnic cleansing against Muslims in Bosnia. The JNA, meanwhile, had the capabilities to launch an all-out assault on the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo, and began shelling the city by mid-1992.⁸⁰

The Bosnian Muslims, by contrast, controlled only the small Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina (ARBiH), created by Izetbegović to defend newly independent Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992, which was “the most modestly equipped and internationally isolated” of the conflict.⁸¹ The disparity of armament between the Serbs and Bosnian Muslims was enormous. Michael Sells estimates that the advantage of the Serbs in heavy weapons over the Bosnian Muslims was, at times, anywhere from 20-1 to 100-1; when the Serbs launched their initial assault on Sarajevo in April 1992, it was armed gangs and organized criminal elements that saved the city from immediate destruction, as they were the only groups that possessed the necessary firepower to mount a defense.⁸² Sells goes on to say that “what occurred from April 1992 through October 1995 has been labeled a war and even a civil war. A war, however, is a conflict between armed adversaries. The Serb army took towns and villages that lacked significant military defenses... This was not a war but organized destruction of a largely unarmed population.”⁸³ The only resource upon which the Bosnian Muslims could capitalize locally was the enormous number of displaced people who were fleeing from the encroaching Serbs; these were people who had been dispossessed of their homes and were willing to fight for the army if it resulted in the recapture of their territory.⁸⁴ Izetbegović believed (mistakenly) that Western aid for the isolated Bosnian Muslims would be forthcoming, particularly once Serb offensives had begun, but this was not to be the case.⁸⁵ The Muslims suffered increasing atrocities at the hand of the Serbs; the alliance with the Croats broke down; Western powers did not come to their assistance; and the minimal supplies they possessed were dwindling.

⁷⁹ For an extensive treatment of Arkan’s rhetoric, campaigns, and relationship with Belgrade, see Sells, *Bridge Betrayed* and Christopher S. Stewart, *Hunting the Tiger: The Fast Life and Violent Death of the Balkans’ Most Dangerous Man* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2008).

⁸⁰ Cohen, *Broken Bonds*, 248.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 117.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 118-119.

⁸⁴ Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 362-363.

⁸⁵ Cohen, *Broken Bonds*, 243.

Izetbegović made the decision to look past the borders of the former Yugoslavia for assistance in fighting the war; he instead appealed for help to the *umma* (global Muslim community), which immediately responded with money, arms, and veteran *mujahedin* from around the world.⁸⁶ The origins of Izetbegović's relationships with Islamic organizations outside of Bosnia are murky, though likely stem from his activities as an "Islamic dissident" in the 1970s and 1980s, which caught the attention of leading figures in the Muslim world.⁸⁷ In 1991, he had toured Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, and deployed envoys to other Islamic countries, making formal connections with governments upon which he capitalized during the war.⁸⁸

By appealing to the *umma* for help, Izetbegović elevated the plight of the Bosnian Muslims to the level of international concern for Muslims around the world; this also emphasized to the Bosnian Muslims that their primary identity was as Muslims, and that it would be Muslims who came to their aid. The Organization of the Islamic Conference utilized its leverage in the UN Security Council and General Assembly to push through resolutions. Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia all supplied arms to the Bosnian government, with Iran ultimately providing the most, trafficked in through Croatian airports.⁸⁹

Aside from the fact that thousands of *mujahedin* entered Bosnia to support the debilitated army and ravaged population – and that some of those *mujahedin* were affiliated with the early incarnation of al Qaeda – there are very few specifics that can be asserted with total confidence regarding the presence of terrorist organizations during the Bosnian War.⁹⁰ According to scholar Marko Atilla Hoare, "Sensational claims have been made that the Bosnian government itself was closely linked to al Qaeda, and that Bosnia's wartime president, Alija Izetbegović, was personally an ally of Osama bin Laden and shared his ideology. Some argue that Bosnia formed a stepping stone via which al Qaeda transported its *jihad* from

⁸⁶ Congressional Research Service, *Islamic Terrorism*, 3.

⁸⁷ Gordon Bardos, "Balkan Blowback? Osama Bin Laden and Southeastern Europe," *Mediterranean Quarterly* (Winter 2002: 44-55), 47.

⁸⁸ Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 176.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 488.

⁹⁰ Marko Atilla Hoare, "The Balkans *Mujahedin*," *Internationale Politik* (26 February 2009). <http://europenews.dk/en/node/20384>.

Afghanistan to Europe, aided by the Clinton administration. And there are even those who contend that the Bosnian *jihad* laid the groundwork for al Qaeda's terrorist attacks in New York and elsewhere."⁹¹

The *mujahedin* and the arms trafficked into Bosnia along with them played a significant role in boosting the military capabilities of the Bosnian Army. Between three and four thousand of these foreign fighters fought for the Muslim side over the course of the war, initially alongside the Muslim regiments under a separate banner. Some were absorbed into the Bosnian Army's 3rd Corps, 7th Muslim Brigade in September 1993⁹²; others became part of a highly trained combat unit known as El-Mudzahid, which operated mostly in Central Bosnia to protect those areas from ethnic cleansing.⁹³ Although there are conflicting accounts regarding the organization of foreign fighters into units within or attached to the Bosnian army, the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia has acknowledged the existence of only one, El-Mudzahid.⁹⁴ These *mujahedin* also had another important contribution which will be addressed in depth in Chapter Four: they introduced new, radical forms of Islam, namely Salafism and its more stringent branch of Wahhabism, which were entirely alien to the traditionally moderate, Hanafi Bosnian Muslims.

The Islamic Community During the War

Regardless of the influx of firepower, from 1992 until late 1995, the Bosnian Muslim community underwent a massive transformation: over the course of the war, more than 64,000 Bosnian Muslims were killed, the majority of which were civilians⁹⁵, and hundreds of thousands were displaced. In addition to his efforts to facilitate the entry of foreign aid, Izetbegović also enacted significant changes in the leadership of the IZ to construct his ideal of Muslim identity in Bosnia.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Vlado Azinovic, "Challenges to International Security: The Case of Bosnia-Herzegovina" (paper presented at the Second Annual Conference on Human Security, Terrorism and Organized Crime in the Western Balkan Region, Sarajevo: The HUMSEC Project, 4-6 October 2007).

⁹³ Kenneth Morrison, "Wahhabism in the Balkans" (Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Advanced Research and Assessment Group Paper: 2008), 4.

⁹⁴ Bardos, "Balkan Blowback?" 48.

⁹⁵ Approximately 83% of the overall war-related deaths were civilian, though in some regions, such as Eastern Bosnia, the ratio was as high as 95%. Kovac, "Bosnia and Herzegovina," 50.

As with the military situation on the ground in Bosnia, it is challenging to pinpoint exactly what transpired in the community during the war. Under the socialist Yugoslav regime, the IZ had been completely disenfranchised: staff was dispersed, *waqfs* were seized by the state, and educational institutions were shut down almost entirely.⁹⁶ The *rais-ul-ulema* remained in place during the time but had little-to-no resources available to support the community. The only *madrasah* to remain open was the famed Gazi Husrevbey *madrasah*, which had been operating continuously in Sarajevo since the 15th century.⁹⁷ Although it had attempted to provide some sort of coherence for the Bosnian Muslims during the socialist period, the IZ was rendered inoperative by the chaos of the collapse of the Yugoslav republic and the beginning of the war. By 1993, with the arrival of foreign fighters and firepower from outside Bosnia, Izetbegović felt confident enough to make a move to empower the disoriented and displaced IZ. To achieve this goal, he turned to Dr. Mustafa Cerić.

Cerić was a native Bosnian cleric, educated at the prestigious Gazi Husrevbey *madrasah* in Sarajevo and then at al-Azhar University in Cairo, often referred to as “the Vatican of the Muslim World.”⁹⁸ In 1981, Cerić was offered a life-changing opportunity, as imam at the Islamic Cultural Center (ICC) of Greater Chicago in Northbrook, Illinois. The ICC was built in 1976 – financed in part, interestingly enough, by Saudi backers – to accommodate the rapidly growing Bosnian Muslim community,⁹⁹ which by that time numbered in the thousands. By taking this position, Cerić was also afforded another opportunity: he was accepted to the doctoral program in Islamic Studies at the University of Chicago. In 1987, after receiving his PhD, Cerić returned to Yugoslavia and accepted a position as imam at the Islamic Center in Zagreb, Croatia. During this time, Cerić met the renowned Muslim scholar Syed Muhammad al-Naquib al Attas, who had founded a new Islamic institute, the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) several years prior in Malaysia. Al-Attas offered Cerić a position teaching Islamic Theology at the institute, and in 1991 – reportedly after

⁹⁶ “History,” Official Website of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁹⁷ Drees and van Koningsveld, *Training of Muslim Clergy in Europe*, 24.

⁹⁸ John L. Esposito, *The Future of Islam*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 108

⁹⁹ William G. Lockwood, “Bosnian Muslims,” in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1980), 185-6.

being defeated by Jakub Selimoski in the election of the new *rais-ul-ulema*¹⁰⁰ – Cerić left Zagreb for Kuala Lumpur.¹⁰¹ One year later, his work at ISTAC was interrupted when the dissolution of Yugoslavia erupted into full-scale war. Cerić resigned his position at ISTAC in 1993 and returned to his besieged community.

What occurred during the turmoil of the next several years is difficult to verify and greatly varies based on the origins of the source. One of the few English resources on the role of religion¹⁰² during the war is *Balkan Idols* by Croatian scholar Vjekoslav Perica, which depicts Cerić as a hardline, “hawkish” radical.¹⁰³ Although the chain of events is murky, what is clear is that Jakub Selimoski had been democratically elected *rais-ul-ulema* in 1991; by 1993, Cerić had returned to Yugoslavia from Malaysia; and shortly thereafter, Selimoski was removed from his position as *rais-ul-ulema* and replaced by Cerić. How exactly this process transpired is unclear, but it is generally acknowledged that Cerić was “placed” at the head of the IZ by Izetbegović.

The relationship between Cerić, Izetbegović, and the SDA is also unclear and subject to hyperbole in both directions. According to Perica, Izetbegović and the SDA attempted to rally Bosniak support for an Islamic state in Bosnia, primarily through the mobilization of the IZ behind a strong leader committed to Bosnian Muslim solidarity. Selimoski, who was strongly pro-Yugoslav (meaning he hoped to maintain the integrity of the Republic), clashed with Izetbegović’s vision of a separate Muslim Bosnia; in April 1993, Izetbegović convinced the Muslim clergy to hold a new election, and Cerić was elected to a position of “deputy *rais*.” Selimoski was ousted shortly thereafter and Cerić became the *rais-ul-ulema*.¹⁰⁴

Cerić ascended to the highest position in the IZ when the Bosnian Muslim community was at its lowest point. By early 1995, it became apparent to all involved – including the apprehensive international

¹⁰⁰ Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 85.

¹⁰¹ Mustafa Cerić, *The Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam: A Study of the Theology of Abu Mansur Al- Maturidi (d. 333/944)* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1995), iii-iv.

¹⁰² Perica’s book addresses the role of religion and religious institutions *as such* during the war, rather than examining religion as synonymous with nationality or ethnicity.

¹⁰³ Perica. *Balkan Idols*, 83-5.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 169.

community – that the Serbs were waging a war of genocide against the Bosnian Muslims. At the time he was writing (1996), Michael Sells noted that the term “genocide” was tiptoed around initially, and that the term “mass killings” was generally preferred, particularly by NATO which feared violating international law in not actively intervening in a case of genocide.¹⁰⁵ The massacre at Srebrenica has been legally deemed a case of genocide, and 21 people have been indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal of Yugoslavia for the crime of genocide in connection.¹⁰⁶ It is no exaggeration to say that the Muslim population of Bosnia was ravaged: although statistics are contested, most sources estimate that around 70,000 Bosnian Muslims were killed between 1992 and 1995, half of which were civilians, a rate of almost ten times the Serb and Croat civilian casualties; over 50,000 women were raped; millions were driven from their homes into refugee camps. The breaking point for the international community occurred in July of 1995, when the Serbs brazenly entered the United Nations safe-zone of Srebrenica, which was serving as a makeshift refugee camps for tens of thousands of Muslims. Under the direction of still-at-large General Radtko Mladic, Serb forces separated the women and children from the men, deported them to detention centers, and systematically killed over 8,000 men and boys as the UN peacekeepers claimed they had no authorization to interfere.¹⁰⁷ Within two months, global outcry in response to this well-documented outrage reached a fever pitch, and NATO caved and launched air strikes against Serb positions surrounding Sarajevo. Muslim and Croat forces used the opportunity to launch a last offensive against the Serbs, and the tides were turned. All parties agreed to a ceasefire shortly thereafter, and several weeks later, Serbian President Slobodan Milošević, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, and Alija Izetbegović met in Dayton, Ohio, to design the agreement soon known as the Dayton Accords. The war officially ended on December 14, 1995, with the formal signing of the agreement in Paris.

¹⁰⁵ Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 25.

¹⁰⁶ For a complete record of the activities of the ICTY, please see the official United Nations website, <http://www.icty.org/sid/10415>.

¹⁰⁷ Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 26-7.

After Dayton

The Dayton Accords¹⁰⁸ provided the framework to end the active fighting and establish the independent state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This framework laid out the political design of Bosnia, which remains in effect today. The cornerstone of the policy is the two-entity system – Republika Srpska (RS), consisting primarily of Bosnian Serbs, and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is bi-national with Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats.¹⁰⁹ Republika Srpska controls 49% of the territory of BiH and the Federation controls 51%. Within the Federation, the entity is further divided into cantons, primarily based on ethnicity as related to territorial location, and then further into municipalities within the cantons, also based upon ethnicity.¹¹⁰ The government in RS is more centralized, owing to the ethnic homogeneity and lack of further division into autonomous units.¹¹¹ These elements of the government, as put forth by Dayton, are divided along ethnic lines to guarantee ethnic group representation. As such, the divisions emphasized leading up to and during the Bosnian War have been preserved; with the exception of the multi-ethnic city of Sarajevo, Bosnian Muslims live in relatively homogenous communities.

