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## CONTEMPORARY ISLAM IN EAST EUROPE

The successive censuses of socialist Yugoslavia offered different options to its Serbocroatian-speaking citizens who regarded themselves of Islamic tradition or extraction in any sense of this term. In 1948 they could declare their nationality as “Muslim”, in 1953 as “Yugoslav ethnically undetermined”, in 1961 as “Muslim in the ethnic sense”, and in 1971 “Muslim in the national sense”. All these terms excluded the Albanian and the Turkish minorities while they included many atheists.<sup>1</sup> This confusion made many believe that Islam was a nationality or a nation. No one expected at that time the dramatic meaning this concept would gain in the 1990s.

An oft-quoted though questionable 1985 Yugoslav opinion poll<sup>2</sup> gave the following proportions of religious believers: Bosnia-Herzegovina 17 p.c., Macedonia 19 p.c., Kosovo 44 p.c.... so the religiosity of Muslim and other Bosnians was rather low, even by East European standards. The link between Islam(ic tradition) and ethnicity must have been indirect. The two should be clearly distinguished which is not easy in the Balkans for various reasons. Albanians, Bulgarian and other Balkan Turks and Roma have their distinct language, culture, kinship, even physical appearance to some extent, but for Slav Muslims only traditions and the feeling of commonality would have remained if Yugoslavia had survived. Several of the above elements have been affected by these groupings' understanding of Islam, which is nevertheless a supra-national community and also a spiritual, moral, behavioral, legal, etc. code. In normal circumstances those who find its basic tenets unimportant or anachronistic could hardly be considered as “Muslim” regardless of their ancestry. Nevertheless, so many thousand people massacred and others threatened just for their neighbors supposing them to belong to that community is anything but normal. Controversial this may be I myself will also call “Muslims” all East Europeans of Islamic descent as do the press and the pertinent recent literature. The latter (a new sub-discipline of post-socialist “transitology”) tends to focus on human rights, minority issues and ethnicity much more than on religion, with very few exceptions.<sup>3</sup>

As an Islamicist and Arabist I do not always feel comfortable with this approach which may be practical as the term “Muslims” designates several ethnic groups in each of Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, etc. It is also followed by both non-European and western Muslim authors.<sup>4</sup> They tend to have a rather limited knowledge of East European socialism, to overemphasize the (Orthodox) Christian aspect of post-socialist national(ist) revival in the Balkans, and to inflate the number of (nominal) Muslims there. These figures are risky estimates. They hardly take into account actual religious attachment. If they did so, they would reveal for instance a surprisingly low number of Muslims in Albania, the only country of Muslim majority in Europe, in 1945.<sup>5</sup> It is a widespread myth that communist assault on religion strengthened the resolve of Muslims, or Christians, to cling to it even more tenaciously.

Secularization went far in socialist East Europe including Kosovo where the above-mentioned 44 p.c. appears to be exaggerated or at least needs to be commented. Even the remaining Islamic consciousness is often “contaminated” by crypto-Christianity, syncretic elements, popular superstitions and non-Shari’a-conform (Sufi) mysticism<sup>6</sup> which are rejected by mainstream “official” Middle Eastern Islam. The latter is essentially not compatible with secularism, the idea of European civic society where religion belongs exclusively to the private sphere. The case of Bosnia raises the question of Islam’s adaptability, let alone subordination, to European laic democracy. Christian and other anti-secularism’s exist in the United States while in West Europe they have become discredited and insignificant.

■ How can Islam re-emerge in East Europe as a pillar of identity if it can at all?

It has been obviously on the defensive in this century. It has no other chance now than substantial Mideastern ideological, material and other support: construction of mosques, slaughter-houses, education, publications, scholarships for studies in Muslim countries, sending more or less intelligent proselytizers. Otherwise it risks to be reduced to folklore in one generation or two. In a sense, this applies even to the Muslims of former Yugoslavia, who have the well-trained specialists to convey the authentic (Mideastern) Islamic message while the other countries lack them.

Bosnia is the center of Balkan Islam for its remarkable Muslim institutions but it is also a symbol of the Islamic world's failure to protect those it regarded as its brethren. After Dayton, they were eventually saved, "equipped and trained" by the U.S. Army which many Muslims worldwide view as Enemy Number One. This paradox is even more difficult to digest in the light of the not entirely dissimilar Kosovo war which they also perceive as a civilizational, Muslim-(Orthodox)Christian conflict, a "crusade" to annihilate the emergence of a "bridgehead", another "Muslim republic" in Europe. Perceptions, even false ones, may be more important than, and have an impact on, reality. Balkan Muslims may be heavily affected by the ongoing Kosovo crisis. I will make a few remarks on it at the end of this paper although its evolution is unpredictable at the time of writing. As much as possible I try to refrain below from commenting well-known political and war events unless they are directly related to Islam and its institutions.

In the course of my ongoing research I have become increasingly interested in this international Islamic dimension of the Balkan crisis. Besides minority and human rights, ethnic issues and history, which are well documented, new questions arose in addition to the old ones I study anyway.

- What are the positions and prospects of indigenous East European Islamic institutions in the swiftly changing regional environment?
- What are the main tensions between them and the other political forces in their respective countries if any?
- How do the local representatives of Middle Eastern proselytizing agencies and "charities" assist and influence those institutions?
- What role do resident alien Muslim (mainly Arab) communities play in (re)islamization? Do they represent a security risk? They are often anti-western and accused of "fundamentalism" or even potentially supporting terrorist actions in the West.
- Is there a parallel between them and their West European ("guestworker") counterparts?

For ideological and historical reasons the below account focuses on Bosnia and even the survey of most of the international Islamic support is related to it. Weapon shipments were probably the most effective way of assistance rather than the wide publication of the Koran in local languages. Except for Lithuania, I

have done no research, so far, in the former Soviet Union, where the prospects of Islam are of course different from the Balkans.

## BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

To solve the above-described dilemma of Muslim and national and/or ethnic identity, the ideologists of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA - *Stranka Demokratske Akcije*) introduced and emphasized the concept of Boshnyak nation which meant the Bosnian people of Muslim extraction so the Orthodox and the Catholics became, by definition, reduced to minority status in the country where they lived, not being part of the Nation. The term Boshnyak was not new at all. It was of common use in the Austrian Monarchy (1878-1918) which tended to favor the Muslim landlords over the Serb peasants. However, "Boshnyak" had no exclusivist significance in the two (monarchist and socialist) Yugoslavias. As "Muslims" cannot normally be a "nation" ingenuity was required from poet, journalist, propagandist and President Alija Izetbegovic's former jail-mate Dzermaludin Latic to explain why Boshnyaks would be one since they have shared their land, language and to a large extent their cultural traditions with their Christian neighbors for centuries. "Boshnyaks are a regional feature" (not a nation) as old yugonostalgic Halid Causevic put it<sup>7</sup> who has been diligent, along with a number of Sarajevo intellectuals, in provoking and angering the SDA leaders.

A Nation was needed to justify nationalism in the post-Yugoslav context. SDA ideologists referred to Ban Kulin's 12<sup>th</sup>-century pseudo-state, the Bogomil heretics having found refuge there and even more to the long Ottoman rule when a considerable part of the country's population embraced Islam for whatever reason. (I find irrelevant whether Balkan islamization was "forced" or not so I do not deal with this issue which is recurrent in anti-Islamic propaganda and historiography, in several countries.) Gazi Husrev Beg, a 16<sup>th</sup>-century high ranking warrior was the symbol of the Boshnyaks' integration in the Muslim Empire. Boshnyak history was to be re-evaluated<sup>8</sup> in a new national spirit, different from what it had been in the Yugoslav era. Latic reproaches today's intellectuals for having been educated in Belgrade and Zagreb and thus being alien to the real Muslim Boshnyak people of the countryside whom he prefers to the cosmopolitan, vicious and un-Islamic city-dwellers. "Those who would establish this state without Islam can only be one of the two: enemies of this state

and the Boshnyaks, or utopians whose intentions lead to hell”, Latic wrote in his paper *Ljiljan*<sup>9</sup> which reflects the SDA’s position, as do *Dnevni Avaz* and *Preporod*. The latter is the periodical of the religious and cultural association of the same name.

In principle neither the SDA nor the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina is of religious character. In fact, the ruling Party has had a pronounced Islamic orientation and the symbiosis of ethnic and national identities, ideology and power, Party and state, allowed it to extend its control over the population, which voted for it massively at several elections. As an additional justification Latic proposed the thesis of “secular state and non-secular society”<sup>10</sup> envisioning the (re-)islamization of the latter. Many regard this as an euphemism for the not very reassuring and officially denied project of an Islamic state. It was elaborated in a brutal and provocative, more outspoken than sophisticated language by (then) Tuzla SDA President Adnan Jahic.<sup>11</sup> He talks of building the educational system, the social and economic institutions on the basis of Muslim ideology, “not promoting” opposing ideas, providing reliable believers with “higher social privilege” than others, gradually abolishing the duality between sacred and secular, religious and political or social in the name of Islam as an “all encompassing approach to living”, providing the media with “morally educational and nationally useful content” and putting “non-Muslim material... on the margins of production and broadcasting”. The ruling Party already controls the state TV (RTV BIH) and the above-mentioned newspapers although it is still far from dominating the press. Liberal papers, like *Dani* or *Slobodna Bosna*, denounce SDA authoritarianism, which may be Islamic in form but it is very East European (xenophobic, exclusivist) in content. Discourses as that of Jahic, anti-“cosmopolitan” and anti-leftist rhetorics, which are not uncommon in the pro-government press, appear to be counter-productive and so are the attacks against the consumption of alcohol, pork, non-fasting at Ramadan, the “indecent” attire of some women, “pornography”, the celebration of Christmas and the New Year with Christian neighbors, Santa Claus as a “communist symbol” and particularly mixed marriages.

Many thousand such marriages were concluded in Yugoslavia. Blaming them for “assimilation” is a rather sensitive issue. Speaking of the mass raping of Muslim women by the Serbs, one of the leaders of the Islamic Community of Bosnia-Herzegovina (*Islamska Vjerska Zajednica - IVZ*) Imam Mustafa Spahic, member of the editorial board of *Musulmanski Glas*, allegedly declared: “For us these

rapes are horrible, incomprehensible and unforgettable but they are less painful and less difficult to admit than all those mixed marriages and the children issued from them.”<sup>12</sup> Marriage between a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim man is strictly prohibited by Islamic law. (Koran 60:10) Officials of the Islamic Community (IVZ) raised the idea of establishing Shari’a courts in the country<sup>13</sup> which is expected to provoke heated debate even though this would not mean at all the full application of Islamic law in the Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Islamic Community has had excellent relations with the SDA leadership and a prominent role in public life, particularly since the August 1995 election of Mustafa Cerić as Reis al-ulama i.e. Head of the Community. He was re-elected in November 1998.

After studying in Egypt and Chicago, working at the Zagreb djami and then at the Sarajevo Faculty of Theology, Cerić taught in 1991-93 at the International Islamic University of Kuala Lumpur where many other Boshnyaks sojourned later on. Then he returned to Zagreb where some of the most trustworthy SDA cadres resided during the war.<sup>14</sup> He is described by his critics as a very educated person, an arrogant and intolerant “hardliner”. This label means that he does not run away from confrontation. According to Jahić<sup>15</sup> his desire would be a Muslim state in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Of course he professes official SDA nationalism: “the more we are Boshnyiaizing ourselves, the better Muslims we shall be, or the more we are islamizing ourselves the better Boshnyaks we shall be”, he declared and added: “A Boshnyak without Islam would be ‘a spiritually illegitimate child’ and without Bosnia would be ‘a physically illegitimate child’. Consequently he must have his mother and father: his father is Islam, his mother is Bosnia, and he has been indolent to his parents so far.” (Boshnyaks) “must accept and protect what they have inherited from Kulin Ban - that is a state, and their cultural heritage and spiritual inheritance from Gazi Husrev Beg.”<sup>16</sup>

Socialist Yugoslavia was an open European country if compared with those of the Treaty of Warsaw. Its citizens were free to travel. No wonder that Reis Cerić and other outstanding personalities of the Community (IVZ) are well-educated in both the western and the Islamic senses. This applies to theology professor Jusuf Ramić and nationalist Mostar Mufti Seid Smajkić, who both run for the office of Reis at the November 1998 elections, Bihać Mufti Hasan Makić and former Zenica Mufti Halil Mehtić, who both played remarkable roles during the war, 34-year-old Tuzla Mufti Husein Kavazović, who was a popular youth leader, an active opponent of Ahmadi missionary activities and a principled supporter of

armed struggle from the beginning<sup>17</sup>, theologian Fikret Karcic teaching now in Kuala Lumpur, former Minister of Education Enes Karic and others. One should not overestimate their ideological and political differences as all are in the same camp and more or less loyal to the same ideas and boss: Izetbegovic's leadership is uncontested within the Community (IVZ) which is subordinated to, or even part of, the Party elite according to most observers. The 1990-92 genesis of the SDA was about the most self-conscious Muslims' way from pan-islamism to this new nationalism in the menacing shadow of Great Serb and Great Croat aspirations.<sup>18</sup> Electors simply followed Izetbegovic and as a part of the Community (IVZ) did not, it had to change. In April 1993 former Reis Jakub Selimoski was replaced by the radical Ceric, as temporary Deputy Reis at that time. (Some questioned the legitimacy of his election.<sup>19</sup>) The "El-Hidaje" Association he belonged to took over the Community. Ceric was assisted by the populist Imam of the Begova djami of Sarajevo, Ismet Spahic, who is currently his deputy.

Thanks to Xavier Bougarel excerpts from the passionate sermons delivered in the Sarajevo mosques at Ramadan (March) 1992 by most of the above and other preachers are available in English.<sup>20</sup> They reflect zealous commitment to and deep knowledge of Islam, and also an ardent wish to adapt Bosnian society to its principles somehow. This was probably as unlikely then as it seems to be today. It may be even more interesting where all those orators came from. Although strongly criticized by the rulers of today's Bosnia socialist Yugoslavia did not prevent Boshnyaks who wished (not many did) from studying theology, having contacts with their Mideastern co-religionists and expressing their views within certain limits, which were rather elastic if compared with those of the other socialist countries. Pressures against overt religious attachment were minimal. The famous 1983 Sarajevo trial was the main exception to this rule.

Izetbegovic's moral authority originates from that 14-year sentence he received merely for writing an essay<sup>21</sup> on Muslims worldwide, not in Yugoslavia at all. He and his co-defendants were definitely victims of the Communists. They never denied being impressed by the Middle East. The war, the engine of nation-building, further reinforced their credibility. They argued that the Boshnyaks' identity was to be based on Islam if they had been considered Muslim enough by others to be killed for it which sounds convincing. Europe was heavily blamed for having left them in the lurch which is very true. Communitarian solidarity rather than European individualism was the proposed solution which is also an Islamic

principle. All subjects of the Ottoman Empire were supposed to belong to a religious community (*millet*). It remains to be seen how this, or anything similar, will work after 45 years of socialism and 70 years of Yugoslavia.

Izetbegovic's domestic critics have blamed him for his attempts to transform Bosnia into "Muslimania", a "green-minded fascist regime". Some SDA leaders' speeches and editorials often fan the flames of extremism rather than following the line of tolerance and coexistence. They frequently pour arbitrary qualifications and insults on their opponents and try to intimidate them. This as well as corruption, nepotism, favoritism and patriotic fervor are not the attributes of Islamic order. They are common in East Europe, particularly the Balkans. However, it is difficult in general to harmonize Islamic social teachings with the principles of secular European civic society. Bosnia is not an exception.

The basics of Islam are already taught in schools and the army. The latter has been islamized to a considerable extent although Bosnia-Herzegovina is a multiethnic, multiconfessional and multinational state in principle, called "multi-multi" in Sarajevo. More than 100 imams satisfy the spiritual needs of the conscripts. (Catholics have their own army priests.) Islamic insignia and symbols are in use and soldiers shout *Allahu akbar*. This army was nevertheless the only force to defend the population from 1992 to 1995. It was created from scratch and most Bosnyaks do not seem to mind its "Muslim character". Nevertheless, the press raised the killings and brutalities carried out against non-Muslims during the war mainly by the Tenth Mountain Brigade of the late Musan Topalovic Caco whom Izetbegovic declared "a good combatant and a good believer".<sup>22</sup> The alleged islamization of the secret police, the oversized Agency for Information and Documentation, is also controversial.

Intelligence and military connections with Iran and the Sudan are delicate matters in a European country which is currently more of an international protectorate than a sovereign state. They are apparently not as close as they used to be before Dayton when several hundred foreign Muslim volunteers (*Mudjahidin*) fought in the Bosnian army. Some of them obtained citizenship as husbands of Bosnyak women and other Arabs living in the country are employed by Islamic charities and relief organizations. Only liberal (often labeled as "western-minded" or "cosmopolitan") and leftist Bosnians seem to mind Middle Eastern influence and assistance. As Izetbegovic put it in Tehran "Iran proved during the war that it is a true friend but Iran is far and our enemies are close".<sup>23</sup>

Although Iran and other Muslim countries contributed to the defense of Bosnia, the bulk of the support came from Saudi Arabia. When asked about financial documents on these donations Izetbegovic claimed they had been channeled through the “Shehids [martyrs] and Invalids Funds” or transferred directly to cities, army units and humanitarian organizations as “Merhamet”.<sup>24</sup> Little is known of the circulation of those moneys. Former Imam and Deputy Defense Minister Hasan Cengic was responsible for a part of them. Izetbegovic declared this former jail-mate of his an “honest man”. Many regard him, at home and abroad, as the representative of Mideastern influence. In this respect there is probably little difference between him and Izetbegovic himself.