The Islamic Community of Bosnia was officially reestablished as the highest authority of Islam in Bosnia with the adoption of a new constitution in 1997. This constitution has instituted the current structure of the IZ, which is clearly identified as “the sole and united community of Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, of Bosniaks outside their homeland, and of other Muslims who accept it as their own.”¹¹² In addition to the encouragement of an Islamic lifestyle that promotes good, prevents evil, and conforms to the ideals of the Qur’an and the Sunnah, the constitution asserts that it is the responsibility of

¹⁰⁸ The Dayton Peace Agreement (or Dayton Accords) were brokered by the United States, under the leadership of Richard Holbrooke, in Dayton, Ohio, in November 1995. The signatories were Slobodan Milošević of Serbia, Franjo Tuđman of Croatia, and Alija Izetbegović of Bosnia. For a detailed analysis of the Dayton Accords, see David Chandler, *Bosnia: Faking Democracy After Dayton* (London: Pluto Press, 1999), 34-66.

¹⁰⁹ Bosnia-Herzegovina has not conducted a census since 1991, so reliable figures for exact population distribution are unavailable and further complicated by high numbers of internally displaced persons. International Crisis Group estimates that Croats likely constitute 25% or less of the population of the Federation. See ICG, “Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Parallel Crisis”, Europe Report N°209 (28 September 2010).

¹¹⁰ Valery Perry, “At Cross Purposes? Democratization and Peace Implementation Strategies in Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Frozen Conflict,” *Human Rights Review* 10 (2009: 35-54), 38.

¹¹¹ Republika Srpska is divided into municipalities, but the division is more administrative and municipalities have little autonomy.

¹¹² Kovac, “Bosnia-Herzegovina,” 52.

the IZ to protect “the authenticity of the Islamic norms and assures their interpretation and application.” The school of Islam for Bosnian Muslims is unequivocally stated as Hanafi¹¹³ - meaning that the formal IZ is not open to alternate interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence, including those of Wahhabism. The community itself is organized into seven units: the *jamaat* (community), the *majlis* (local organizational unit), the *mufti* (the nine principal religious authorities), the *Riyasat* (the executive organization), the *Rais-ul-Ulema* (the Grand Mufti), the Council of the Islamic Community (the representative organization), and the Constitutional Court of the Islamic Community (the judicial organization).¹¹⁴ In the spirit of the post-war, post-Communist revival of Islam in Bosnia, a number of small, independent Muslim organizations have developed, including missionary groups, women’s groups, cultural centers, student councils, and charities.¹¹⁵ Shari’a law was abolished in Yugoslavia in 1946, and religious law has never regained a legal place in Bosnia.

When the war ended in late 1995, Bosnian Muslims faced a series of obstacles to a return to normal life. Of the estimated 4.3 million people in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina at the beginning of the war, more than two million were displaced, either becoming internal refugees or emigrating outside of the country.¹¹⁶ Extensive ethnic cleansing had profoundly altered the demographic landscape; the multiethnic makeup of the country prior to the war was essentially eliminated, with towns and villages now tending towards homogeneity. For many Muslims, this meant that the possibility of returning to their homes was unlikely.¹¹⁷ In addition to establishing new homes, Bosnian Muslims discovered an alien presence in their midst. Despite a provision in Dayton requiring the immediate expulsion of all foreign fighters,¹¹⁸ this provision was not universally obeyed; several hundred *mujahedin* married Bosnian

¹¹³ Alibasić, “Traditional and Reformist Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina.”

¹¹⁴ “The Structural Organization of the Islamic Community of Bosnia-Herzegovina,” Official Website of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, last modified on 7 October 2008, accessed on 1 May 2010, http://www.rijaset.ba/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=48&Itemid=53

¹¹⁵ Kovac, “Bosnia and Herzegovina,” 53.

¹¹⁶ Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 2.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 375.

¹¹⁸ Dayton Accords, initialed on 21 November 1995 in Dayton, Ohio. Annex 1A: Military Aspects of the Peace Settlement, Article III: Withdrawal of Foreign Forces, Paragraph 2, states that all foreign forces, including individual advisors, freedom fighters, trainers, volunteers, and personnel from neighboring and other States, must withdraw from Bosnia.

Muslim women and obtained Bosnian passports under their *noms de guerre*, and another group of foreign fighters remained in the country illegally, occupying remote villages where they could exist under the radar.¹¹⁹

Foreign-financed charity organizations offering humanitarian aid found willing recipients among the devastated Bosnian Muslim population. These large organizations were primarily funded by foreign governments – predominantly Saudi – and had the power and funds to produce sweeping formal changes to the Muslim communities. Morrison describes the efforts in Bosnia:

Aid from Islamic countries (in particular Saudi Arabia) was focused on social programmes such as building madrassas (Islamic schools) and funding programmes for war orphans, and infrastructural reconstruction projects (the rebuilding of mosques in the Muslim-dominated parts of Bosnia & Herzegovina). But the aid came with conditions. Saudi money has indeed helped fund social programmes and reconstruction of mosques, but the character of Islamic places of worship has changed significantly as a consequence. In the ten-year period since the end of armed conflict in Bosnia, around 550 new mosques have been built – primarily in the Wahhabi style. But aid donated by the Saudis was not restricted to the reconstruction of mosques. According to the Balkan Investigative Research Network (BIRN), the Wahhabi movement in Bosnia was strongly supported by the Saudis, who used an organisation called the High Saudi Committee for Relief (under the auspices of a Saudi government ministry) to channel funds throughout the Bosnian war and thereafter.¹²⁰

In the war-torn and impoverished regions, the financial resources of these organizations were extremely attractive, and needy Muslims were happy to accept the offerings: charity money, new schools, summer programs for their children, even new copies of the Qur'an.¹²¹ For displaced Muslims returning to their homes, “mosques [are] visual embodiments of their community’s claim to inhabit the land, and rebuilt mosques have contributed to a sense among Bosniak refugees and displaced persons that it was safe to return to their former homes.”¹²² Additionally, the displaced peoples were offered a massive assortment of options for assistance. Organizations that operated in the region after 1990 included the World Assembly of Muslim Youth [WAMY]; the Islamic International Relief Organization of Jeddah, the Al-Haramain Humanitarian Foundation (Riyadh), the Bin Mahfouz family’s Al-Muwaffaq Foundation and the Saudi High Committee for Bosnia, all based out of Saudi Arabia; the Sudanese Da’wa Islamiya;

¹¹⁹ Robert J. Donia, “Nationalism and Religious Extremism in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo since 1990” (position paper, Ljubljana: International Institute for Middle East and Balkan Studies, 2007), 7.

¹²⁰ Morrison, “Wahhabism in the Balkans,” 6.

¹²¹ Gyorgy Lederer, “Countering Islamist Radicals In Eastern Europe” (CSRC Discussion Paper 05/42, CSRC, 2005), 4.

¹²² Donia, “Nationalism and Religious Extremism,” 10.

the British Islamic Relief; Yusuf Islam's Muslim Aid¹²³; the American ICNA Relief and Mercy International; Internationale Humanitäre Hilfe, run by Turkish immigrants in Germany; the Global Relief Foundation; the Benevolence International Foundation (BIF - Chicago); the Taiba Foundation; and local organizations Merhamet and El-Hilal.¹²⁴

As Bosnia-Herzegovina began the process of recovering from the war and building a new state, the Bosnian Muslims began a process in their own community as well: a reassessment of what it meant to be Muslim and a reevaluation of how Islam manifested itself in Bosnia.

Chapter Four: From Religious Activation to Religious Pluralization

Although they had embraced Islam nearly half a millennium earlier, Bosnian Muslims lived in relative harmony with their neighbors of other religions. In contrast to the rhetoric of “ancient hatreds” dating back centuries, Bosnia was known for the peaceful coexistence of a variety of religious groups, occasionally stoked by outside forces but ultimately united by their common ethnic bonds.¹²⁵ Indeed, this shared ethnicity was the basis for the ideology of Yugoslavism which would bring together all of the South Slavs in one kingdom and, eventually, one federal republic which sought to emphasize this identity as primary before all others.

As related in Chapter Three, however, Tito was an astute statesman and understood that tension still existed between the ethnic groups, especially in the wake of World War II in which the Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims, in particular, experienced confrontation. Thus Tito created a power-sharing *narod* schema, designed to prevent the dominance of any single ethnic group. The republic where this appeared to be most necessary was Bosnia, the only of the six republics which was not the traditional homeland of a single *narod*, but rather three groups: the Catholic Bosnian Croats, the Orthodox Bosnian Serbs, and the Bosnian Muslims. It was within this complicated arrangement where Bosnian Muslim identity came to be

¹²³ Yusuf Islam is the popular American folk singer formerly known as Cat Stevens.

¹²⁴ Donia, “Nationalism and Religious Extremism,” 10.

¹²⁵ Ivo Andric’s Nobel-Prize winning work, *The Bridge on the Drina*, recounts in detail the struggle between the different religious communities of Bosnia as they attempt to stave off the divisive effects of outside influences.

understood as something separate from the rest of the Yugoslav peoples – and where the creation of this separate identity proved to be the most detrimental.

This chapter first will explore the internal processes¹²⁶ that created a set of conditions which resulted in the activation of the religious identity of Bosnian Muslims. It will then examine the external factors which acted upon the internal conditions in Bosnia to produce pluralism in the Muslim community. This pluralism has been primarily represented in the development of a small but vocal minority of radical Muslims who embrace Salafism/Wahhabism. The dynamic between these Salafis/Wahhabis and the majority of Bosnian Muslims who still adhere to the traditional, unique form of Bosnian Islam has resulted in tension in the community.

The Internal Consolidation of Muslim Identity in Bosnia

Until the late 1960s and early 1970s, Bosnian Muslims lingered in a somewhat undefined category vis-à-vis nationality, of which they were reminded every ten years when the census was taken. Bosnian Serbs chose the “Serb” *narod* and Bosnian Croats chose the “Croat” *narod*, but Bosnian Muslims found themselves without a proper choice for national identity.¹²⁷ Until 1961, Bosnian Muslims had a few different options for the census: “In the population census of 1948, there was the option of ‘Muslim of undeclared nationality’ ...in 1953 those who did not want to declare themselves as Serbs or Croats had the option of choosing ‘Yugoslavs of undeclared nationality.’ In 1961 the Bosnian Muslims were allowed to declare themselves as a *narodnost*...and finally in the 1971 census they were able to declare themselves as ‘Muslim’ in the category of *narod*.”¹²⁸ This change indicated the formal, legal separation of the Bosnian Muslims from the rest of the Yugoslavs, as a unique “nation,” for the first time.

¹²⁶ “Internal” refers to both the former Yugoslavia in general and the Bosnian Muslim community specifically.

¹²⁷ Bringa makes the point that the concept of nationality in a socialist state is very different from the Western notion. In Yugoslavia, there was a distinct hierarchy of nationality categories. *Narodnost* is closest in meaning to the Western concept of an ethnic group; *narod* is a larger concept of a nation. See Bringa, *Being Muslim*, 25.

¹²⁸ Bringa, *Being Muslim*, 27.

Bosnian Muslims proved to be a more complicated category. Though generally ethnically identical to their neighbors¹²⁹, they had long been amalgamated into a millet with Ottoman Turks, and when the millet system was abolished in the late 19th century, Balkan Muslims found themselves without a national partner to their religious identity. So instead of garnering a category such as “Orthodox Serbs” or “Catholic Croats,” they remained, simply, “Muslim”:

Balkan nationalism, which irrevocably destroyed the imagined community of Orthodox Christianity, managed to preserve a frozen, unchangeable, and stultifyingly uniform image of the Muslim community, and consistently dealt with it in millet terms. In other words, the Christian populations of the Balkans began speaking, among themselves, the language of nationalism, whereas their attitudes toward the Muslims remained in the realm of the undifferentiated religious communities discourse. A manifestation of this Christian attitude was the continuous and indiscriminate use of the name Turk to refer to Muslims in general, a practice still alive in many parts of the Balkans today... The Muslims were marginalized in the face of a sphere that proved to be exclusionary to them.¹³⁰

Thus when ethno-national groups were consolidated into the *narod* of Yugoslavia, the Bosnian Muslims found themselves excluded; they were not, in fact, an ethnicity, but were differentiated from the rest of the population based solely on their religious designation, a designation which had no national “partner.” They were, quite literally, placed in the “other” category: different from the two other ruling groups of Bosnia, yet not deserving of their own category either. They lingered in a national no-man’s land, due not to their ethnicity, but rather to their religion. The decision to create the “Muslim” *narod* for the 1971 census gave legal form to a social construct which had already existed for some time: the Muslim was formally designated as other.

The means by which this Muslim identity – “frozen, unchangeable, and stultifyingly uniform,” as Todorova states above – became accepted within the broader Yugoslav landscape was through a societal dialectic process which Peter Berger calls “externalization, objectivation, and internalization.”

Externalization is the ongoing outpouring of human being into the world, both in the mental and physical activity of men. Objectivation is the attainment by the products of this activity (again both physical and mental) of a reality that confronts its original producers as a facticity external to and other than themselves. Internalization is the reappropriation by men of this same reality, transforming it once again from the structures of the objective world into the structures of the subjective consciousness.¹³¹

¹²⁹ To a certain extent, there was minor ethnic “mixing” insofar as ethnically Turkish elites had intermarried with some local Bosnians.

¹³⁰ Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, updated ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 178.

¹³¹ Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory Of Religion* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), 4.

As such, the construct of Bosnian Muslims as a group separate from and “Other” than the rest of the Yugoslavs was the created reality that was accepted by the “in-groups” – particularly Bosnian Serbs and Croats – as the true and accurate differentiation of Bosnian society, and this differentiation was ultimately internalized and accepted by Bosnian Muslims as well. Berger notes that this is an ordering of experience, in the Durkheimian sense, which gives meaning to society by creating neat categories into which we may place phenomena. With Bosnian Muslims now legally represented in their own category, they were formally acknowledged as the “Other.”

The “Othering” of Bosnian Muslims presents a case of what Milica Bakic-Hayden calls “nesting Orientalisms.” The concept builds upon the traditional form of Orientalism¹³² and its off-shoot of Balkanism, which relocates some of the same oppositional dichotomies utilized by Orientalism from the general Orient to the specific Balkans.¹³³ Resting on the notion that the Balkans¹³⁴ constitutes the “Other” within Europe, Balkanist rhetoric contends that “its inhabitants do not care to conform to the standards of behavior devised as normative by and for the civilized world”¹³⁵ and emphasizes the “frozen” or historically-entrenched nature of all things Balkan. “Balkan” became synonymous with any number of derogatory terms, including “filth, passivity, unreliability, misogyny, propensity for intrigue, insincerity, opportunism, laziness, superstitiousness, lethargy, sluggishness, inefficiency, incompetent bureaucracy... cruelty, boorishness, instability, and unpredictability.”¹³⁶ The internalization of Balkanism by the Balkan peoples in general resulted in the phenomenon of “nesting orientalism,” as Milica Bakic-Hayden calls it, in which the objectified become the objectifiers:

¹³² “Orientalism” describes the set of assumptions by which Western cultures have viewed Eastern cultures as different and exotic. This view assumes that Western cultures are intellectually and developmentally superior to Eastern cultures. Orientalism focuses heavily on Islam as a factor which sets apart Eastern societies from Western. The seminal work on the subject is Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

¹³³ Milica Bakic-Hayden, “Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of the Former Yugoslavia,” *Slavic Review* Vol. 54, No. 4 (Winter 1995: 917-931).

¹³⁴ For the purposes of this paper, the Balkans consists of: Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, and Greece – countries located either entirely or partially within the geographic Balkan Peninsula.

¹³⁵ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 3.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 119.

...the designation of the 'other' has been appropriated and manipulated by those who have themselves been designated as such in orientalist discourse. Thus, while Europe as a whole has disparaged not only the 'orient' proper but also the parts of Europe that were under oriental Ottoman rule, Yugoslavs who reside in areas that were formerly ruled by the Ottoman Empire, hence 'improper.' Within the latter area, eastern Orthodox peoples perceive themselves as more European than those who assumed identities of European Muslims and who further distinguish themselves from the ultimate orientals, non-Europeans.¹³⁷

Maria Todorova explains this internalization of Balkanism through Erving Goffman's description of the social process of stigmatization. The stigmatized individual (in this case, the Balkan peoples) stratifies his own people "according to the degree to which their stigma is apparent and obtrusive. He then can take up in regard to those who are more evidently stigmatized than himself the attitudes the normals take to him."¹³⁸ Thus in the Balkans, and particularly in Bosnia, the Muslims become not only the "Other," but a stigmatized "Other," now branded with myriad negative connotations. It is important to note that although each of the *narodi* saw itself as different from the others – and in some cases, as with the Serbs and Croats, this also constituted religious differences – the primary factor which set apart the Bosnian Muslims as a separate nation that was different from all others in Bosnia was Islam.

This activation occurred as Yugoslavia was edging closer and closer to dissolution, and was consolidated by the anti-Muslim rhetoric undertaken by Serb nationalists as a means of reinforcing the "Otherness" of the Bosnian Muslims. The greater Serb population was already agitating for ethnic dominance. In the context of the ethnic tensions and struggle for power in Bosnia in the early 1990s, Serbian nationalist leaders seized upon the anti-Muslim, "nested Orientalism" as a means of mobilizing the population against a perceived threat. Using this discourse as its base, the goal of the nationalist rhetoric was to "construct bounded cultural objects or an illusion that a nation is built up of coherent and solid cultural 'material.'"¹³⁹ For Serbian nationalist leaders¹⁴⁰, this was easily achieved by promoting the fight against the Muslim "Other" – a designation which had already been established among many

¹³⁷ Bakic-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms," 922.

¹³⁸ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 58.

¹³⁹ Edit Petrovic, "Ethnonationalism and the Dissolution of Yugoslavia," in *Neighbors at War: Anthropological Perspectives on Yugoslav Ethnicity, Culture, and History*, eds. Joel M. Halpern and David A. Kideckel (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, 164-186), 170.

¹⁴⁰ The most prominent Serb nationalist leaders at the time were Slobodan Milošević and Radovan Karadžić, but there were numerous nationalists at all levels of society. Other well-known nationalist leaders were Vojislav Šešelj and Branko Grujić.

Serbian – and reminding the population of the long history of Muslims as the enemy. The church elders¹⁴¹ contributed to the passion of the discourse by adding a new element to the sub-Balkanist, anti-Muslim discourse: Muslims were emphasized as Christ-killers¹⁴² and race traitors.¹⁴³

Norman Cigar emphasizes Talal Asad's phenomenon of cultural translation and the internalization of the inscribed ethnographies as essential in the spread of anti-Muslim rhetoric in Yugoslavia. This process was undertaken by Serbian intellectuals who, as the educated elite, were viewed by the masses as the appropriate guides for the proper way of perceiving national identity:

Their special position in society enabled [them] to serve as a guide to their fellow Serbs... Their impact has been felt strongly in creating images, forming attitudes, and crafting proposals for action against the Muslims of Bosnia, or Bosniaks, and ultimately in their major role in the creation of the policy of genocide. In particular, these intellectuals have been instrumental in establishing and cementing an in-group/out-group dichotomy between the Muslims and the Serbs based on stereotypes, a factor which has been central to forming the environment and establishing legitimacy for much of the violence that occurred.¹⁴⁴

In addition to promoting the hegemonic Western notions of the Muslim as "Other," Serbian intellectuals engaged in the objectivist stance of placing their observations of Muslims in reference to their own cultural model and determining that the assumed system of Muslim cultural norms was in direct violation of their own archetypal norms – "a transgression of the in-group's values" which provided ample legitimation for stigmatization as the out-group.¹⁴⁵ As in the original form of Balkanism (and Orientalism), Muslims as the "Other" were ascribed certain characteristics deemed to be inherited, genetic, and immutable – observed social behaviors which followed a perceived, distinct pattern and therefore necessarily made Muslims different from Serbs: "A key strand of the intellectuals' image

¹⁴¹ See Sells, *Bride Betrayed*, 78-85 for a history of the development of Serb nationalism vis-à-vis anti-Muslim sentiments in the Serbian Orthodox Church.

¹⁴² The "Christ-killer" designation of Muslims originates from the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, in which the Ottomans defeated the Serbians, led by Prince Lazar. After his death, Lazar was often compared to Christ, as sacrificing himself for the good of his people. Lazar's death is a central theme in Serbian national mythology and served as the rallying point in Slobodan Milošević's famous speech in 1989, on the 600th anniversary of Lazar's death. For more information, see Michael A. Sells, "The Construction of Islam in Serbian Religious Mythology and its Consequences" in *Islam and Bosnia: Conflict Resolution and Foreign Policy in Multi-Ethnic States*, ed. Maya Shatzmiller (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002, 56-85).

¹⁴³ Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 79.

¹⁴⁴ Norman Cigar, "The Nationalist Serbian Intellectuals and Islam: Defining and Eliminating a Muslim Community," in *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*, eds. Emran Qureshi and Michael A. Sells (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003, 314-351), 314.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 316.

creation focused on the idea that Muslims transgressed accepted values by belonging to an exotic and alien religion and culture.”¹⁴⁶ Islam continually was characterized as a threat to modern Serbian civilization, and Muslims were the bearers of this threat. Central to this methodology was the practice of essentializing Muslims; they were totalized into a singular, monolithic entity devoid of individuality. This essentializing theoretically removed personal agency of individual Muslims, who therefore did not have the power to refute or overcome the specific traits of the “Muslim” portion of the identity dichotomy.

One figure in particular refutes the notion that Muslims did not have any agency in the construction and activation of Muslim identity. Bringa notes that “an important aspect of religion, and of Islam in Bosnia, is that it defines Bosnian Muslims in relation to Serbs and Croats. Islam sets them apart. By practicing Islam people become and experience themselves as different.”¹⁴⁷ Alija Izetbegović, the first president of Bosnia, utilized the “Otherness” of Islam to help consolidate Muslim identity and manipulate it for political and ideological purposes. He actively sought to set Muslims apart from Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats to support his beliefs in a separate, Muslim-dominated state.

Islamism had the most limited presence in Bosnia before the early 1990s, with the only active organization being the Mladi Muslimani. Izetbegović joined this group when he was a teenager, assuming an outspoken activist stance on behalf of Islam during WWII. Trained as a lawyer, his use of rhetoric was nuanced and commanding; he spoke proudly of Muslim traditions and purposely emphasized connections to the *umma*.¹⁴⁸ Although experts debate the extent to which Izetbegović truly embraced radical Islam,¹⁴⁹ there is ample evidence that, at the very least, he directly manipulated the discourse in Bosnia in the period immediately prior to and during the Bosnian War. He freely utilized Islamist rhetoric to enhance the “Otherness” of Muslims in Bosnia as a means of promoting a separate Islamic state, of which he would be the head; he was able to recycle the anti-Muslim discourse from the Serbs and Croats as a

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 322.

¹⁴⁷ Bringa, *Being Muslim*, 197.

¹⁴⁸ Schindler, *Unholy Terror*, 48.

¹⁴⁹ Sells, for example, rejects the notion that Izetbegović’s rhetoric can be interpreted as promoting radicalism; Schindler, however, refers to such interpretations as “blindness” on the part of Western experts who wished to believe Izetbegović was moderate.

means of demonstrating why Muslims needed to put their own welfare first.¹⁵⁰ With their own leader reminding them daily that they were being targeted as Muslims and urging them to stand up to anti-Muslim propaganda, the Bosnian Muslim population internalized the identity of the “Other” from the top down. Izetbegović ensured that his ideal of Muslim identity – religious, rather than secular – was emphasized throughout society. He replaced the pro-Yugoslav Selimoski with Cerić, upon whom he could rely to promote a Muslim Bosnia. In 1994 Izetbegović appointed as the minister of culture Enes Karic, who began a program of Islamic education in public schools.¹⁵¹ This aggressive campaign consolidated Muslim identity from the inside, activating religiosity as a means of combating anti-Muslim hostility and shoring up the strength of the Muslim population as a unit.

The activation of Muslim identity only escalated as the war began. For almost four years, Bosnian Muslims were subject to massacres, ethnic cleansing, and ultimately genocide as a result of their religious identity. Sells writes that Muslims were often referred to as Turks as “a form of alienation and abuse.”¹⁵² This Muslim-focused hatred proved to be a central feature of the war and also served a major motivator for Serb troops:

...the religious ideology of the violence was complex. It was at once part of a modern surge in religious militancy after the Cold War, a reappearance of a Serbian nineteenth-century ideology that constructs an ‘age-old antagonism’ between Muslim and Christian in which the Muslim is a race traitor, and a new manifestation in a history of assaults on non-Christian populations in Europe grounded in manipulation of the Christ-killer charge.¹⁵³

The means by which Bosnian Muslims were “Other-ized” illustrates two key elements of the activation of their Muslim identity which have already been mentioned but warrant emphasis. The first is that the Bosnian Muslim community was traditionally only modestly observant, and indeed by the end of the Communist era, often not observant at all. Many Bosnian Muslims considered themselves “Bosnians” or “Yugoslavs,” rather than choosing to be designated primarily as Muslim. This Muslim identity that was imposed on them by the oppositional communities was quite foreign to them in many cases, and thus the

¹⁵⁰ Fine, “Various Faiths,” 17-21.

¹⁵¹ Fine, “Various Faiths,” 19.

¹⁵² Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 75.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 89.

internalization of this new identity had a profound impact on the community, shaping it, dividing it, and creating new dynamics. The second element is that the conceptions of the “Muslim” as related above demonstrate how a monolithic perception of the community arose. This perception was reinforced by Izetbegović to serve political purposes, suggesting that the Muslim population was different from – and therefore incompatible with – the Christian populations, making coexistence impossible. Such notions caused Muslims in Bosnia to “revisit, or reinvent, the historical religious dimensions of their identity as proposed by a few pan-Islamic ideologists like Izetbegović himself.”¹⁵⁴

External Factors Affecting the New Muslim Identity

The activation of the religious identity of Bosnian Muslims was well underway within the first year of the Bosnian War. When the tenor of the war shifted dramatically in 1993 with the arrival of foreign aid, a series of external elements interacted with the internal conditions present among the Bosnian Muslim population to set the community on a new trajectory of pluralization within the community. The manner in which these external factors were able to influence the transformation of Islam in Bosnia would have been impossible if the Muslim community was not adequately prepared for this change through the internalization of their religious Other-ness. Similarly, the ongoing circumstances of the war subjected the population to a series of conditions which dramatically increased the likelihood of radicalization, including displacement, economic and political disenfranchisement, and genocide. The appearance of a small group of radicalized Muslims in Bosnia that exists within the same population as the majority moderate Muslims has created a new phenomenon of pluralism in the community.

It is simplistic to say that foreign fighters imposed upon Bosnia a new radical form of Islam called Salafism and that this alone explains why there are small pockets of radical Muslims in Bosnia today. The presence of radical Islam in Bosnia is not solely the result of foreign imposition, as frequently asserted; it is a result of the combination of outside influences and the internal conditions in the Bosnian Muslim community which came together to permanently alter the religious landscape of the population.

¹⁵⁴ Lederer, “Countering Islamist Radicals, 3.

These outside influences were primarily the *mujahedin* who arrived in Bosnia to support the war efforts and the Islamic charities which sought to help rebuild the Muslim community. Both of these groups saw an opportunity in a devastated people in need, a traditionally liberal people who had a new understanding of their identity as Muslims, and, especially, a number of angry, confused, and disoriented young people who sought a new way of life in wake of the destruction of the old way.

In the mid-to-late 20th century, Saudi Arabia's conservative atmosphere made it a safe haven for extremists from across the Muslim world. These extremists joined with local activist Wahhabis who expressed dissatisfaction with the enormous wealth gap created by Saudi petrodollars. Widespread social unrest created a base of support for these extremists. The Saudi royalty, increasingly nervous about potential complications from these agitators, devised a plan to make creative use of them:

To deal with the burgeoning domestic threat posed by local Wahhabis and foreign extremists, the house of Saud actively encouraged the export of Wahhabi personnel and ideology, primarily to the *jihād* in Afghanistan. As a consequence, many Saudi Wahhabis would participate in conflicts far beyond Saudi borders, and following the end of the Soviet-*Mujahedin* conflict, many moved on to engage in new conflicts, such as those raging in Chechnya, Algeria and Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁵⁵

In this manner, the Saudis were able to eliminate the problem of increasingly agitated extremists, who frequently clashed with the Saudi government; by the time the war had begun in 1992, there was a steady flow of *mujahedin* departing Saudi Arabia for Bosnia.