Cengic supervised the Third World Relief Agency (TWRA). Its role as an arm purchasing and smuggling company is famous.<sup>25</sup> My personal view is that the American administration was right to close its eyes over the breaking of that immoral and shameful embargo. It was distasteful to blame Clinton for that in the heat of the 1996 electoral campaign.<sup>26</sup> It is less known that the Sudanese manager of TWRA had also been the Vienna representative of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY). A graduate of the Belgrade Faculty of Medicine, author of two books on the persecution of Muslims in Bosnia and Bulgaria<sup>27</sup>, close friend of Izetbegovic, he was in charge of the East European proselytizing or re-islamizing campaign sponsored mainly by the Saudis, from the collapse of communism until the 1995 raid by the Austrian police on his office. There is no contradiction between Saudi money and contacts with radicals as Iran, the Sudanese ruling party or even, allegedly, with Osama Bin Ladin and the blind mastermind of the World Trade Center bombing which have not been proved. Little is known on how donations transferred through the Muslim World League, WAMY, the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations, the International Islamic Relief Organization and other (Eastern and Western) private Muslim charities have been spent. WAMY-TWRA translated from Arabic and published a lot of anti-secular proselytizing brochures in languages ranging from Polish to Albanian. They were distributed by its network of young Arabs ubiquitous in East Europe. It also supported financially indigenous Muslim leaders who badly needed and still need those small amounts. This does not imply any anti-western orientation on their part.

Mideastern aid has been spectacular in the reconstruction of mosques in Bosnia-Herzegovina. More than the half of them (several hundred) were

destroyed during the war.<sup>28</sup> The many new djamis, minarets and houses of worship may reflect a more Muslim Sarajevo than its inhabitants are. Islam is “in vogue” for a part of the population including many of those who have political ambitions. Nevertheless, even SDA cadres are expected to sound moderate, “non-fundamentalist”, “European”, and so they are to a great extent like people who were brought up in Yugoslavia. As former Minister Enes Karic describes the Bosnian version of Islam, tolerance and “multi-multi” would be its essence.<sup>29</sup>

Some youngsters raised in and by the bloodshed obviously think otherwise. The Active Islamic Youth (AIY - *Organizacija Aktivne Islamske Omladine*) is a radical organization. Its members are known in Bosnia as “Vehabis” for being ideologically comparable to the followers of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Arabian preacher Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab whose conservative doctrine prevails in today’s Saudi Arabia. If anything, this can be termed as “fundamentalism”. The rather young members’ lives are based on Islamic law. They regard the Koran “as their constitution”. This includes wearing beards (as “natural marks of Muslim men”), studying Islam and inviting others to it which is called *da’wa*. It is performed in mosques and their own locals. They offer courses on Islam, often related to sports camps (as their *tai kwon do* academy) for young people whom they teach to pray, fast, behave, think. They separate men from women, make the latter wear veils or at least head-scarves and avoid the “lewd temptations” of western society which they reject. They envision separate schools, let alone gymnasiums, for boys and girls. They would not allow women to work if this meant mingling with men. They are for an Islamic Bosnia ruled exclusively according to Islamic principles. For this reason they are critical even of the Islamic Community (IVZ) and the SDA although this relationship is somewhat ambivalent. Several religious and government officials sympathize with the AIY but supporting it overtly is hardly possible for the declared secular character of the Republic. Zenica Mufti Halil Mehtic is said to have been demoted for his good relations with the AIY whose national headquarters are in that city. It frequently organizes lectures at the Zenica Islamic Pedagogical Academy. Besides Sarajevo Travnik, Bugajno, Zavidovici and Visoko are the AIY’s main strongholds. It was legally registered in 1995 and reportedly has now over 2000 members (?), mainly students. Their President, Adnan Pezo, declared to “receive donations... from all over the world, East and West”.<sup>30</sup> This probably means Saudi Arabia and not Iran since the organization is markedly anti-Shi’a.

Pezo and other AIY activists are war veterans despite their young age. Many fought in the Mudjahidin unit along with Arab volunteers who impressed them by their personal example, Islamic solidarity and lifestyle. On the 1998 International Women's Day AIY members entered in heated polemics with human rights activists over the latter's initiative "A Flower for the Women of Kabul" attended by western guests as European Commissioner Emma Bonino. This formally anti-Taliban demonstration of liberal Sarajevans was probably intended to provoke the government and the Islamic Community (IVZ) whose concept of women's rights they did not regard as European. The SDA and the IVZ did not respond but the AIY did.<sup>31</sup>

Radical Mideastern leaders can hardly find nowadays European politicians outside Bosnia who would not be embarrassed by their friendship. (As we shall see the case of Albanian leftists this applies even to the Organization of the Islamic Conference which is conservative rather than radical except for a few members.) Izetbegovic, Cengic, Latic, Cerić and the like are venerated in the Muslim world where many would like to see AIY - but at least SDA - type movements in East Europe. The Gazi Husrev Beg Medrese and the Theology Faculty of Sarajevo are also highly appreciated in the Middle East as far western outposts of Islam. Ironically, those institutions are constantly re-evaluating the meaning of "Boshnyak Islam". This process started by the "fundamentalism debate"<sup>32</sup> and it is not expected to end soon. Theology Professor Resid Hafizovic's recently published views sound particularly enlightened and "European".<sup>33</sup> Islam can be freely interpreted to a certain extent but Cerić and the rest of the SDA nomenklatura are there to call to order those who forget their "national identity".

There are politicians in East Europe who are even less democrats than the SDA elite without being Muslim - most are or claim to be staunch Christians, actually. I tend to believe that if we regard Islam as an all encompassing *Weltanschauung* and codified divine revelation, the assumption of its compatibility with democracy and (the western understanding of) human rights is not the most practical working hypothesis. It is not even expected from us by most of our Mideastern interlocutors. This has been an old (and now fashionable) debate<sup>34</sup> which one Muslim essayist can hardly solve even if he became President of a European state. "Muslimania" and "Boshnyak identity" he and his associates (re?)created may not disappear with him even if the West continues to maintain the status quo (deter the Serbs) and pump cash into Boshnyak economy which is

inevitable. Nevertheless stability, if achieved, will not be conducive to radicalism which has no roots among Bosnian Muslims anyway.

## THE SANDZAK

The SDA plays a key role in the neighboring Yugoslav province of Sandzak too, which straddles Serbia and Montenegro.<sup>35</sup> When secessionist leader Sulejman Ugljanin proclaimed the autonomy of the province of Muslim majority (52 p.c.?) after the October 1991 referendum he aimed at integration with Bosnia-Herzegovina. The 1993 "Memorandum on the Special Status of the Sandzak" was inspired by the example of Sarajevo. By opposing secession from Yugoslavia SDA Secretary Rasim Ljajic was more realistic than Ugljanin who spent years in exile in Turkey for his radical views while his Montenegrin counterpart Harun Hadzic of Pljevlja was imprisoned. Interethnic relations have been tense for the last years. The Chetnik White Eagles as well as the army and the police tried to intimidate the Muslims whose paramilitary groups, the Green Berets, were weaker than them. Serbia will not let the province go for its almost half Orthodox population, strategic location and since it regards it as her medieval center (Raska).

Just as in Bosnia Islam as a religious identity is to be re-discovered for many Sandzak people. They shout "*Djihad! Djihad!*" at soccer matches and do not appreciate the Yugoslav army's call up orders. Many fled the province for this reason. Unlike in Sarajevo the relation between Ugljanin and Head of the Islamic Community Muarem Zukorlic has been bad for personal reasons. (The former attacked the latter in connection with a student strike at the Novi Pazar Medrese - religious high school.)<sup>36</sup> Zukorlic and Novi Pazar Muslim leader Hairo Tutic managed to accommodate Serbian authorities which allowed the construction of several mosques paid by the Saudis. However, Muslims are now in better position in Montenegrin Sandzak since the election of Djukanovic in Podgorica. The fate of Islam in rump Yugoslavia, Sandzak Muslims and Montenegro (and refugee) Albanians included, who may be the next victims, depends now on the Kosovo crisis. If Serbian authorities are nervous, they arrest even loyal Belgrade Mufti Hamdija Jusufpahic (nicknamed "Milosevic's Mufti") as it happened in January 1998.<sup>37</sup>

## ALBANIA

Islam-related developments in Albania appear to follow the trends I tried to describe earlier.<sup>38</sup> Poverty, historical traditions and extreme patriotism affect the evolution of Muslim consciousness. Islamic Community President Hafiz Sabri Koci's moral authority is still based on the persecution he suffered under Enver Hoxha but actual leadership is now more the responsibility of the younger generation represented, among others, by Secretary General Sali Tivari. Assistance from Arab foundations and charities established in the country has been crucial. The number of the new expensive mosques may grow faster than that of the impoverished believers. The Shkoder djami is a particularly impressive one.