The Saudi government – not to be outdone by its rival Iran, with whom Izetbegović had also established ties while soliciting support for the SDA¹⁵⁶ – set up a committee to raise funds and public awareness for the Bosnian *jihād*, as it was known, as a means of supporting their fellow Muslims. By their own accounts, the Saudis raised approximately \$373 million from 1992 to 1997 to benefit the Bosnian Muslim community.¹⁵⁷ It is difficult to enumerate exactly how much material assistance went to the Bosnian government headed by Izetbegović due to confusion between the public and private sectors. According to Thomas Hegghammer, the support for the official Bosnian Army (ARBiH) was so much higher than support for Saudi *mujahedin* that it caused a major rift between *jihād*ist Muslims in Saudi

¹⁵⁵ Morrison, "Wahhabism in the Balkans," 3.

¹⁵⁶ Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 301.

¹⁵⁷ Thomas Hegghammer, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 36-38.

Arabia (and those who were abroad in Bosnia) and the mainline Saudi government. Osama bin Laden complained on multiple occasions that the Saudi government was restricting private funding of the Bosnian *mujahedin*, and even accused the king of deflecting attention away from internal Saudi problems by making a show of supporting Bosnia.¹⁵⁸

Many of the Bosnian *mujahedin* had been trained and war-hardened in the mountains of Afghanistan; they arrived in Bosnia fully entrenched in *jihadist* ideology, which found its basis in Salafism (and, more accurately for the Saudis, Wahhabism). By all accounts, the *mujahedin* were surprised and disturbed by the degree of secularism among the Bosnian Muslims. Kenneth Morrison relates an anecdote in which Abu Jandal¹⁵⁹ found that Bosnian Muslims “‘bore about as much relation to Wahhabism as the Church of England gardener had to a Bible Belt evangelist’”:

Communist ideology had wiped out all the features of the Islamic religion and understanding of Islam. We saw some Muslim youths wearing a cross around their necks without knowing what this meant, although they belonged to Muslim families and some of them had Arab and Muslim names. They were completely ignorant of Islam. Therefore, we saw that the responsibility we shouldered in Bosnia was broader and more comprehensive than the mission of combat, for which we had come. So we found that we became bearers of weapons and at the same time bearers of a call, a book, a message.¹⁶⁰

While the aggressive, *jihadist*-style proselytism of the *mujahedin* won over a select few Bosnian Muslims, foreign aid organizations set about effecting change in the Muslim community through softer means. Islamic charities, as described in Chapter Three, arrived in Bosnia bearing gifts that were impossible to refuse. In many cases, the services they provided were the most basic humanitarian needs: food, clothing, and shelter for millions of displaced peoples. But a number of their services were uniquely Muslim in nature. The Serb armies were careful to purposely target for destruction symbols of multiculturalism (in Sarajevo, in particular) or Islam; mosques, masjids, and religious schools were favorite targets as a means of not only cleansing regions of Muslim people, but anything that symbolized Islam and wore witness to the Muslim tradition in that land. The destruction of their cultural heritage was

¹⁵⁸ Hegghammer, *Jihad*, 33-38.

¹⁵⁹ Abu Jandal was Osama bin Laden’s personal bodyguard and confidante before being detained for his role in the bombing of the USS Cole in 2000 and a year later for interrogation related to 9/11. He provided the FBI with a large amount of information and was the main identifier of the hijackers.

¹⁶⁰ Morrison, “Wahhabism in the Balkans,” 4.

an added blow to the decimated Muslim population, metaphorically cleansing a Muslim identity from the land as a means of preventing the community, now known solely on the basis of their Muslim nature, from having either symbolic or physical presence there. From 1992 to 1995, 614 of the 1,144 mosques were destroyed and 307 were damaged; 218 of the 557 *masjids* were destroyed and 41 were damaged; out of the 1,425 *waqf* holdings, 405 were destroyed and 149 were damaged.¹⁶¹ Almost immediately after the war, the IZ, supported by enormous amounts of money from foreign organizations, began to rebuild their properties to underscore “the return of the territory’s Muslim inhabitants and the revival of Islam in that area.”¹⁶²

The physical reconstruction of Muslim spaces after the war bore a distinct characteristic which emphasize the changed nature of the Muslim community. In contrast to the grand Ottoman architecture that characterized the old mosques of Bosnia, the new mosques – financed by the governments or governmental organizations supported by Malaysia, Indonesia, Kuwait, Qatar, and Jordan, but most notably, Saudi Arabia¹⁶³ - bore a sharp, severe style that stood out in the quaint Balkan landscape. The epitome of this architectural imposition was the King Fahd Mosque in Sarajevo, which is referenced in the opening epigraph of this paper. In stark contrast to the surrounding aesthetics, it was “constructed along the stylistic lines of a Saudi Wahhabist mosque. The original interiors and associated decorations, for example, were destroyed and replaced with whitewashed walls characteristic of a typical Saudi mosque. Similarly, other existing mosques were rebuilt, but in a fashion out of keeping with their traditional character.”¹⁶⁴ In this manner, foreign organizations were not only suggesting a new form of Islam to Bosnian Muslims: they were physically situating it in the local context within Bosnia, in place of the traditional form of Islam represented by the mosques destroyed in the war.

The presence of foreign Islamic aid organizations in Bosnia also provided another golden opportunity for the spread of new religious ideas: hundreds of volunteers relocated to Bosnia in order to

¹⁶¹ Karčić, “Islamic Revival in Bosnia-Herzegovina.”

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Morrison, “Wahhabism in the Balkans,” 6.

administer these charitable organizations, many of whom were eager to teach their fellow Muslims about more conservative branches of Islam. The organizations impressed the impoverished locals with their seemingly endless funds, which were used not only to support the Muslim community, but to rebuild and guide it in a more conservative direction under the watchful eye of the charities' staff. In addition to the mosques, they built ritual slaughter-houses, paid for locals to travel to Mecca for the hajj, distributed copies of the Qur'an and Islamist propaganda literature in Serbo-Croatian, gave out financial rewards for modest dress or veiling, organized summer camps and religious courses for youngsters, and provided educational scholarships for students to travel abroad for religious education. Most importantly, as foreign charities rebuilt mosques at a rapid pace, they were happy to fill vacant positions – particularly the ever-influential imams – with their own staff who preached a radically different form of Islam.¹⁶⁵

Radicalization Appears in the Muslim Community

As previously noted, the majority of Bosnian Muslims, though happy to accept the aid of foreign Islamic organizations, were not open to this strange, ultra-conservative form of Islam which stood in diametric opposition to the liberal Hanafi tradition of Bosnia. However, the internal conditions provided an atmosphere in which the arrival of radical Islam was welcomed by a small number of disillusioned Muslims. There are a series of sociological conditions necessary to facilitate the radicalization of a religious community, and Salafism/Wahhabism arrived in Bosnia at an opportune time, when these conditions were present as a result of the breakdown of Yugoslav society, the ensuing war, and the consolidation of Muslim identity.

The first and foundational condition in the case of the Bosnian Muslims is the marginalization, discrimination, or persecution of the group based on religious designation. This condition was not only present during the war, but writ large: marginalization in this case manifested itself through ethnic cleansing and genocide. Phillip Jenkins notes that religious persecution causes groups to operate clandestinely, develop military wings, cultivate dangerous ideologies of suffering and punishment,

¹⁶⁵ Lederer, "Countering Islamist Radicals," 4.

centralize power in charismatic clerical elite, and connect to a transnational network as a means of undermining the state.¹⁶⁶ All of these characteristics which result from religious marginalization describe the activities of the radical Muslim groups in Bosnia after the war.

Another essential condition for radicalization is economic depression. This condition manifested itself in a unique way in the Bosnian Muslim community, for not only had the economy been brought to a standstill by the years-long war, but millions of people throughout Bosnia had been displaced. These people were now homeless, jobless, and penniless; many children were orphans and women were widows. The entire economic structure of society had all but disappeared. Many young men in particular had found roles for themselves as defenders of their community during the war, often forging bonds with the *mujahedin* who fought alongside them. With the end of the war, these disaffected youth found themselves left with nothing and nowhere to go, subject to feeble governments propped up by an international protectorate. The segment of the population from which radical Muslims have had the most success recruiting new members is youth. Morrison states that “the Wahhabi claim, that they oppose nationalism, usury, prostitution and the consumption of alcohol and recognise only the authority of Allah, is a powerful and attractive message to the Muslim youth, jaded by what they perceive as the corruption of their politicians.”¹⁶⁷

A final condition necessary for the radicalization of a religious community is the appropriate religious ideology to suit the particular needs of the population. In combination with the internal changes in the Muslim community and the external factors which resulted in the arrival of Salafism/Wahhabism in Bosnia, this form of Islam in particular held a special appeal for a small portion of the shattered Bosnian Muslim community. The tenets of Salafism/Wahhabism prescribe a set of behavior, practices, and understandings of the world which were able to fulfill the needs of a people who oftentimes felt they had been left with nothing. Salafism promotes a specific worldview which is in direct response to an environment of tyranny and subjugation, in which Islam has been subject to degradation either by

¹⁶⁶ Phillip Jenkins, “The Politics of Persecuted Religious Minorities,” in *Religion and Security: The New Nexus in International Relations*, eds. Robert A. Seiple and Dennis R. Hoover (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004).

¹⁶⁷ Morrison, “Wahhabism in the Balkans,” 11.

outsiders or by local traditions which have eroded the essence of the religion. Martijn de Koning writes that Salafism can be viewed as a Utopian social movement fully entrenched in the modern world, “aimed at guarding the identity and integrity of Muslims in a world perceived to be full of seduction, oppression and injustice.”¹⁶⁸ The ideal of Salafism/Wahhabism is to provide a purely Islamic alternative to a way of life which had been corrupted or destroyed. It creates a community where one did not exist or had been destroyed, as was the case in Bosnia, where Muslims often lost their homes, towns, and entire families in the war. There is a sense of belonging which had been tragically lost for Muslims and is offered by membership in the Salafi/Wahhabi community. It also provides Bosnians with a distinct Muslim identity, clearing up the confusion resulting from attempts to discover the new meaning of being Muslim in Bosnia and engaging in what is related to them as “true” Islam. In a society which had become a chaotic cauldron of ethnic cleansing, hatred, genocide, and atrocity, Salafism/Wahhabism seemed to offer a means by which a “lost” generation of Bosnian Muslims could restore or instill a clear order to their lives. De Koning explains the appeal of Salafism:

The rigorous and sometimes rigid Salafi creed and piety creates a stark contrast with the often conflicting and troublesome experiences of daily life. This, as is the same as with the other Muslim youth searching for a ‘true’ Islam, does not mean people actually follow every aspect of the Salafi way. Many of them see it as an attempt to follow a life as a ‘true’ Muslim, as a personal project that has to be fulfilled and as a means to revive ones personal faith (imaan) without fully living up to it. The utopian Islam and the dark, messy, chaotic daily life coexist and, this contradiction is exactly what both is the strength and weakness of the Salafi movement. The utopia with its high moral standards can become an obstacle for functioning in daily life with family, work and education where other rules and loyalties exist. At the same time it gives the Salafi movement its power for it means that people can hold on to the ideal without diluting it and it makes people striving for more all the time.”

The radicalization of a portion of the Muslim community can be viewed as a religious output of social input; the process of activation of identity, social marginalization, and depression of the community combined with the introduction of radical Islam to Bosnia by the *mujahedin* and Islamic charitable organizations, resulting in the creation of a small community of radical Bosnian Muslims. This community is undoubtedly the minority, but its existence represents the first time the Islamic Community

¹⁶⁸ Martijn de Koning, “Radicalization Series IV – Salafism as a Utopian Movement,” *Closer: Anthropology of Muslims in Europe* (academic blog), 6 August 2010, <http://religionresearch.org/martijn/2010/08/06/radicalization-series-iv-salafism-as-a-utopian-movement/>.

of Bosnia has experienced true pluralism. This pluralism is not manifested through a difference of opinion on certain issues within the basic frame of liberal Hanafi Islam or the presence of a Sufi brotherhood,¹⁶⁹ but rather the breaking-off of a segment of the community which chooses to adhere to a different form of Islam altogether, and a radical form which has placed itself in direct opposition to and competition with the moderate majority.

The Moderate Majority in the Bosnian Muslim Community

Even though these foreign fighters primarily arrived in Bosnia to wage *jihad* and secondarily to spread the word of Wahhabism, their proselytization was not welcome to the majority of Bosnian Muslims. Vlado Azinovic states that “due to its character, Salafism/Wahhabism caused tensions in traditional, religiously moderate Bosnian Muslim society from the outset. These tensions...have led to a struggle between Bosniak ‘traditionalists’ and Salafis/Wahhabis for control of important mosques and Islamic centers both in Bosnia and abroad in places of Bosniak diaspora.”¹⁷⁰ Most Bosnian Muslims longed for a return to their normal, pre-war lives and resented attempts by foreign Muslims to impose strict Islamic law on their towns – closing shops which sold liquor or pornography, and forcing men to grow beards and women to veil themselves.¹⁷¹ In order to achieve a full picture of the Bosnian Muslim community, it is necessary to elucidate the manifestation of the activated Muslim identity in the non-radicalized portion of the Bosnian Muslim community.

In her recent work, Bringa emphasizes that many Bosnian Muslims have reassessed and reoriented their Muslim identities in the post-war period. This is expressed through “a more assertive Islamic identity, primarily by expanding the use of Islamic discourse (e.g., specific Muslim greetings, Islamic holidays becoming state holidays, public broadcasting, education).”¹⁷² She goes on to say,

¹⁶⁹ Historically, there have been several Sufi brotherhoods present in Bosnia. They are extremely small and do not challenge the authority of the IZ.

¹⁷⁰ Azinovic, “Challenges to International Security,” 4.