The Islamic Community has been closer to the Democratic Party of former President Sali Berisha which is currently in weak but sometimes noisy opposition to the governing Socialists. The latter and human rights activists have been concerned by increasing Arab presence, the alleged "indoctrination" of youth in Arab-sponsored religious courses and sports camps and the controversial membership in the Organization of the Islamic Conference, particularly following the Daressalam and Nairobi embassy bombings and fears of armed provocation against the Tirana U.S. embassy itself. OIC membership appears now to be suspended, if not canceled, as the parliament never ratified Berisha's 1991 signature on its charter. Berisha's expectations of that time regarding Mideastern financial help to the country have not come true.

Instead of petrodollars a number of shady Arabs arrived in Albania, reportedly Bin Ladin himself in 1994. Except for the 1996 desecration of the Voskopoja church, the deported Egyptian "Islamic Revival" charity director, Bin Ladin's French-Algerian would-be Kosovo volunteer (Claude Kader) sentenced for murder and arrests at the Arab-Albanian Islamic Bank, there is apparently no sign of "fundamentalist threat" in leftist-ruled Albania whose immigration control was lax until recently.<sup>39</sup> But because such a threat is a recurring subject in parliament the Islamic Community has strong interest in remaining neutral, non-partisan, "European" and "non-fundamentalist" to protect itself, its schools, other institutions and relative social prestige from attacks not only by the powerful left but also Albanian liberals. Prominent writer Ismail Kadare repeatedly called Albanians to return to their "initial faith", Christianity, for their re-integration in

Europe.<sup>40</sup> To be an “Islamic island” on the continent does not pay in this world and the West does not need a “bridge” between itself and the Muslim East which would have been Albania’s role envisioned by Berisha. This frequent instrumentalization of Islam and “anti-fundamentalism” in public life is as brutal as Albanian politics in general which is partly due to the bloody Enverist past and weak civic culture.

The city of Kavaje is the stronghold of both the Democratic Party and Islam-conscious forces, which is not a coincidence. Nevertheless, Muslim spiritual leaders refrain from overtly opposing the government. They stress their commitment to national interests and ideals in almost every issue of their newspaper *Drita Islame*. Confessional differences do exist but they tend to be downplayed in the name of national unity and are attributed to foreigners (Greece, Italy). “The religion of Albanians is Albanianism.” (19-century poet Pashko Vase) Tolerance, modernizing Islam and adapting it to the requirements of western democracy are often mentioned as goals. Secular Turkey is more of a model than the other Muslim countries whose votes may count if one day the UN decides on Kosovo though. Regional insecurity, the influx of refugees, misery, criminality, violence (one million unregistered guns in private hands), the total lack of democratic traditions and particularly the war are much more threatening than inter-religious disputes. The concurrence on the market of spirituality has been strong for the last few years. Arab and the few local Muslim proselytizers have had to compete with many ambitious Christian and other western missionaries aspiring to save post-socialist souls. Most Albanians probably do not identify themselves with any religion at all as a result of long and harsh Enverist atheism.

The formerly widespread Bektashi and other mystic sects seem to have lost the most under Enverism. Their followers are probably much fewer than 20 p.c. of the Muslims of Albania which is a widespread western estimate based on pre-war statistics. The (Hanafi Sunni) Islamic Community considers the sects as integral parts of its flock which is not the position of Bektashi Dede (“Head of Church”) Reshat Bardhi. The Islamic world regards Bektashis as heretics, or at least rather strange Muslims, for a number of theological considerations. Without substantial international backing (some may be expected from Iran [?]) the sect is probably condemned to absorption by the Sunni mainstream, sooner or later. Even now they appear to be more popular in the western scholarly literature<sup>41</sup> than in their mother-country Albania. Certain Mideastern Sunni

Muslim specialists resent this western interest in them and regard it as an orientalist (=neocolonialist) attempt to divide and weaken the world of Islam.

## MACEDONIA

Bektashism survived among Albanians in (Kosovo and) Macedonia where no one persecuted it. Bektashi leader Baba Tair's office is in Tetovo along with those of other Sufi orders (*tarikah*). The Islamic Religious Community led by President Sulejman Rexhepi is the country's main Muslim organization despite all provocative attempt against it as that of the creation of a "Muslim Religious Community" by former Sarajevo Reis al-ulama in socialist Yugoslavia Jakub Selimoski who is Slav Macedonian, not Albanian, by nationality. He represents only a part of the Macedonian Muslims (*Torbashi*) and so does the "State Association of Cultural and Scientific Manifestations of Macedonian Muslims" called "Union of Islamized Macedonians" since March 1999. Some Torbashi leaders fear the "Albanianization of Western Macedonia" which includes the assimilation of the 40-100.000 (?) Torbashis by non-Slav Muslims. This concern may be justified by the fact that Islam(ic tradition) is often a more powerful unifying factor than ethnicity. This applies less to the 100.000 (exclusively Muslim) Turks of Macedonia. They receive support from Turkey, from both government and islamist ("former Refah", now Fazilet) sources. They and their Turkish Democratic Party are in good terms with the predominantly Albanian Islamic Religious Community. The number of Muslim Roma is uncertain, probably less than 50.000. A part of them call themselves "Egyptians", "descendants of the Pharaohs", in Kosovo too. This (*Egipcani*) was a separate category at the Macedonian census of 1991.

The Albanians claim that their proportion within the population is much higher than the 23 p.c. established by the 1994 census. They reject the fifteen-year continuous residence as a condition of citizenship, the country being "the national state of the Macedonian people" according to the Constitution which also declares "the Macedonian language... the official language". The Albanians rightly demand partner-nation status, the use of their language in official fora, at all levels of education, particularly if they actually represent more than one-third of the population as they pretend. Their birth rate is higher, by far, than the average anyway. Kosovar refugees may stay there for a while. Most Albanians speak Macedonian but non-Albanians do not learn Albanian. The

state showed its real face in 1994-95 by attempting to close forcibly the “Albanian University” in Tetovo which resulted in deaths of protesters. The new government proved somewhat more flexible but interethnic relations remain strained. Mixed marriages have always been rare. For the myth of “endangered Orthodoxy” and for almost all Albanians being (at least nominal) Muslims the conflict has some religious connotation.<sup>42</sup>

The Islamic spiritual leadership (*Meshihat*) and President Rexhepi himself are ideologically close to the main Albanian party, the Party for Democratic Prosperity which is a nationalistic, not a religious movement, nor is the more radical Democratic Party of the Albanians of Arben Xhaferi and Menduh Tachi religious. (The latter recently criticized Muslim leaders Zanun Berisha and Rexhepi himself.) Albanians are nevertheless often accused of identifying themselves with foreigners (the Islamic world) rather than their Slav fellow-citizens. Albanian solidarity with Kosovars is actually strong. On the other hand it is difficult to estimate the Muslim world’s donations to the Islamic Religious Community, directly or through its humanitarian organization *El Hilal* led by Behjuddin Shehabi. (*El Hilal* has also been the name of the Community’s periodical.) The Jeddah-based International Islamic Relief Organization (called “Ilgase” in the hostile local press) was active in the mid-1990s but it does not seem to be anymore. Orthodox Slavs are sensitive to any expression of Islamic solidarity which they often label as “fundamentalism”. It is a fact nevertheless that the Faculty of (Muslim) Theology was inaugurated in Kondovo in May 1998 (until then only the Isabeg Medrese existed) and that Islamist Turkish weekly *Zaman* has been published in Macedonia for years. In general, representatives of Turkish Islamist organizations are operative in the country. President Rexhepi’s relations are good with the Middle East where most young spiritual leaders of his Community have been trained in the Yugoslav era or later.

Macedonian officials argue that civic society is supposed to keep religion within the private sphere and reject the intermingling of national, religious and political affiliations.<sup>43</sup> This attitude is hardly constructive when Albanians feel to be discriminated. If Islam is communitarian and not individualistic by nature, it can be a challenge to civil democracy, in principle. Albanian national tradition is even more communitarian. It remains to be seen whether Slav Orthodox Macedonia can afford to make the required concessions or not to make them. At the time of writing this, the influx of Kosovar refugees and the war in general seem to change the situation and the prospects drastically. The Macedonian

police (Albanians are grossly underrepresented in the police and government bureaucracy) treat the refugees like scum as there is little difference between Macedonians and Serbs regarding their attitudes towards Albanians or Islam.

## CROATIA

According to Neven Duvnjak's unpublished study<sup>44</sup>, there were 43.468 Muslim citizens in the Republic of Croatia in 1991, most of them of Bosnian origin. Many Croats regard them as Croats of Islamic religion, "the blossom of the Croat people", so relations between Catholics and Muslims were not bad until the 1993 brutal Croat-Bosnian war. As a result of the latter, Muslims were omitted from the list of national minorities of the 1990 Constitution. This amendment of constitution was carried out in late 1997 when Bosnian refugees still resided in the country. Croatia cared for them and supported Bosnia in its fight against Serbian aggression if and when this served Croatia's interests. Despite several centuries of coexistence, there is now tension and distrust between markedly Catholic Croatia and her Muslims who regard Bosnia-Herzegovina as their mother-country. President of the Islamic Community of Croatia Sevk Omerbasic and Zagreb Imam Dzevad Hadzic maintain close contacts with the Sarajevo office of Reis Cerić who used to live in Zagreb, along with a number of prominent SDA personalities as we saw it above. For many Bosnians it is still strange to regard Croatia as a foreign country, particularly so for the Catholics living in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Muslims of Croatia are much fewer and less important than them, also in constitutional terms. Duvnjak finds that their situation worsened in the 1990s despite their having a large mosque in Zagreb since 1987. 3.000 believers can attend prayers in it. Due to internal migration in former Yugoslavia, Slovenia also has its smaller Muslim community which was traditionally guided from Zagreb.

Building a mosque in Rijeka with or without a minaret, the legal status of the Islamic high school in Zagreb, the permit to turn a building in the town of Sisak into a prayer house, teaching Islam and providing special diet for Muslim students in public schools are not decisive issues. In an atmosphere of trust and tolerance even the above constitutional problem could be solved. If influential Croat politicians regard themselves as a vanguard of Europe against Islam and think of swallowing Herzegovina, this atmosphere is fragile of course. Unfortunately Croatia is not more of a democracy than the East European

average which is not the subject of this study. As to Sevko Omerbasic “speaking of democracy in Muslim countries, he believes that the Muslim world has lost the most in the area of democracy because in numerous countries of the Islam world there are autocratic and dictator regimes in power”.<sup>45</sup> This is very true. Those regimes and their institutions are the main sources Omerbasic, who was involved in TWRA, and other Balkan Muslim leaders can expect and do receive financial support from.

## BULGARIA

In October 1997, 35-year-old Mustafa Alish Hodzha was elected Chief Mufti of the Islamic Community of Bulgaria. This apparently ended the power struggle between former Chief Muftis Fikri Sali Hasan and Nedim Gendzhev. The latter had worked for the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the communist regime which put him in that position in 1988. He had supported Zhivkov’s anti-Turkish measures in the 1980s and rejected the 1992 election of young and democratically-minded Fikri Sali as Chief Mufti. The former Bulgarian Communists (the Bulgarian Socialist Party) always supported Gendzhev and after their victory at the 1994 elections the Directorate of Religion recognized his faction as the representatives of the Muslims of the country. For several years there were two chief muftis, two “Supreme Theological Councils”, parallel regional muftis and parallel imams at local levels. The election of the current Chief Mufti was made possible by an August 1997 agreement between Fikri Sali and old communist secret police officer Gendzhev which shows that leftist authoritarianism is still present within the ranks of the Muslim hierarchy, let alone Bulgarian public life. Besides, right-wing Bulgarian patriots are often as anti-Turkish (anti-Islamic) as the (former) Communists. Bulgarian nationalism was born anti-Islamic in the last century as were other Balkan patriotic movements at that time. Article 13 (3) of the 1991 Constitution states that “Eastern Orthodox Christianity shall be considered the traditional religion of the Republic of Bulgaria” which is controversial. Orthodox missionary activities among Muslims are permitted while the opposite is not tolerated.

13 p.c. of the population of 8.5 millions being (nominal) Muslim should be understood in the light of the fact that “Muslims generally regard Islam as a relatively unimportant feature of their identity.”<sup>46</sup> This striking paradox, which would be a nonsense in the Middle East, reflects low religious awareness,

particularly among young people. This is not surprising after decades of leftist dictatorship, assimilation and atheist propaganda. Since the collapse of communism most human and civil rights have been restored and the ban on religious classes in public schools, call to prayer (*ezan*), circumcision, funerary ritual, fasting, distribution of the Koran, celebration of religious holidays, etc. eliminated. Muslims could get their old names back, wear traditional clothes, use Turkish language, also in the media, and establish contacts with the mother-country. However, many of those Bulgarian Communists who abused their powers during the anti-Turkish repression of the 1980s and earlier remain in position to this day although they should be brought to justice.

Article 11 (4) of the Constitution prohibits political parties on ethnic or religious basis which sounds strangely in today's Europe. Thus the Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF) of former political prisoner Ahmet Dogan has had to proceed carefully in articulating the interests of Turks and other Muslims. He declared the MRF an "ethnic party of a national type and a national party of an ethnic type" and distanced it from "terrorism, chauvinism, revanchism, Islamic fundamentalism, nationalism and the striving for autonomy".<sup>47</sup> The latter statement is clear and revealing. For most of its inhabitants Bulgaria is still a single-nation state. Turks are supposed to identify themselves as its citizens above all and so do most of them. This was a condition of teaching Turkish language, having Turkish theaters, folklore ensembles, cultural clubs, newspapers, radio and television broadcasts. Although the MRF has also stood for the re-opening of Islamic schools and the (re)construction of mosques it is far from being a religious party. Besides, it has lost much of its influence since the early 1990s when it was "king-maker" in parliament. Rifts within the movement, deteriorating economic conditions, attempts to divide its electors (even Gendzhev created a small splinter party at the 1994 elections, the "Democratic Party of Justice") resulted in the loss of many MRF votes. The Bulgarian patriotic and leftist press has inflamed anti-Turkish hatred, threatened with "fundamentalist conspiracy" and the "Turkification of Bulgaria" referring to the Turks' higher birth rates. The (less well-educated) half of the 350.000 emigrants of the 1989 "Grand Excursion" eventually returned to their homeland from Turkey which had not been as generous towards them as expected. All this has little to do with Islam even if the recrudescence of Bulgarian nationalism, the manipulation of the public opinion, the scapegoating of minorities do have Orthodox Christian (anti-Islamic) overtones as elsewhere in the Balkans.

In socialist Bulgaria Islamic religious training simply did not exist. Besides Islamic high schools as that of Shumen there is now in Sofia an Islamic High Institute (*Visshij Isljamski Institut*) directed by Ibrahim Jalamov but only a few have graduated so far. Foreign help is decisive. This means primarily Turkey which invites students for religious and other studies, provides books, curricula, teachers and financial means. The assistance of the secular Turkish Republic, mainly through the *Diyanet Isleri Baskanligi* (Directorate of Religious Affairs) network, is different from that of Turkish Islamist institutions as the Naksibendi and Kadiri orders, the Zaman Foundation publishing a remarkable newspaper in Bulgaria too, or the “Muslims of Turkish origin” of Milli Gorus as they call themselves. By Balkan standards they are wealthy, opposed to secularism and committed to the cause of Islamic revival among their “ethnic brothers”. They spent considerable amounts on building mosques. Donations from Arab states and organizations are the other main financial source of the “revival process” just as in the other East European countries. The presence of Arabs (proselytizers and others) in Bulgaria was perceived as “fundamentalism” by the hostile press and even the MRF had to distance itself from them.<sup>48</sup> The Arabs are still there but probably less active than a few years ago. The Iranian “Tauhit” Foundation supports the members of the Shi’a minority who are called *Aliani* or *Kizilbash* for their traditional headgear with twelve red stripes. These Turks represent 7 p.c. of the total nominal Muslim population: 93 p.c. are Hanafi Sunni.

According to estimates based on the 1992 census 75 p.c. of Bulgaria’s Muslims are Turks, 13 p.c. Pomaks (Bulgarian-speaking Muslims), 11 p.c. Gypsies and there are some Tatars and Albanians. These figures are uncertain as both Pomaks and Gypsies might have declared themselves Turks. A third of the country’s estimated 500-800.000 Gypsies may be of Muslim tradition: the Horahane Roma who tend to identify themselves in terms of religion. This would mean very little by Mideastern standards. They are looked down upon and regarded as “dirty, lazy and thievish” by all others, even by the Turks who do not consider Pomaks highly either. The Pomaks’ origins and the circumstances of their islamization three-seven (?) centuries ago are widely debated.

Most Bulgarian publications related to Muslims in the country are enlisted in Ali Eminov’s recent book, a major source on this topic. To him too, “Muslim” means first of all people belonging somehow to the above groups of Islamic tradition (Turks, Pomaks, Gypsies...), not actual religious attachment. About the spiritual leaders he says: “... most religious leaders have put their personal ambitions

ahead of the spiritual needs of the Muslims. Instead of presenting themselves as role models to be emulated by rank and file Muslims, they have become symbols of pettiness and greed. Such behavior inevitably leads to lack of confidence in and trust of religious authorities. Lack of trust in religious leaders alienates people from religion, jeopardizing the potential for a genuine revival of Islam in Bulgaria.”<sup>49</sup>

I have had no real opportunity to verify this so far. The economic conditions of Bulgaria’s population are not reassuring and they get along as they can, religious personnel included. It is difficult to obtain information on the Islamic Community, the Supreme Theological Council, as well as the agencies from Turkey and the Arab world that operate in Bulgaria. This work is still under way.