¹⁷¹ Morrison, “Wahhabism in the Balkans,” 5.

¹⁷² Bringa, “Islam and Identity,” 32.

however, that this does not mean a detachment from traditional Bosnian Muslim customs and traditions – only that there is “a stronger stress on the Islamic heritage of that collective identity.”¹⁷³

Harun Karčić notes that most academic studies of Islam in Bosnia focus on the “Islamic revival” there as manifested through the acceptance of radical Islam; most investigations stop there, without exploring how the non-radical population experienced this revival.¹⁷⁴ The activation of religious identity has appeared in the majority of the community as well, as what Karčić terms a “revival” of religiosity in the Muslim community, but one which has remained within the tradition of the uniquely Bosnian Islam. By revival, he means “the greater presence of Islam in both the private and public sphere.”¹⁷⁵ In the broader Islamic world, this has been manifested through “a greater observance of Islamic injunctions, greater mosque attendance, adherence to Islamic dress and etiquette, increased use of Islamic terminology and greetings, establishment of Islamic organizations and associations, greater interest in the study of Islamic sciences, greater publication of Islamic books, and sometimes calls for the state implementation of *Shari’a* in the public domain.”¹⁷⁶ These categories also apply to Bosnian Muslims, albeit in the context of Bosnian Islam, and have demonstrated an increase in religiosity concurrent with the maintenance of liberalism and the promotion of pluralism.

Increased religiosity has been expressed in Bosnia in particular through a notable increase in Islamic educational and civic organizations and publications. These organizations and publications are generally produced by the IZ, thus imparting on them a traditionally liberal perspective and maintaining them as part of Bosnia’s official Islamic community. The IZ publishes both books and periodicals. Books range from *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *tafsir* (Qur’anic exegesis) to children’s books, and periodicals include the newspaper *Preporod* (circulation of 25,000 copies), the relatively new *Novi Muallim* which focuses on innovative techniques in teaching Islam (circulation of 2,000 copies, published by the Association of *Ulema*), and *Takvim*, an Islamic almanac that also prints articles on religion, culture, and society

¹⁷³ Bringa, “Islam and Identity,” 32.

¹⁷⁴ Karčić, “Islamic Revival.”

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

(circulation of 50,000 copies).¹⁷⁷ Women's organizations have taken on an important role in post-war Bosnia, helping to empower women¹⁷⁸: *Kewser* was established during the war with the goal of helping women navigate the modern world while adhering to Islamic standards; *Nahla* was established in 2000 to empower women through education and offers courses on the Qur'an, Arabic, sewing, health, psychology, time management, and parenting.¹⁷⁹

The activated Muslim identity in the moderate majority of the Bosnian Muslim population is demonstrated primarily through public religiosity, such as the organizations and publications listed above. An increase in personal piety is more difficult to ascertain; while attendance at Friday prayers has increased, attendance at daily prayers is low, and alcohol consumption is still common.¹⁸⁰ In recent years, this public expression of traditional Bosnian Islam has come into conflict with its outspoken rival for precedence in Bosnia, the Salafi movement.

Chapter Five: The Voice of Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina

The pluralism within the Bosnian Muslim community necessarily debunks the myth that the Bosnian Muslim population constitutes a unified, monolithic bloc of moderation and secularity. Instead, the community's identity is shown to be dynamic and fluid, which suggests that the outcomes of pluralization are not predetermined. While those who embrace conservative Islam have remained the minority, they have been successful in garnering attention and extending their public reach, which may enable them to appeal to new followers. As a result, in the fifteen years post-Dayton, there has been a struggle to control the voice of Islam in Bosnia.

Although the IZ still represents the majority of Muslims in Bosnia, it has found itself on the defensive in recent years as global attention has fixated on images of elaborate Saudi mosques and women covering themselves from head to toe as representative of Islam in Bosnia, instead of looking at

¹⁷⁷ Kovac, "Bosnia and Herzegovina," 58.

¹⁷⁸ Tens of thousands of women were left widows after the war; there are reports that up to 50,000 women were raped. For a detailed analysis of crimes against women, see Alexandra Stiglmayer, *Mass Rape: The War Against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

¹⁷⁹ Karčić, "Islamic Revival."

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

the unique form of Islam in Bosnia as an example of moderation and liberalism.¹⁸¹ The Salafi/Wahhabi groups, comprised of foreign fighters who remained after the Bosnian War and local Muslims who have been radicalized, have recognized their growing influence and are seeking to increase this influence by becoming more visible and vocal. Although pluralism is generally regarded as essential to the health of a democracy's religious landscape,¹⁸² the experience of pluralism in Bosnia's Muslim community has been complicated. Most of Bosnia's 1.4 million Muslims¹⁸³ do not welcome the Salafi/Wahhabi presence, which they perceive as pernicious and unfaithful to traditional Bosnian Islam. In keeping with the mainline beliefs of Salafism, the Wahhabis believe there is only one true form of Islam – that which remains within the confines of their conservative, narrow definition of what is acceptable – and do not embrace the notion of pluralism within Islam.

Within this newly pluralistic community of Muslims, there has emerged a struggle for dominance, in which the proportionately tiny radical Muslim groups seek to make their voice heard above those of the IZ and the Bosnian Muslims who have continued to embrace the traditional form of “Bosnian Islam.” This struggle has not only altered the dynamics of the religious atmosphere in the Muslim community of Bosnia, but also threatens to destabilize Bosnia in general as it spills over into the public sphere. The struggle is manifested primarily in two ways: the leadership of the respective movements and their attempts to control the definition of Muslim identity in Bosnia; and the continued influence of foreign organizations on the expression of Islam in Bosnia.

The Central Figures in Pluralistic Muslim Bosnia

The direction and cohesion of these movements have been connected to the charismatic leadership of central figures in the Bosnian Muslim community: in the Salafi/Wahhabi movement, first Jusuf Barčić, and since his death, Muhammed Porča, both of whom are native Bosnians but were

¹⁸¹ See Chapter Two for a full explanation of the unique form of Islam present in Bosnia.

¹⁸² For a thorough exploration of the intersection of religious pluralism and democracy in a variety of societies, see Thomas F. Banchoff, *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁸³ The number of Bosnian Muslims who have embraced Salafism/Wahhabism is estimated to be in the thousands, which would make them less than .01% of the Bosnian Muslim population.

educated in Saudi Arabia; and for the IZ, Grand Mufti Dr. Mustafa Cerić, the rais-u-ulema of the Islamic Community of Bosnia since 1993, who is seen as having shepherded his people through a genocide and rebuilt the community in the aftermath.

Cerić's reputation within Bosnia has been slightly controversial, due in part to the suspicious circumstances by which he became *rais*, but more so recently due to the unusual line he has toed in the Bosnian Muslim community. On the one hand, he has been an outspoken advocate for and leader of the movement for interfaith dialogue, integration of Muslims into broader European society, and moderate beliefs.¹⁸⁴ On the other hand, he has been hesitant to vocally admonish or disassociate from the activities of more radical groups in Bosnia. It is plausible to conclude that Cerić has been placed in a precarious position in which he is attempting to assuage the tension which has resulted from the pluralism in the Muslim community by appeasing both sides.

In the wake of the war, Cerić shifted his focus from the survival of his community to peaceful coexistence of disparate religio-ethnic groups, as would be necessary in the new Bosnia. Regardless of territorial splits and the profound cleansing that had rendered entire regions of Bosnia ethnically "pure," all of the religious communities of Bosnia would be required to live together in a single state; many Muslims insisted on being able to return to their previous homes, where they would live as highly segregated minorities. Thus, Cerić's mission became the encouragement of religiously plural societies in Europe, particularly Bosnia, and the total inclusion of Muslims as equal participants in that pluralism. Simonetta Calderini speaks about how a transformation of modern Islamic theology results from necessity:

As a consequence of changed social and political circumstances, of conflicts, ethnic cleansing, political and religious activism, the present-day world is indeed a different place from that of the late 1980s and early

¹⁸⁴ For examples of Cerić's work, see: *Toward a Muslim Social Contract in Europe*, part of the the Zaki Badawi memorial lecture series (Richmond: Association of Muslim Social Scientists/City Circle, 2008); "The Many Voices of Islam," in *Contemporary Islam: Dynamic, Not Static*, eds. Abdul Aziz Said, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Meena Sharify-Funk, (London ; New York: Routledge, 2006); "Love of God, Love of Neighbor," (audience of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, at the First Seminar of the Catholic-Muslim Forum. Rome, 6 November 2008) <http://acommonword.com/en/conferences/20-rome-november-2008/106-address-by-his-eminence-mustafa-Cerić-grand-mufti-of-bosnia.html>; and "Keynote Address" (lecture at Loving God and Neighbor in Word and Deed: Implications for Muslims and Christians, sponsored by A Common Word, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 29 July 2008) <http://www.acommonword.com/en/component/content/article/2.html?start=3>.

1990s, both in forms of interfaith dialogue and Islamic theology...Theological necessity has become more pressing and real in a context like Bosnia, where the grand Mufti Mustafa Cerić (born 1955) adopting a much needed degree of Islamic realism, identifies religious pluralism as a safeguard against another genocide and, on the basis of Qur'anic verses, calls for an inclusive theological approach whereby no religious community has the monopoly of the Truth.¹⁸⁵

Cerić's work in the post-war period – from 1996 to the present – has earned him numerous appellations which stand in contrast to his depiction as a hawkish minion of Izetbegović during the war; in this period, he has been called a reformer, a moderate, and a “bridge between the Muslim World and the West, and between diverse Muslims in Europe.”¹⁸⁶ Rather than calling for an Islamic state, Cerić instead advocates for diverse societies which uphold strong religious pluralism, and opposes Muslims who believes that states should be religiously, culturally, and nationally homogeneous. He bases this opposition in the Qur'an, “noting that the Qur'an states many times, ‘If God wanted, he could create you to be one nation, but he wanted you to be different nations.’”¹⁸⁷ Cerić embraces the synthesis of traditional and modern Islamic theology to create new Qur'anic interpretations which can be applied to uniquely modern circumstances. For nearly 15 years, Cerić has utilized this methodology to develop Qur'anic arguments for religiously plural societies, interfaith dialogue, and full participation of Muslims as part of the religious landscape of Europe. His body of work reveals Qur'anic interpretation that is thoroughly modern, profoundly applicable to contemporary circumstances, and encouraging of interreligious relations which are notably not exclusive or insular.

Anes Alic reports that “the moderate Islamic community in Bosnia has stepped up its struggle against the Wahhabi movement. The community's head, Reis-ul-Ulema Mustafa Effendi Cerić, has...suggested that problems with radical Muslims in Bosnia have been imported from other countries, primarily Austria.”¹⁸⁸ This no doubt refers to Porča, whose primary residence is in Vienna, which is home to a large Bosnian diaspora. Regardless, Cerić perhaps has not taken as clear a stance on radical groups in

¹⁸⁵ Simonetta Calderini, “Islam and Diversity: Alternative Voices within Contemporary Islam,” *New Blackfriars*, Vol. 89 No 1021 (May 2008: 324-336), 335.

¹⁸⁶ Esposito, *Future of Islam*, 108.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 109.

¹⁸⁸ Anes Alic. “Investigation into Backgrounds of Bosnians involved in Vienna Terror Plot,” in *Terrorism Focus*, Volume: 4 Issue: 32 (October 2007), published online by the Jamestown Foundation [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=4462](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=4462).

Bosnia as he might. Stephen Schwartz of the Center for Islamic Pluralism notes that Cerić has changed his rhetoric of late, often defending the foreign fighters who remained in Bosnia and now face deportation, as well as affiliating himself with an organization called the European Council for Fatwas and Research, which is headed by well-known Egyptian-born, Qatar-based fundamentalist Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi.¹⁸⁹ Pointedly, Cerić has deflected questions about the Saudi presence in Bosnia, stating that other European countries such as Germany and Britain have a greater concentration of “dangerous people” and that the Bosnian Islamic Community is not in a position to refuse charitable funds from Saudi organizations seeking to rebuild the community.¹⁹⁰ Slaven Blavicki notes that while the IZ “expressed skepticism toward Islamic radicals and their activities in the country, they never openly tried to prevent the spread of radical ideology” and has in fact created an environment where such activity might be viewed as permissible.¹⁹¹

Muhammad Jusić¹⁹² has suggested that the IZ’s inconsistent response to the presence of radical Islam has resulted from the picture of Bosnian Islam that is painted by the global security threat framework as outlined in Chapter 2. The over-emphasis on the importance of radical Islam to Bosnian Muslims has put the IZ on the defensive as it attempts to dispel the notion that Bosnian Islam presents a threat. Jusić believes this misperception of Bosnian Muslims is driven in part by Islamophobia and is responsible for what he calls an uncharacteristic response to extremism:

This pernicious opportunist attitude in turn puts into pressure on the Muslim community; a pressure which, in the event of real Islamic extremism or hints of militarism, can become a serious obstacle to counteracting them. In the official Islamic community, as well as in the wider social environment, a climate is thereby created in which – uncharacteristically for Bosnian Muslims – cover-up methods are offered as the only way to handle suggestions of the radicalisation of Islamic teaching and the turning of traditional Islam into Islamism. Thus, every open analysis of the rise of Islamism among Bosnian Muslims that reaches Bosnian Muslim theologians or the ulama is seen as a boost to those ill-wishers who, as mentioned before, politicise these indications, further aggravating the position of Bosnian Muslims in these unstable times.... More to

¹⁸⁹ Stephen Schwartz, “Six Questions for Mustafa Cerić” (article from the Center for Islamic Pluralism, last modified 21 May 2007), <http://www.islamicpluralism.org/261/six-questions-for-mustafa-Cerić>.

¹⁹⁰ Patrick Moore, “Leader of Bosnian Muslim Community Speaks Out,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (23 April 2004, accessed 14 Nov 2010), <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1052461.html>.

¹⁹¹ Slaven Blavicki, “Islamist Terrorist Networks in the Balkans” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, September 2009), 78.