## ROMANIA

As I tried to describe it earlier<sup>50</sup> Turkish (*Uniunea Democrata Turca din Romania - Romanya Demokrat Turk Birliđi*) and Tatar (*Uniunea Democrata a Tatarilor Turco-Musulmani - Romanya Musluman Tatar-Turklerinin Demokratik Birliđi*) national minority organizations play an important role among indigenous (nominal) Muslims in Romania. The Turks are led by Ruhan Balgi, the Tatars by President Osman Fedbi and Secretary General Yasar Memedamin. These organizations’ activities can be followed through their periodicals: *Karadeniz* for the Tatars and *Hakses* for the Turks. Besides, *Zaman* has appeared in Romania too. Both unions are supported by the Turkish mother-country. This assistance is like in Bulgaria, on a much smaller scale of course as the number of Romanian Tatars and Turks altogether may be about 50.000, plus 10.000 “Muslim Gypsies”. They are assimilated and secularized to a considerable extent. The April 1996 official inauguration of the Islamic High School of Medgidia (*Liceul Teologic Musulman si Pedagogic “Kemal Atatürk” din Medgidia*), which is a city with a sizeable Tatar population, was a remarkable development in this respect. The “Ataturk” name reveals the influence of secular Turkey in religious matters.

58-year-old Mufti Osman Necat is still the spiritual leader of the country’s Muslims. His office (*Muftiatul Cultulni Musulman din Romania*) is in Constanta. The new (1996) government named Professor Tahsin Gemil, who had been the Tatars’ main leader and representative in parliament, ambassador

in Azerbaijan. As to Romania I have already referred to the presence of a substantial number of Muslim resident aliens, mainly but not exclusively Arab students.<sup>51</sup> They opened prayer-houses in several cities independently from the Turks and Tatars who live and have their mosques in Dobrogea and Bucharest. Contacts between the two groups are limited.

## CENTRAL EUROPE

Indigenous Muslim communities in Hungary and the Czech Republic are marginal, let alone in Slovakia. They consist of several hundred members each at best (they often claim more), including many - former and actual - wives of foreign Muslims. In the light of their importance the 3.000 Tatars of Poland and their mosques in Bohoniki, Kruszyniany (both in Eastern Poland), Gdansk and Warsaw are over-documented.<sup>52</sup> The 5.000 Lithuanian Tatars deserve attention for their building four mosques in the early 1990s and their celebrating in 1997, along with their Polish and Belorussian brethren, the 600-year anniversary of their forebears' settlement in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. These spectacular achievements were due more to the enthusiasm of Professor Jonas Ridzvanavichius of Kaunas, who drummed up the necessary funds for the mosques, than to the rather weak Islamic or ethnic awareness of his fellow-Tatars<sup>53</sup> speaking Lithuanian, Russian or a Polish dialect.

Financing is the major issue for these communities which were (re-)organized at the beginning of the post-socialist period. Little help can be expected from the governments of their countries although the Municipality of Budapest contributed to the Muslim prayer-house inaugurated in 1997 in that city. Most of the support came from Arab organizations, the Iranian embassies and Milli Gorus of Koln. The case of the Brno mosque opened in 1998 was similar. The Czech Muslims are led by Professor Mohamed Ali (Premysl) Silhavy of Trebic and Jiri Pelikan of Prague while Zoltan Bolek has been the Head of the Hungarian Community since 1996. Building a mosque is not on the agenda in Slovakia although Nidal Saleh of Dunajska Luzna, near Bratislava, raised this issue several times.<sup>54</sup> Jan Sobolewski of Bialystok is the Chairman of the Muslim Religious Union of Poland. The Warsaw Islamic Center is directed by Ali Kozakiewicz. None of these gentlemen plays any role in the public life of their respective countries. They are often invited to meetings and symposia by Arab and Turkish organizations. The 1991 attempt to create an East European Islamic Council

failed.<sup>55</sup> (West) European Muslim initiatives were not much more successful except perhaps for the August 1993 Davos “Conference Towards Islamic Unity in Europe” organized by Milli Gorus and attended by most East European leaders. The well-publicized August 1998 Washington “International Islamic Unity Conference”<sup>56</sup> was an event of protocol where the above “small community leaders” were not invited, only the big ones as Ceric of Sarajevo, Koci of Tirana, Rexhepi of Skopje and Boja of Prishtina besides their counterparts from the former Soviet Union.

The England-based Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe hardly integrates the eastern part of the continent. Its membership list includes almost exclusively associations or foundations of Arabs residing in those countries: the Assalam Association of Chisinau, the Kiba’a Association operating in several Hungarian cities, the Association of Muslim Students in Romania of Timisoara, the Annoor Foundation of Sofia, the Union of Muslim Students of the Czech Republic, and the Muslim Cultural Society of Bialystok related to the Federation of Muslim Students in Poland. The latter does also have a few Polish members and publishes a remarkable newsletter in Arabic, *Al-Hadara*, on its activities. The May 1999 issue of *Al-Hadara* publishes the informative speeches delivered at the ten-year anniversary conference of the federation which was held on 2-5.4.1999. The other organizations tend to work separately from the small (except for Bulgaria) indigenous Muslim groups and often compete with them for support from Mideastern funding sources which sometimes leads to tensions. In some cases nevertheless East Europe-based Arabs use those funds, or a part of them, to assist their local co-religionists. Such was the case of the Arrahma Foundation of Budapest which runs its own prayer-house independently from both Kiba’a and the Hungarian Islamic Community of Bolek.

The sizes of these Arab communities vary from country to country. They outnumber indigenous Muslims except for the Balkans although in Romania there may already be more Arab and other oriental Muslims than Dobrogea Tatars and Turks. The foreigners include students, professionals, husbands of local women, legal and less legal residents. They are much fewer than but ideologically comparable to their counterparts in the West. Many try to spread Islam which is a sacred duty. Mideastern proselytizing and charitable organizations back a number of them, also because they speak Arabic and are less affected by secular and pro-western ideas than local Muslims. Limited information on these immigrants can be obtained from their newsletters as *Al-*

*Hadara*, where available, and through direct personal contact. It is inevitable if one deals with contemporary Islam in East Europe, which is cheaper, more corrupt and easier to penetrate than the West. Press reports on Arabs are rare, biased, not to say racist, and often branding the danger of “fundamentalism”.

East European police and immigration authorities are as xenophobic as their social environment. They lack the experience, legal framework and human rights guarantees of the West. Many are bothered by the noticeable presence of uncontrolled aliens while no one is afraid of the few indigenous Muslims in Central Europe. Their leaders stress, unlike most Arabs, that they are western-minded, moderate, tolerant, “non-fundamentalist”, law-abiding meek citizens of their Europe (E.C.)-bound countries. However donations, including Libyan money<sup>57</sup>, are always welcome. Islamic radicalism, other than propaganda, has rarely been reported in East Europe, nor have its residents been related to subversive criminal acts except perhaps for the pre-Dayton “terrorist training camps” (Mudjahidin rather than terrorist) in Dusina, near Fojnica, Bosnia, and the allegations of similar activities in Albania until the summer of 1998. We can only guess who killed Bosnian Vice-Minister Jozo Leutar in 1999.<sup>58</sup>

Little tolerance is expected towards Islamic anti-secularism in Central Europe. Those who come from the traditional heartland of the Muslim world are probably entitled to tell the periphery what authentic Islam is for they know it better. It may be an elastic system of values but it can hardly be reduced to a private matter of conscience in a secular state as religion is supposed to be in a democracy and as practically all indigenous East European Muslim leaders accept it. They also realize the counter-productivity of anti-U.S., anti-Israeli, anti-western attitudes which seem to have increased among resident young Arabs with the ongoing Iraqi crisis and the western measures of the last years against Muslim radicals.

The term “Islamic fundamentalism” was appropriately used in 1985 by a great orientalist.<sup>59</sup> Since then it has become a bogey-word, not to say a curse, on the lips of westerners who never studied Islam. They just want to designate something “bad”, “radical”, intolerant or potentially violent - “anti-secular” would not sound pejorative enough for a number of Americans. It has even been translated into Arabic (*usuliyya*) and provoked debate in the Muslim world shocked by menacing and unsophisticated western declarations as that of Willy Claes. (“Islamic fundamentalism is at least as dangerous as communism was...

Please do not underestimate it.”)<sup>60</sup> Islam, which tends to stick to its *fundamentals* more than other creeds do, is to be studied with humility and understood rather than threatened.

There would be “good”, “non-fundamentalist” Muslims with whom the West can talk, even of democracy, while the others are not to be trusted. A careful choice of interlocutors may “prove” that “fundamentalists” do not represent Islam. The “best way” is dialogue with westernized intellectuals of Muslim origin or certain Muslim countries’ pro-western corrupt political elites, which have seldom been elected, including leaders of official religious institutions, the nomenklatura. It is beyond the scope of this study where such a dialogue - carried on by western human rights experts, priests, political analysts, rather than scholars of Islam - can lead. I just want to point out that East Europe is the place where Islam is as the West would like it to be everywhere: secular, “non-fundamentalist”, loyal to the government, western-minded... Some doubt it is still authentic Islam by Mideastern standards. This also applies to the few authoritarian SDA leaders who are relatively inoffensive, “multi-multi”, fully aware of their vulnerability and the Islamic world’s inability to protect them. Talking of “Muslims” (followers of Islam) as national or ethnic minorities in this part of the world may be misleading as we saw it, “fundamentalism” even more so.

Balkan Muslims have more reason to be pro-American than anyone in East Europe. Residents from the Middle East are often different but they are far from threatening anybody. At worst, some of them may be in contact with their radical western “guestworker” counterparts who are more accepted by their environment than those in the East despite all relative discrimination and racism in the West.

## KOSOVO

At the time of writing this, a plethora of publications on Kosovo have appeared<sup>61</sup> and more are expected in the near future so I do not comment on the ongoing events except for their Islamic dimension. Field research has not been possible in Prishtina, of course.

Kosovar Albanians are overwhelmingly of Muslim tradition. (95 p.c.) For their majority this means Islamic (Turkish-Arabic) first names, family celebrations of the Bayram holidays, circumcision, funerary rituals and avoiding pork but not

necessarily alcohol. "Islamic values there have been happily combined with an archaic but humane ethical fundament."<sup>62</sup> Many have been guestworkers in Europe and even more are westernized. In socialist Yugoslavia no one prevented them, if they wished, from practicing or studying Islam which had its periodicals (*Edukata Islame*, *Nur al-Kur'an*, *Ditura Islame*) and institutions as the *Meshihat* (Supreme Council), the Alauddin Medrese in Prishtina and other medreses. They were subordinated to the Sarajevo Reis al-ulama, the national (Yugoslav) Head of Islam, who - subservient Reis Ferhat Seta - went as far as condemning Albanian "nationalism and irredentism" in the late 1980s. Active solidarity between Boshnyaks and Kosovars is relatively recent and due primarily to the common enemy of the 1990s.<sup>63</sup> Kosovars had to confront that enemy much earlier.

Popular Islam - Bektashism for some - may be part of Albanian identity but Kosovars do not need Islam to belong to a Nation unlike the Boshnyaks. Albanians are distinct people for their peculiar language, not their religious heritage. In socialist Yugoslavia a considerable number of rural Albanians showed up in the mosques on Friday. We have no reliable figures only estimates. Albanian city-dwellers in Kosovo and Macedonia were as secularized as their Slav neighbors, which affected the countryside indirectly. Such a trend threatens Islam more than Christianity as the latter's rituals are less demanding. Unlike in Bosnia there has been no campaign of "re-islamization" among "former Yugoslav" Albanians (actual Yugoslav Kosovars, to their regret) in the 1990s, let alone serious islamist tendencies in public life, which would have been and would be unrealistic.

From April 1981 on, the long series of anti-Serb protests had practically no religious connotation. They were started, at the very beginning, by leftist and patriotic students. Some of them sympathized with the mother-country of that time. Nevertheless, Enverist Albania did not attract most Kosovars, let alone religious leaders who tended to be apolitical and follow the events. The Serbian apartheid of the 1990s resulted in increasing national, not religious, radicalism. Loyalty to the Yugoslav authorities became eventually impossible for Head of the Islamic Community Rexhep Boja. His political influence was limited anyway.<sup>64</sup>

As he put it in 1994: "The religious interests of the faithful coincide entirely with the aspirations of the Albanian people. The Meshihat is therefore not required to deal with politics. We strive to realize our mission in conformity with the religious

norms. But the painful conditions prevailing in Kosovo affect us too. The Serbian occupant does not let us work.” ... (The objective is to) “elaborate a strategy in the interest of our lands, to prove our ability to go beyond this unfortunate division imposed upon us by others, (to go beyond it) by uniting us, the Meshihat of Skopje and the Islamic Community of Albania, without ignoring of course the other Muslims, but always taking into account the fact that Albanians are the largest Muslim community in the Balkans. For this reason I believe that we should act and build our leadership on the sole basis of the Koran and the Sunna which was destroyed by the division of our ethnic territories. Our ultimate goal will be its realization as well as the presentation of the truth to the public opinion, in particular to the Muslim world.”<sup>65</sup>

The Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) has hardly any religious character. Serbian propaganda has tried to portray its combatants as “fundamentalists” supported by the Middle East. The UCK has no interest to rely on military assistance from Iranian or Arab radicals. Kosovars have learned the lesson of the Mudjahidin at Dayton and they are aware that further U.S. involvement is Kosovo’s only chance. Unlike Izetbegovic they do not identify themselves with Mideastern mentality and religiosity. Leaders in the Islamic world probably feel this so their expressions of solidarity do not sound as enthusiastic as they used to be in the case of Bosnia in 1992-1995 although their stand on Belgrade’s “cleansing” of Kosovo is unambiguous. They may also have learnt from Dayton. Issuing condemnations and appealing for a peaceful negotiated settlement cost little. Despite the (so far modest) Arab and Iranian humanitarian aid the West seems now to do much more for the Kosovars even without any currently envisioned “Balkan Marshall Plan”. Former political prisoner, now UCK representative in Switzerland, Jashar Salihu reportedly declared: “For us, religion means nothing. We are Europeans and we have nothing to do with Mudjahidin or other extremists.”<sup>66</sup>

Radicals as Iran, the current head of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, are in an embarrassing position: fighting the oppression of Muslims may put them on the same side as the U.S. Ayatollah Khamenei condemned both Belgrade and NATO. This will probably not be Iran’s official position which is not totally clear at the moment. Anti-western Muslims are at a loss what to say while former Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon warned against Kosovar Albanian independence insisting it would create a greater Albanian “fundamentalist Islamic state” in the heart of Europe. This assumption is totally baseless, of course. It is interesting to note that the Jewish Defense League has cooperated

with the Serbian Unity Congress and taken Serbia's side since the Bosnian war.<sup>67</sup> Director of the Jerusalem Institute for Western Defense Yohanan Ramati also criticized (the idea of) U.S. armed action against Serbia for Kosovo.<sup>68</sup> In the Muslim world only Libya and Iraq did that accusing the U.S. to "play the Kosovo Muslim card" to neutralize Arab and Muslim opposition to NATO attacks on an independent sovereign state.<sup>69</sup> Now, in the wake of the victory of Labour a possible decrease in this kind of Israeli/Jewish hostility towards Balkan Muslims may be appreciated by some in the Middle East. (?) This is the reason which may give it some relevance. Anti-semitism is insignificant among Kosovars or Boshnyaks. Many Jews worldwide have been sympathetic to them as victims of genocide.

The views and solidarity of the Islamic world's official representatives as to the predicament of whom they regard as Muslims in the Balkans are still relevant even if those officials' prestige and credibility have not increased since Dayton. The Word of Allah cannot be devaluated or discredited of course but incompetent Arabs trying to represent or spread it abroad can. Most of them and their message are rejected by xenophobic East Europe. The mosques (to be re-)constructed on Mideastern money will work under the protection of American guns if at all. Very few (nominal) Balkan Muslims oppose this solution which is apparently the sole prospective guarantee of their security and against general regional destabilization. They remember what the U.N. and Europe did in and for Bosnia in 1992-1995 by treating victims and executioners equally if they did not overtly encourage the Serbs. Muslims have no reason to mind some American control over the U.N. (apparatus) as to the Balkans where probably only the Serbian regime and its allies would mind that. An "impartial" U.N. articulating the views of Russia, China and other supporters of unfettered state sovereignty and leftist authoritarianism would threaten all East European (and indirectly other) minorities and democrats, not just the (nominal Muslim) victims of Serbian genocide. At the time of writing this, the number of massacred Kosovars is unknown. It will certainly affect inter-community relations. This is not a religious issue although Serbian propaganda has tried to present it as such.

East European Muslims do not need to adjust (secularize, westernize, "modernize", relativize...) their Islam, if one may call so a cultural reference, as this already happened many years ago.