¹⁹² Muhamad Jusić, “Islamism in BiH: A vote against isolationism is a vote against radicalism” (paper published through the Open Society Fund Bosnia and Herzegovina, 9 February 2008, available at Islam in South East Europe Forum), http://iseef.net/index2.php?option=com_content&do_pdf=1&id=29.

the point, fearing that the increasingly Islamophobic world, especially the western public, might characterise them as potential terrorists, thereby pushing them into even greater isolation, Bosnian Muslims – Bosniaks - find it all the harder to pluck up the courage to face with defiance the implications of extremism, radicalism and the ideologisation of Islam within their own ranks.¹⁹³

Two figures who have benefitted from the IZ's hesitance to formally condemn radical Islam are Jusuf Barčić and Muhamad Porča. Both men were recipients of scholarships (explained later in this chapter) which enabled them to study in Saudi Arabia in the early 1990s. Upon his return to Bosnia, Barčić began preaching a puritanical form of Islam – Wahhabism – and, thanks to the establishment of small groups led by foreign adherents, he found a growing base to support his views.¹⁹⁴ In early 2007, Barčić and his followers, who had previously maintained a fairly isolated existence in central Bosnia, gained national attention by (unsuccessfully) attempting to occupy and “claim” a number of mosques managed by the IZ in the Tuzla region. After these attempts, Barčić and his group demanded entry to the Czar's Mosque in Sarajevo, the largest mosque in the country, so that Barčić could preach for a return to traditional values. Although he was prevented from doing so by authorities from the IZ, Barčić had made his point: Salafis/Wahhabis were present in the region and wanted to make themselves heard. Their voice was bearing an unequivocal message: there is only one acceptable form of Islam, and Bosnian Muslim society can be saved only by returning to the traditional core of Islam as represented by Wahhabism. Two months later, Barčić was killed in a car accident in Tuzla; more than 3,000 people, mostly Wahhabis from Bosnia and abroad, attended his funeral.¹⁹⁵

Porča, meanwhile, became the imam at Al-Tawhid Mosque in Vienna, where a large Bosnian population has settled, and began promoting Salafism/Wahhabism there. Although the specific nature of their ties is contested, Bosnian authorities believe that Porča and his congregation in Vienna were the primary financial supporters of Barčić's development of the radical Muslim community in Bosnia.¹⁹⁶ A significant source of this funding has been Porča's close friend and fellow cleric Adnan Buzar, the

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Blavicki, “Islamist Terrorist Networks,” 30.

¹⁹⁵ Anes Alic, “Wahhabism: From Vienna to Bosnia” (article published at ISN International Relations and Security Network, last modified 6 April 2007), <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?id=53104&lng=en>.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

Bosnian-born, Vienna-based son-in-law of Abu Nidal, the founder of the Fatah Revolutionary Council. Abu Nidal's substantial Swiss bank accounts were frozen in the 1980s but released in 1998, at which time his daughter, Buzar's wife, withdrew around \$8 million.¹⁹⁷ Porča has maintained his position in Vienna and "commutes" to Bosnia, where he has called for the establishment of an Islamic Community based in Salafism/Wahhabism. Porča had also financed trips for radical Muslims from Germany and Austria to Bosnia to preach and recruit new adherents to Salafism/Wahhabism.¹⁹⁸ Former associates – including Buzar's brother, Isfahn, as well as fellow imam Senad Podojak – have warned about his increasingly radical mindset, with Isfahn Buzar even saying that "it is a mystery to [him] why the authorities do not stop him (Porča)."¹⁹⁹

After Barčić's death in 2007, a follower of both Barčić and Porča named Nusret Imamović rose to prominence among the Salafis/Wahhabis in Bosnia. Imamović's community at Gornja Maoča in central Bosnia, an isolated enclave of around 20 families who live according to strict Islamic law, has become a representative focal point of the struggle between the moderate Islamic Community and the radical Salafis/Wahhabis in Bosnia. Largely ignored for the past several years, the Bosnian authorities reportedly sprung into action in early 2010 as a result of pressure from the international community, which had grown increasingly frustrated with Bosnia's unwilling to address what it perceived as a potential terrorist threat.²⁰⁰ Imamović, who hosts a *jihadist* website²⁰¹ and has pronounced his intentions to establish similar communities throughout Bosnia, was arrested, along with six others from the settlement; weapons, cash, and videotapes were seized. "Operation Light," as it is known, is still an active investigation, and the seven Salafis/Wahhabis who were arrested in February 2010 remained jailed. The issue of Gornja Maoča is illustrative of the complexity of the Muslim community in Bosnia today. Despite dismissals of Bosnian

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Alic, "Investigation," 2007.

¹⁹⁹ Petra Ramsauer, "Reports Point to Austrian Islamist 'Cells' Behind Radicalization of B-H Muslims" (article published in *Vienna News* in German, last modified 19 July 2007, accessed on 27 February 2011, 40-4), http://www.sina.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=122:reports-point-to-austrian-islamist-cells-behind-radicalization-of-b-h-muslims&catid=39:archive-&Itemid=57

²⁰⁰ Vlado Azinovic, "The True Aims of Bosnia's 'Operation Light,'" *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (last modified 12 Feb 2010), http://www.rferl.org/content/The_True_Aims_Of_Bosnias_Operation_Light/1954254.html.

²⁰¹ His website can be found at www.putvjernika.com (in Serbo-Croatian).

Muslim affiliation with foreign extremists or terrorist groups, the Islamic Community reportedly has been quick to dismiss outside criticism of Salafis/Wahhabis as Islamophobia and an attack on the Muslim community as a whole.²⁰²

Though the initial foreign influence in Bosnia came directly from Saudi Arabia and these organizations do continue to function in the region, much of the focus of late has shifted to Vienna as the source of financial and ideological support for radical Islam in Bosnia. Cerić, generally slow to criticize the more extreme movements in Bosnia, has directly implicated radical elements in Vienna. In her 2007 article, Ramsauer writes:

...Imamović reports that a preacher by the name of Muhammed Porča often visited from Vienna and that some of the residents of the village had jobs in Austria. His observations square with the findings of a number of experts interviewed by News. Their alarming analysis: The radicalization of Bosnian Muslims is being directed by a cell in Vienna. In an exclusive interview with News, the leader of Bosnia's Muslims, Grand Mufti Mustafa Cerić, explicitly warns the Austrian authorities of "networks and cells in Vienna": "You too could soon be the target of attacks." And terrorism expert Anes Alic, the director of the security consulting firm ISA, affirms in an interview with News: "I have information from the Bosnian intelligence service confirming that the leaders of the extremists are in Austria." Journalist Esad Hećimović, the author of a book on Islamists in Bosnia, has been researching the Islamist border-crossers for years: "I constantly run across accounts and addresses in Austria. The connections are very difficult to prove, but I assume that just as Saudi money especially was often channeled to Bosnia via Vienna during the Bosnian war, now money is flowing to the Wahhabis via those same channels."²⁰³

As Hećimović points out in the above quote, the connections between Vienna and Bosnia have been difficult to prove definitively, but they are present tangentially at least. The most recent incident in Bosnia is illustrative of the interconnectedness between the radical communities in Vienna and Bosnia. In July 2010, six men, all known members of the Bosnian Salafi/Wahhabi community, were arrested for the bombing of a police station in Bugojno, in central Bosnia, which killed one police officer and injured several others. There were initially two theories for the purpose of this attack. The first theory was that it was motivated by revenge for the arrest of Rijad Rustempašić, a Salafi/Wahhabi leader who was a close follower of Barčić and Porča. Rustempašić was well-known in Bosnia as a member of El-Mudzahidin brigade in the Bosnian Army during the war and reportedly fell in with the foreign *mujahedin* who remained in Bosnia. Hećimović describes him and his community as examples of those Bosnian Muslims

²⁰² Azinovic, "True Aims," 2010.

²⁰³ Ramsauer, "Reports Points to Austrian," 2007.

“who have embraced the *takfir* ideology and violent methods of action. Over the past two years the term “*takfir* supporters” has usually been attributed to people linked to groups in Austria...it comes as no surprise that a possible lead in this investigation is the arrestees’ alleged link to individuals in Austria.”²⁰⁴

The second theory for the motivation of the attack was that it was designed to disrupt a popular Muslim pilgrimage to the nearby mountain of Ajvatovica, the practice of which the Salafis/Wahhabis believe contravenes Muslim tradition.²⁰⁵ The real motive is likely some combination of the two: one of the perpetrators of the police station attack is the brother-in-law of Rustempašić, and another was an outspoken critic of the Ajvatovica pilgrimage; the attack gave them the opportunity to disrupt the ritual and target the police for revenge. Rustempašić, meanwhile, remains in prison on charges of terrorism, along with several members of his community, including his brother, who was arrested while attempting to flee Bosnia for Vienna.²⁰⁶

The Salafi/Wahhabi-Moderate Struggle Over Education

The power of figures such as Barčić and Porča highlight an issue which has existed in Bosnia since the early 1990s: the ability of foreign organizations to influence internal matters in the Bosnian Muslim community. The complicating impact of foreign groups, which constituted the external factors that contributed to the pluralization of the community, has persisted in Bosnia. The organizations have become interwoven into the community, making themselves indispensable in the form of educational opportunities. However, the moderate IZ has responded to the increased religiosity of Bosnian Muslims by expanding its role in a broad range of educational organizations. Despite the aggressive campaigning by the Salafis/Wahhabis, most Bosnian Muslims still operate within the traditional IZ.

During the Yugoslav period, Muslim education was almost non-existent. Prior to 1946, there had been more than 40 *madrasahs* in Bosnia; as previously noted, the only Muslim educational institution to

²⁰⁴ Esad Hećimović, “B-H Weekly Report Profiles Leader of Recently Arrested Group of Terror Suspects,” *Sarajevo Dani* (in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian 28 March 2008, 34-36).

²⁰⁵ Anes Alic, “Police Targeted in Bugojno Terror Attack” (article published at ISN Security Watch, last modified 12 July 2010, accessed on 28 February 2010), <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?lng=en&id=118664>.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

remain operational under communism was the Gazi Husrev-Bey *Madrasah* in Sarajevo.²⁰⁷ Almost immediately after Bosnia declared independence from Yugoslavia and was no longer subject to the repression of religion in the public sphere, public schools in Bosnia introduced curricula designed to provide religious education on an elective basis at the insistence of Izetbegović's new minister of culture, Enes Karic. These classes, with parental consent, were intended to teach students about a variety of religious traditions, not just Islam. This system is still in practice in public schools in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Primary schools have regular religious education offered electively to the three main religious confessions (Orthodox, Catholic, and Muslim). In secondary schools, this education is limited to one hour per week; for Muslim students, this class is taught by teachers trained by the IZ but employed by the state.²⁰⁸

One of the few forms of religious education that survived under communism was the traditional *mekteb*, informal religious classes held by imams on the weekends. These are still prevalent in Bosnia, though have declined in popularity since religious education is available in public schools now. Additionally, five of the primary *madrasahs* which were closed by Yugoslav authorities reopened during the war: the 'Osman ef. Redžović' *Madrasah* in Čajangrad near Visoko, reopened in 1992; the 'Behram-bey' *Madrasah* in Tuzla, established in 1626 and reopened in 1993; the 'Elči Ibrahim Paša' *Madrasah* in Travnik, established in 1706 and reopened in 1993; the 'Džemaludin ef. Čaušević' *Madrasah* in Cazin, reopened in 1993; and the 'Karadoz Bey' *Madrasah* in Mostar, established in 1557 and reopened in 1995.²⁰⁹ These five *madrasahs*, in addition to Gazi Husrev-Bey, are now officially administered by the IZ, and rather than functioning as facilities to train future imams, they operate more in the fashion of parochial schools in the United States: providing an overall secondary education along with religious education, couched in Islamic values and teachings.²¹⁰ This has made it possible for the IZ to provide moderate religious education to a larger portion (approximately 400 graduates per year, equal gender

²⁰⁷ Karčić, "Islamic Revival."

²⁰⁸ Kovac, "Bosnia-Herzegovina," 54.

²⁰⁹ Karčić, "Islamic Revival."

²¹⁰ Kovac, "Bosnia and Herzegovina," 54-55.

distribution) of the young Muslim community, which would otherwise only be able to receive the limited (though still present) education available through public schools and *mektebs*.²¹¹ The IZ also administers three institutions of higher education, which now operate as associate institutions of the major universities in Sarajevo, Zenica, and Bihac; they offer training programs for imams and religious school teachers, as well as non-religious degrees in Islamic Studies. There are around 300 full-time students and 300 part-time students spread throughout these various programs.²¹²

Despite the opportunities offered by the IZ, foreign actors have found Islamic education to be a primary means of asserting their presence and maintaining relevance in Bosnia. Beginning in the early 1990s, during the war, foreign organizations offered scholarships to students for religious education outside of Bosnia. Although the Saudis have been the primary sponsor of these scholarships, students have traveled to a variety of countries to study: Karčić cites a 2002 report which states that 107 students were studying in Saudi Arabia, 60 in Syria, 38 in Egypt, 34 in Jordan, 28 in Iran, 11 in Turkey, eight in Pakistan, two in Libya, one in Kuwait, and one in Lebanon. He notes that “these students of Islamic studies in Muslim countries are an influential channel for the transmission of Islamic ideas and practices from the countries of their study to Bosnia and Herzegovina.”²¹³ One only needs to look at the example of Jusuf Barčić to understand the impact: he was given the opportunity to study in Saudi Arabia, where he trained as an imam, and then returned to Bosnia as a preacher trained not in traditional Bosnian Islam, but in Wahhabism, eventually becoming the *de facto* leader of the Salafi/Wahhabi movement in Bosnia.²¹⁴

It is difficult to pinpoint exact numbers of radical Muslims in the Bosnian community. More often than not, it is Salafis/Wahhabis who have definitive connections to terrorism, such as Rustempašić and Imamović, who are outspoken and garner the most attention for obvious reasons. They have demonstrated that they do indeed present a clear security risk for the Bosnian state and, given their connections to foreign organizations, perhaps the entire region. Given these very real threats, the relevance of the global

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid., 55-6.

²¹³ Karčić, “Islamic Revival.”

²¹⁴ Blavicki, “Islamist Terrorist Networks,” 46.

security perspective in analyzing this phenomenon is clear. However, it is essential to note that the number of Bosnian Muslims identified with or arrested for terrorism is not representative of the Muslim community in general or even the radical Muslim community. Radicalism is not the same as terrorism, though it may lead to engagement in terrorist acts.

This process underscores the importance of understanding the process by which some Bosnian Muslims have moved from a moderate orientation to a conservative, radicalized version of Islam. As a result of this process, the Muslim community in Bosnia has changed dramatically since its emergence from the repression of communism in the early 1990s. It is now caught in a struggle between two very determined forces representing divergent views of Islam, one deeply rooted in centuries of practice in Bosnia, and one foreign and, in some cases, irresistibly appealing for what it can offer a disenfranchised population. The dominant moderate majority, embodied by the formal institution of the Islamic Community and the Grand Mufti of Bosnia, Mustafa Cerić, is attempting to shepherd the Islamic revival resulting from religious reactivation in a moderate direction. The radicalized minority, represented by such figures as Muhamad Porča and the late Jusuf Barčić, emphatically rejects the moderate views of the majority and has attempted to increase its influence in the Muslim community through largely foreign-supported, locally-managed action.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

The Bosnian Muslim community has been analyzed largely from two perspectives. The first is an ethno-national perspective, which views the Bosnian Muslim population as a “nation” of people bound together by ethnic designation; thus this population is often referred to as “Bosniaks,” a political category that corresponds to ethnic but not religious identity.²¹⁵ The religious meaning of being Muslim is either no longer or only minimally applicable. This analysis of the community is insufficient as it essentially ignores the recent activation of religious identity and the presence of new forms of Islam in Bosnia. The

²¹⁵ The disparity between “Bosniak” and “Bosnian Muslim” is evidenced in the CIA World Factbook, which notes that 48% of Bosnians identify as “Bosniak” but only 40% identify as Muslim.

second perspective is a global security threat framework, which views Bosnian Muslims as a community which has been thoroughly infiltrated by foreign influences seeking to establish radical Islam in a European state. As such, the entirety of the Bosnian Muslim community is viewed as having radicalized and is thus a potential threat for terrorist activity. This analysis of the community is also insufficient for it exaggerates the influence of radical Islam and ignores the presence of a majority that still embraces a unique form of Bosnian Islam.

This paper, therefore, has utilized a different approach to the study of the Bosnian Muslim community. This approach rejects essentialized depictions of the population as a monolithic bloc and instead seeks to explore the new manifestations of pluralism within the community. The variations in the Bosnian Muslim community have developed in the post-communist period as a result of a two-level process of pluralization.

The first part of this process is the creation by internal factors of a set of conditions in Bosnia which contributed to the activation of religious identity among Muslims. The internal factors arose from inter-religious dynamics of the Yugoslav landscape prior to and during the war, including repression of religiosity under socialism; marginalization by Serbs and Croats of Bosnian Muslims as the “Other”; and mobilization and consolidation of Muslim identity by charismatic political and religious leaders. The second part of this process occurred when a series of external factors emerged during the Bosnian War, catalyzing the conditions previously created by the internal factors to initiate a process of pluralization. These external factors include the influx of veteran *mujahedin* and Islamic agencies that arrived in Bosnia assist the Muslim community. Both the foreign fighters and the agencies introduced to Bosnia an alien form of Islam known as Salafism, and more specifically the Saudi version of Salafism, Wahhabism. As a result of this process, the Bosnian Muslim community has pluralized, manifested primarily through the development of a small but vocal group of Salafi/Wahhabi Muslims.

Since the development of pluralism in the post-war period, there has been a struggle between the Islamic Community of Bosnia (IZ) and the Salafis/Wahhabis for primacy of voice in determining the true Muslim identity in Bosnia. Although statistically minute, the radical Muslim population has succeeded in

establishing a strong presence. It has been able to aggressively challenge the primacy of the IZ as the Islamic authority in Bosnia by establishing its position through education, civil society, religious practice, financial assistance, and, in isolated instances, terrorist activity. Despite its vocal presence in Bosnia, the majority of Muslims still adhere to a unique form of “Bosnian Islam,” a syncretic tradition which combines liberal Hanafi Islam with local Bosnian customs and traditions. This majority of the population has experienced a revival of religiosity in the post-war period, but this revival remains within the context of Bosnian Islam.

The Bosnian Muslim population not only comprises one of the three governing nations of the new state of Bosnia-Herzegovina; it is also the largest nation, making up over 40% of the state’s population. It is therefore essential to understand the full range of issues facing this community. Bosnian Muslims do not represent a monolithic entity; there is considerable variation within the community and, most significantly, there is a growing power struggle for control of the Islamic establishment between two fundamentally different Muslim groups. Understanding the diversity of Bosnian Muslims will allow those who engage with it to respond to the needs, concerns, and issues within the community in an appropriate, productive, and meaningful way.

Bibliography

Aitken, Rob. "Cementing Divisions? An assessment of the impact of international interventions and peace-building policies on ethnic identities and divisions." *Policy Studies*, Vol. 28, No 3 (2007): 247-269.

Alibasić, Ahmet. "Traditional and Reformist Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina." C-SIS Working Paper No 2., Cambridge Programme for Security in International Society, 2003.

http://www.iseef.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=42.

Alic, Anes. "Investigation into Backgrounds of Bosnians involved in Vienna Terror Plot." In *Terrorism Focus*, Volume: 4 Issue: 32 (October 2007), published online by the Jamestown Foundation.

[http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=4462](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=4462).

Alic, Anes. "Police Targeted in Bugojno Terror Attack." Article published at ISN Security Watch, on 12 July 2010. <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?lng=en&id=118664>.

Alic, Anes. "Wahhabism: From Vienna to Bosnia," Article published at ISN International Relations and Security Network on 6 April 2007. <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?id=53104&lng=en>.

Andjelic, Neven. *Bosnia-Herzegovina: The End of a Legacy*. London: Frank Cass, 2003.

Asad, Talal. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.

Atanassof, Velko. "Bosnia and Herzegovina - Islamic Revival, International Advocacy Networks, and Islamic Terrorism." *Strategic Insights*, Vol. IV, Issue 5.

Azinovic, Vlado. "Challenges to International Security: The Case of Bosnia-Herzegovina." Paper presented at the Second Annual Conference on Human Security, Terrorism and Organized Crime in the Western Balkan Region. Sarajevo: The HUMSEC Project, 4-6 October 2007.

Azinovic, Vlado. "The True Aims of Bosnia's 'Operation Light.'" *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, published on 12 Feb 2010.

http://www.rferl.org/content/The_True_Aims_Of_Bosnias_Operation_Light/1954254.html

Bakic-Hayden, Milica. "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of the Former Yugoslavia." *Slavic Review* Vol. 54, No. 4 (Winter 1995): 917-931.

Baljak, Aladin. *Bosnia: The Security Dilemma That Did Not Exist - An Investigation into the Causes of Ethnic Violence*. Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2008.

Balkan Insight. *Bosnian Police Raid Wahhabi Village*. Article on BalkanInsight.com, published 2 February 2010. <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/main/news/25407/> (accessed April 9, 2010).

Banchoff, Thomas F. *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2007.

Bardos, Gordon N. "Balkan Blowback? Osama Bin Laden and Southeastern Europe." *Mediterranean Quarterly* (Winter 2002): 44-55.

Bayat, Asef. "Islamism and Social Movement Theory." *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 6 (2005): 891-908.

Berger, Peter L. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967.

Bjelic, Dusan I. "Blowing Up the 'Bridge'." In *Balkan as Metaphor: Between Globalization and Fragmentation*, edited by Dušan I. Bjelic and Obrad Savic, 1-23. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005.

Blavicki, Slaven. "Islamist Terrorist Networks in the Balkans." Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, September 2009.

Botev, Nikolai. "Seeing Past the Barricades: Ethnic Inter-marriage in Former Yugoslavia, 1962-1989." In *Neighbors at War: Anthropological Perspectives on Yugoslav Ethnicity, Culture, and History*, edited by Joel M. Halpern and David A. Kideckel, 219-233. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.

Bose, Sumantra. *Bosnia After Dayton: Nationalist Partition and International Intervention*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Bougarel, Xavier. *The Role of Balkan Muslims in Building a European Islam*. EPC Issue Paper No. 43, European Policy Centre, 2005.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Logic of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990.

Bringa, Tone. *Being Muslim the Bosnian Way: Identity and Community in a Central Bosnian Village*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995.

Bringa, Tone. "Islam and the Quest for Identity in Post-Communist Bosnia-Herzegovina." In *Islam and Bosnia: Conflict Resolution and Foreign Policy in Multi-Ethnic States*, edited by Maya Shatzmiller, 24-34. Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.

Burg, Steven L. and Paul Shoup. *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999.

Calderini, Simonetta. "Islam and Diversity: Alternative Voices within Contemporary Islam." *New Blackfriars*, Vol. 89 No 1021 (May 2008): 324-336.

Campo, Juan Eduardo. "Hanafi Legal School" and "Salafism." In *Encyclopedia of Islam*. New York: Facts on File, 2009.

Carpenter, Ted Galen. "The Coming Balkan Caliphate: The Threat of Radical Islam to Europe and the West (review)." *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Volume 20, Number 1 (Winter 2009): 151-154.

Cerić, Mustafa. "Keynote Address." Lecture at Loving God and Neighbor in Word and Deed: Implications for Muslims and Christians, sponsored by A Common Word, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 29 July 2008. Video at <http://www.acommonword.com/en/component/content/article/2.html?start=3>

Cerić, Mustafa. "Love of God, Love of Neighbor." Audience of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, at the First Seminar of the Catholic-Muslim Forum. Rome, 6 November 2008.

<http://acommonword.com/en/conferences/20-rome-november-2008/106-address-by-his-eminence-mustafa-Ceric-grand-mufti-of-bosnia.html>

Cerić, Mustafa. "The Many Voices of Islam." In *Contemporary Islam: Dynamic, Not Static*, edited by Abdul Aziz Said, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Meena Sharify-Funk, 17-23. London; New York: Routledge, 2006.

Cerić, Mustafa. *The Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam: A Study of the Theology of Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi (d. 333/944)*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1995.

Cerić, Mustafa. *Toward a Muslim Social Contract in Europe*. Published as part of the the Zaki Badawi memorial lecture series (Richmond: Association of Muslim Social Scientists/City Circle, 2008)

Cigar, Norman. "The Nationalist Serbian Intellectuals and Islam: Defining and Eliminating a Muslim Community." In *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*, edited by Emran Qureshi and Michael A. Sells, 314-351. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

- Chandler, David. *Bosnia: Faking Democracy After Dayton*. London: Pluto Press, 1999.
- Cohen, Lenard J. *Broken Bonds: Yugoslavia's Disintegration and Balkan Politics in Transition*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995.
- de Koning, Martijn. "Radicalization Series IV – Salafism as a Utopian Movement." *Closer: Anthropology of Muslims in Europe* (academic blog), 6 August 2010.
<http://religionresearch.org/martijn/2010/08/06/radicalization-series-iv-salafism-as-a-utopian-movement/>
- Deliso, Christopher. *The Coming Balkan Caliphate*. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007.
- Donia, Robert J. *Nationalism and Religious Extremism in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo Since 1990*. Position paper, Ljubljana: International Institute for Middle East and Balkan Studies, 2007.
- Drees, Willem B. and Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld, *The Study of Religion and the Training of Muslim Clergy in Europe: Academic and Religious Freedom in the 21st Century*. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2008.
- Esposito, John L. *The Future of Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Evstatiev, Simeon. *Public Islam on the Balkans in a Wider European Context*. International Policy Fellowship Program policy paper, Open Society Institute, Budapest: 2005/2006.
- Fine, John V.A. "The Various Faiths in the History of Bosnia." In *Islam and Bosnia: Conflict Resolution and Foreign Policy in Multi-Ethnic States*, edited by Maya Shatzmiller, 3-23. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.
- Finlan, Alastair. *The Collapse of Yugoslavia: 1991-99*. Oxford: Osprey, 2004.
- Friedman, Francine. *Bosnian Muslims: Denial of a Nation*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996.
- Friedman, Francine. "The Bosnian Muslim National Question." In *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, edited by Paul Mojzes, 1-9. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998.
- Giomi, Fabio. "Reforma - The Organization of Progressive Muslims and its Role in Interwar Bosnia." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (December 2009): 495-510.
- Glenny, Misha. *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804-1999*. New York: Viking, 2000.

Gray, David H. and Fred A. Tafoya, "Bosnia's 'Jihad' and the Development of Al Qaida: Past, Present, and Future." *Research Journal of International Studies*, Issue 7 (March 2008): 67-81.

Hayden, Robert M. "Muslims as "Others" in Serbian and Croatian Politics." In *Neighbors at War: Anthropological Perspectives on Yugoslav Ethnicity, Culture, and History*, edited by Joel M. Halpern and David A. Kideckel, 116-124. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.

Hećimović, Esad. "B-H Weekly Report Profiles Leader of Recently Arrested Group of Terror Suspects." In *Sarajevo Dani* (in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian) 28 March 2008, 34-36.

Hegghammer, Thomas. *Jihad in Saudi Arabia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

International Crisis Group. *Bosnia's Incomplete Transition: Between Dayton and Europe*. Europe Report N°198, Brussels: ICG, 2009.

International Crisis Group. *Bin Laden and the Balkans: The Politics of Anti-Terrorism*. ICG Balkans Report no. 119, 9 November 2001.

<http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/FileContent?serviceID=10&fileid=385DC0AFE1A0-CF33-A7FF-C0F65D7317C2&lng=en/>.

Izetbegović, Alija. *The Islamic Declaration: A Programme for the Islamization of Muslims and the Muslim Peoples*. Sarajevo: 1970, published 1991.

Jelavich, Barbara. *History of the Balkans*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Jelavich, Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan States, 1804-1920*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977.

Jenkins, Phillip. "The Politics of Persecuted Religious Minorities." In *Religion and Security: The New Nexus in International Relations*, by Robert A. Seiple and Dennis R. Hoover, 25-36. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.

Juergensmeyer, Mark. "Religion as a Cause of Terrorism." In *The Roots of Terrorism*, edited by Louise Richardson, 133-144. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Jusić, Muhamad. "Islamism in BiH: A vote against isolationism is a vote against radicalism." Paper published through the Open Society Fund Bosnia and Herzegovina, 9 February 2008. Available at Islam in South East Europe Forum. http://iseef.net/index2.php?option=com_content&do_pdf=1&id=29.

Kagioglidis, Ioannis. *Religious Education and the Prevention of Islamic Radicalization: Albania, Britain, France, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*. PhD Dissertation, Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School, 2009.

Karajkov, Risto. "Islam: The Young and the Old." *Transitions Online* (February 2006): 1-6.

Karčić, Harun. "Islamic Revival in Bosnia-Herzegovina: 1992-2010." Working paper, Center for Advanced Studies in Sarajevo, 8 January 2011.

http://www.iseef.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=122&Itemid=92.

Karpat, Kemal. "Millet and Nationality: The Roots of Incongruity of Nation and State in the Post-Ottoman Era." In *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, by Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, 141-169. New York City: Holmes & Meier, 1982.

Kohlmann, Evan. *Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network*. Oxford: Berg, 2004.

Kovac, Mirnes. "Bosnia-Herzegovina." In *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, 2009 edition, edited by Jørgen S. Nielsen and Samim Akgönül, 49-59. Lieden: Brill, 2009.

Kullolli, Arben. *Proselytization in Albania by Middle Eastern Islamic Organizations*. Master's Thesis, Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School, 2009.

Lederer, Gyorgy. *Countering Islamist Radicals In Eastern Europe*. CSRC Discussion Paper 05/42, CSRC, 2005.

Lockwood, William G. "Bosnian Muslims." In *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, edited by Stephan Thernstrom Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1980.

Meijer, Roel. *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

Moore, Patrick. "Leader of Bosnian Muslim Community Speaks Out." *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*. Published on 23 April 2004, accessed 14 Nov 2010. <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1052461.html>.

Morrison, Kenneth. *Wahhabism in the Balkans*. Advanced Research and Assessment Group Paper, London: Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, 2008.

Oluic, Steven. "Radical Islam on Europe's Frontier." *National Security and the Future* 1 (2) (2009): 35-52.

Perica, Vjekoslav. *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Perry, Valery. "At Cross Purposes? Democratization and Peace Implementation Strategies in Bosnia and Herzegovina's Frozen Conflict." *Human Rights Review* 10 (2009): 35-54.

Petrovic, Edit. "Ethnonationalism and the Dissolution of Yugoslavia." in *Neighbors at War: Anthropological Perspectives on Yugoslav Ethnicity, Culture, and History*, edited by Joel M. Halpern and David A. Kideckel (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, 164-186)

Ramsauer, Petra. "Reports Point to Austrian Islamist 'Cells' Behind Radicalization of B-H Muslims." Article published in *Vienna News*, last modified 19 July 2007, accessed on 27 February 2011, 40-4. http://www.sina.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=122:reports-point-to-austrian-islamist-cells-behind-radicalization-of-b-h-muslims&catid=39:archive-&Itemid=57.

Runciman, Sir Steven. "'Rum Milleti': The Orthodox Communities Under the Ottoman Sultans." In *The Byzantine Tradition After the Fall of Constantinople*, by John J. Yiannis, 1-16. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991.

Saeed, Abdullah. *Islamic Thought*. Oxon: Routledge, 2006.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

Schindler, John. *Unholy Terror: Bosnia, al-Qa'ida, and the Rise of Global Jihad*. St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2007.

Schwartz, Stephen. "Six Questions for Mustafa Cerić." Article from the Center for Islamic Pluralism, published on 21 May 2007. <http://www.islamicpluralism.org/261/six-questions-for-mustafa-Ceríc>

Sells, Michael A. *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Sells, Michael A. "The Construction of Islam in Serbian Religious Mythology and its Consequences." In *Islam and Bosnia: Conflict Resolution and Foreign Policy in Multi-Ethnic States*, edited by Maya Shatzmiller, 56-85. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.

Shay, Shaul. *Islamic Terror and the Balkans*. Herzliya: Interdisciplinary Center, 2007.

Stemmann, Juan José Escobar. "Middle East Salafism's Influence and Radicalization of Muslim Communities in Europe." *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (September 2006).

Stewart, Christopher S. *Hunting the Tiger: The Fast Life and Violent Death of the Balkans' Most Dangerous Man*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2008.

Stiglmyer, Alexandra. *Mass Rape: The War Against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994.

Todorova, Maria. *Imagining the Balkans*, updated ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Trofimov, Yaroslav. "Seeds of Hate: In Postwar Bosnia, Militant Islam Turns U.S. Allies to Enemies." *Wall Street Journal*. March 18, 2002, Eastern Edition, <http://www.proquest.com.libproxy.nps.edu>.

United States Department of State Office of Religious Freedom. "2009 Report on International Religious Freedom." Washington, D.C., 2009. Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo.

United States Congressional Research Service. Islamic Terrorism and the Balkans (RL33012; 26 July 2005), by Stephen Woehrel. Received through the CRS Web; accessed 4 April 2010

Woodward, Susan L. *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1995.

Young, Mitchell. "Religion, Community, Identity: Rusmir Mahmutcehajic and the Future of Bosnia." Paper presented at the Kokkalis Program Graduate School Workshop, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 5 February 2004.

<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/kokkalis/GSW7/GSW%206/Mitchell%20Young%20Paper.pdf>.

"Bosnia and Herzegovina." *The World Factbook 2009*. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2009. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html>.

"Dayton Peace Agreement." Available on the State Department website at

<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/or/dayton/52607.htm>.

"History." On the official website of Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, last modified 16 October 2008, accessed 28 Nov 2010,

http://www.rijaset.ba/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=70&Itemid=62.

"Biography," "Raisu-l-Ulama: The Constitution of the Islamic Community," "Raisu-l-Ulama: From Title to Service." On the official website of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, last modified 16 October 2008, accessed 28 Nov 2010.

http://www.rijaset.ba/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=70&Itemid=62.

“The Structural Organization of the Islamic Community of Bosnia-Herzegovina.” On the official website of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, last modified on 7 October 2008, accessed on 1 May 2010. http://www.rijaset.ba/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=48&Itemid=53

“Mapping the Global Muslim Population.” Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. October 2009, retrieved 4 April 2010. <http://pewforum.org/uploadedfiles/Topics/Demographics/Muslimpopulation.pdf>.

“Bosnian ‘White al-Qaeda’ seen as grave threat to Europe.” *Islam-Watch.org*. Posted on January 10, 2008. <http://www.islam-watch.org/Serbianna/Bosnian-White-al-Qaeda-gravethreat-to-Europe.htm>.

Appendix: Research Proposal

Research Paper Proposal

Boston University

Master of Arts in International Relations and Religion

Candidate: Sarah Schlesinger

Advisor: Elizabeth Prodromou

February 7, 2011

The Internal Pluralization of the Muslim Community in Bosnia-Herzegovina: A Case Study in Religious Activation and Radicalization

Statement of Purpose

In 1992, Yugoslavia plunged into war as the former socialist republic dissolved into newly independent states. Over the next three years, conflict raged between the predominantly Orthodox Bosnian Serbs, Catholic Croats, and Muslim Bosnians (or Bosniaks) as these three groups sought to grab territory and cleanse it of their opponents' presence. The Bosniaks, a Muslim population of Bosnia which has existed since the 14th century, suffered a particularly cruel fate as the victims of a brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing by the Bosnian Serbs. The Bosnian War was brought to a screeching halt in 1995 as a result of the Dayton Accords, which created a new state of Bosnia-Herzegovina divided into two entities: the Bosnian Serb Republika Srpska, and the split Bosniak-Croat Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Bosnian state is divided along ethnic lines, between Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks. This division in and of itself indicates a unique set-up: as nations, Serbs and Croats represent nationalities; only the third group, the Bosniaks, have come to constitute their own nation based solely on their religious identity.

The aim of this paper is to answer a central question: how did a specific community – the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina – have its religious identity activated, and what were the factors that provided the environment necessary for radicalization of a portion of that community? In order to investigate this question, three subsets of questions must be addressed:

- What is the historical process that resulted in the consolidation of Bosniak identity? How was this identity “activated” during the pre- and post-war periods?
- What are the internal and external factors that allowed a predominantly secular Muslim population to develop a small but highly radicalized pocket?
- What is the direct impact of the radicalization of a portion of a religious population? Can this study be used to generalize how religious identity is activated and radicalized?

A combination of internal and external factors in the history of this community created the circumstances in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As the former Yugoslavia began to break down, ethnic and national identities were consolidated, and the Bosnian Muslims have come to constitute a separate nation, defined according to – and separated on the basis of – their religion. Bosniaks historically have constituted a religiously homogenous population, moderate in their practice and minimally observant; prior to the Bosnian War of 1992-1995, religious practice had been repressed by almost fifty years of socialist rule. During the war, the besieged Bosniak population readily accepted aid from foreign Islamic organizations, and assistance arrived not only in the form of charitable organizations, but thousands of foreign fighters. Many of these foreign fighters were veteran mujahideen from Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia, and brought with them a form of Islam entirely new to the Bosniaks: Wahhabism. Three short years later, the Bosniak community had experienced a major rift: although the majority of Bosnian Muslims returned to their secular ways, a small but active, ethnically heterogeneous and religiously extremist Muslim community now existed in enclaves throughout Bosnia. As a result, there has been a struggle between the two forces in the Islamic Community of Bosnia-Herzegovina – the moderate majority and the radical minority – to present themselves as the voice of true Islam in Bosnia.

Research Methods

The subject of this paper is a quintessential international relations problem, potentially involving issues of regional security, state capacity and state failure, and nation-building. As such, there are a variety of perspectives which can be (and have been) utilized to examine the phenomenon of the activation and partial radicalization of the Bosniak community, particularly the constructivist discourse. These theories have proven less than satisfying when attempting to trace the process by which the Bosnian Muslim community consolidated its religious identity and experienced internal pluralization with the creation of a small radicalized group. This paper seeks to approach the analysis of religious activation and radicalization from a different perspective, through the application of religious theory. This method does not minimize the importance of this phenomenon from an international relations point of view, but rather seeks to illuminate factors in this phenomenon which have not adequately been explained through IR

theory. I am seeking to explain a phenomenon which is rooted in the international relations context by using a different theoretical set to gain a greater understanding of the specific process by which a subset of the population has its religious identity activated and radicalized.

In order to establish the methodologies by which this phenomenon previously has been analyzed, the paper will begin with a literature review of the work on the Bosniak community. Although the Bosniaks have been the direct subject of relatively few studies, most work tends to either paint the Bosniaks as a monolithic, static community in which any sort of religious pluralization is not possible, or as a community which has been penetrated and overwhelmed so thoroughly by foreign influences that it now represents a widespread danger and security risk. By using religious theory to examine the religious pluralization of the Bosniaks, this paper will reject such an essentialist perspective and argue instead that identities are fluid and dynamic.

This paper will begin by tracing the development of the Bosniak community to establish the historical background for the activation and radicalization of the community. In order to do this, the paper will utilize books, scholarly assessments, newspaper articles, journalistic reports, and governmental records of the periods in question.

The main portion of the paper will consist of a double-level analysis of the two periods of transformation of the Bosniak community. This entails the analysis of both internal and external factors in the activation of religious identity of the Bosniaks as a whole and the radicalization of the minority Wahhabi groups. A number of theoretical religious frameworks regarding the consolidation and activation of specific aspects of religious identity will be tested and applied, including those of Pierre Bourdieu, Talal Asad, and Emile Durkheim. Additionally, theoretical frameworks related to the process of religious radicalization will be applied, including those of Martin Riesebrodt and Phillip Jenkins. Although a specific investigation of the ideology of Wahhabism is outside the scope of this paper, the process by which radical religious ideology penetrates a community will be examined closely.

This paper will also include examination and analysis of the statements, publications, and rhetoric of both the official Islamic Community of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the leaders of the Bosniak Wahhabi movement. Additionally, statistics regarding the number of Wahhabis in Bosnia, attendance at Wahhabi-sponsored events, public reaction to Wahhabi rhetoric, and state responses to the presence of Wahhabis in Bosnia will be analyzed to determine the popularity of the radical movement there.

Preliminary Outline

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two: Review of Current Literature on the Bosniak Community

- Previous approaches to the analysis of the Bosniaks
 - Ethno-national
 - Global security threat

Chapter Three: The Historical Development of the “Bosniaks”

- Bosnian Muslims prior to World War II
- The creation of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the systematic repression of religion, and Bosniak as an ethnicity
- Wartime: Bosniaks as a targeted nation and the response of the Islamic World
- Post-Dayton Bosnia
- An overview of the traditional “moderate” Islam of Bosnia

Chapter Four: From Religious Activation to Religious Radicalization

- The internal transformation of the Bosnian Muslim community through identity consolidation – from secular Bosniaks to Muslim Bosnians
 - The Bosniaks come together: Islam as a social construct for Bosniaks (Durkheim) and the objectification of the Bosniaks as a separate group (Bourdieu)
 - Repression of religious identity under Communism
 - Bosniaks as the “Other”: Orientalism, Balkanism, and segregation (Asad)
 - Outside objectification of Bosniaks – the EU, US, and Muslim World
 - The impact of the war: religious mobilization, systematic destruction of the community, genocide and survival through cohesion
 - The effect of religious identity consolidation on the dynamics of the community: the emergence of disparate Muslim voices
- External factors and the exacerbation of internal conditions – providing the ideology and resources necessary for the completion of radicalization
 - Foreign fighters and the Bosnian War
 - Islamic charities rebuilding the community and transmitting ideology
 - Wahhabism
 - The Bosnian diaspora in Vienna
- The confluence of internal and external factors: the internal pluralization of the community – a radical minority breaks away from the moderate majority

Chapter Five: The Voice of Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina

- The struggle of multivocality in the Bosniak community: who dominates as the “real” Islamic Community?
- Charismatic authority and the leadership of the Islamic communities of Bosnia
- The contingent outcomes of the radicalization of a portion of the Bosniak community: What does the existence of these Salafis mean?

Chapter Six: Conclusions