May 1999

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<sup>1</sup> M-P. Canapa, L'Islam et la question des nationalites en Yougoslavie, *Radicalismes islamiques*, O. Carre, P. Dumont eds., 2., Paris, L'Harmattan, 1986

<sup>2</sup> H. Poulton, *The Balkans: Minorities and States in Conflict*, London, Minority Rights Group, 1991, 43 - source unspecified. According to the Pantic survey the level of religious observance among the "Muslims" ("nation") of Yugoslavia was 37% in 1990 - D. Pantic, Religioznost gradana Jugoslavije, *Jugoslavija na Kriznoj Prekretnici*, Belgrade, Institut Drustvenih Nauka, 1991, quoted by X. Bougarel, Ramadan During a Civil War, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 6:1, 1995, 80

<sup>3</sup> In *Muslim Communities in the New Europe*, G. Nonneman, T. Niblock, B. Szajkowski eds., Ithaca Press, 1996, few studies acknowledge the distinctive particularities of Islam among religions. The Mideastern dimension and substance of contemporary Balkan Islam is not discussed by the authors of *Muslim Identity and the Balkan State*, H. Poulton, S. Taji-Farouki eds., London, Hurst, 1997. It is also more about ethnicity. *Islam in Europe*, S. Vertovec, C. Peach eds., London, MacMillan Press, 1997, is mostly about the western part of the continent. A. Popovic, *L'Islam balkanique*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1986, is still the main if not the only real scholarly reference on post-Ottoman Islam in the region despite the dramatic developments since its publication. The Summer/Fall 1997 special issue of *Islamic Studies* (Islamabad) 36:2-3 contains a number of articles on religion itself. For short surveys see G. Joffe, Muslims in the Balkans, *The Changing Shape of the Balkans*, F.W. Carter, H.T. Norris eds., London, UCL Press, 1996; S. Balic, East Europe, The Islamic Dimension, *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 1:1, 1979

<sup>4</sup> A-M. Bakr, *Al-aqalliyat al-muslima fi Urubba* (Muslim Minorities in Europe), Mecca, Dar al-Haqq, 1985; A. Kettani, *Muslim Minorities in the World Today*, London, Mansell Publishing, 1986; There is a unique Saudi document on the proposed strategy of islamizing East Europe: F. Al-Semmari, *Al-'amal al-islami fi Urubba ash-sharqiyya - at-tahaddiyat wal-mustaqbal* (Islamic Action in East Europe - Challenges and Future), Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University of Riyadh, 1992. The author's suggestions are probably not on the agenda anymore as a result of the Bosnian war.

<sup>5</sup> Nonnemann-Niblock-Szajkowski, Islam and Ethnicity in East Europe, *Muslim Communities...*, *op. cit.*, 30-34, realize this problem. They talk of 6-9 million Muslims in East Europe. The method is for example to multiply the current

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population of Albania by 0.7, the proportion of Muslims in 1945. This would mean 2.5 million Muslims in today's Albania alone without the Kosovar refugees! "Groups for the protection of human rights active in Albania demanded a new religious census of the population which would give a more precise picture of the religious reality in the country." R. Lani, Tirana: Adieu Brethren Muslims, *Alternativna Informativna Mreza* [AIM] (Paris) 11.1.1998; Y. Courbage, Les transitions démographiques des musulmans en Europe orientale, *Population* (Paris) 1991:3

<sup>6</sup> A. Popovic, Les ordres mystiques musulmans du Sud-Est européen dans la période post-ottomane, *Les ordres mystiques dans l'Islam*, A. Popovic, G. Veinstein eds., Paris, EHESS, 1985

<sup>7</sup> N. Curak, Halid Causevic (interview), *Dani* (Sarajevo) 1997:63 - "Bosnjaci su regionalna oznaka"

<sup>8</sup> M. Imamovic, *Historija Bosnjaka*, Sarajevo, Bosnjacka Zajednica Kulture, 1997; I. Banac, Bosnian Muslims: from Religious Community to Socialist Nationhood and Post-Communist Statehood, *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina*, M. Pinson ed., Harvard University Press, 1994

<sup>9</sup> Dz. Latic, Neo-Communists are Trying to Fool Voters (English version), *Ljiljan* 26.6.1996 - The idea of the "alienation" of the Boshnyak intelligentsia from the people was raised previously by M. Rizvic, Muslimanska inteligencija i narodni interesi: diobe i odvajanja, *Glasnik Rijasete Islamske Zajednice* [RIZ] u SFRJ (Sarajevo) 1991:5

<sup>10</sup> *formula o sekularnoj drzavi i nesekularnom drustvu* - S. Pecanin, Dzemo pije a Alija placa, *Dani* 1997:61

<sup>11</sup> A. Jahic, Krijeposna muslimanska drzava (A Virtuous Muslim State - English version on the Web), *Front Slobode* 23.8.1996, reprinted from *Zmaj od Bosne* (Tuzla) 17.9.1993

<sup>12</sup> R. Ourdan, La fin du reve bosniaque, *Le Monde* 28.9.1994; Boshnyak spiritual leaders went actually far in their onslaughts on mixed marriages but this quotation may not be authentic at all or may have been taken out of context.

<sup>13</sup> E. Hecimovic, Biti musliman na drzavni nacin, *Dani* 1998:87

<sup>14</sup> E. Hecimovic, SDA Reis, *Dani* 1998:89, calls them the "circle of Zagreb" (*zagrebacki krug*) including Hasan Cengic.

<sup>15</sup> Jahic, *Front Slobode*, *op. cit.*: "The territory controlled by the Bosnian Army after the war will be a Muslim state. This is a desire of the Muslim people and, after all, our leaders: secular leader Alija Izetbegovic and religious leader Mustafa Cerić (the latter one in a private conversation with me confirmed that the

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old dream of Alija Izetbegovic, member of the organization of Young Muslims, has been and remains the establishment of the Muslim state in Bosnia-Herzegovina; finally, his dream is close to realization and he is not terribly upset because of that).”

<sup>16</sup> E.F. Focho, Exclusive Interview with Reis-ul-Ulema Professor Dr. Mustafa Ef. Ceric, *Gazi Husrev Beg* (Magazine of the Bosnian Islamic Culture Study Group, Kuala Lumpur - English version) 1994; A few years earlier Ceric wrote the following on the national question: “Since our modern historic and cultural development is heavily burdened with the past, both recent and distant, and our nationality has to be defined by its specific place within modern Islamic experience, it is not recommended, if possible at all, to set the correlation between religion and nationality on such a level of scientific approach that is otherwise feasible, indeed necessarily acceptable in the context of Muslim peoples.” M. Ceric, Islam između religije i nacije, *Glasnik RIZ u SFRJ* 1990:5, 12; For Ceric’s latest declarations, to date, see F. Hassan, Islam and the West Should Learn from Each Other, *The Muslim News* (London) 30.4.1999

<sup>17</sup> Hecimovic, SDA Reis, *Dani*, *op. cit.*

<sup>18</sup> X. Bougarel, From Young Muslims to Party of Democratic Action: The Emergence of a Pan-Islamist Trend in Bosnia-Herzegovina, *Islamic Studies*, *op. cit.*

<sup>19</sup> H. Causevic, Bijele kalme, crna politika, *Dani* 1999:95; D. Perranic, The New Islamic Community of Bosnia-Herzegovina, *AIM* 5.1.1994

<sup>20</sup> Bougarel, Ramadan..., *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, *op. cit.*; As an observer noted: “Unfortunately, not much is available in the English language that is written from a religious Bosnian Muslim perspective.” A. Wielechowski, Galvanizing Fear of Islam: the 1983 Trial of Alija Izetbegovic in Context, *State and Nation-Building in East Central Europe: Contemporary Perspectives*, J. Micgiel ed., New York, The Institute on East Central Europe Columbia University, 1996, 74. This kind of literature is not supposed to be in English of course. In her study Wielechowski actually refers exclusively to sources in English. This may be the reason why she talks of “pre-war processes which constructed the identity of Bosnian Muslims as radical Islamic fundamentalists.” (p. 55) This is the language of Serbian propaganda which is in good English on the Web. Unfortunately it influenced many western Balkan analysts.

<sup>21</sup> A. Izetbegovic, The Islamic Declaration, *South Slav Journal* 6:1, 1983; A. Knezevic, Alija Izetbegovic’s Islamic Declaration: Its Substance and its Western Reception, *Islamic Studies*, *op. cit.*

<sup>22</sup> S. Pecanin and V. Selimbegovic published on Caco in the 1997:62,63,64 issues of *Dani*; F. Rahmanovic, Caco Was Not the Only One, *Svijet* (Sarajevo) 11.11.1997; G. Beric, A Party or a State, *Oslobodenje-Svijet* 2.8.1996

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- <sup>23</sup> G. Beric, Fatal Delay, *Oslobodenje-Svijet* 4.4.1996
- <sup>24</sup> S. Pecanin, Izetbegovic (interview), *Dani* 1998:72
- <sup>25</sup> J. Pomphret, How Bosnia's Muslims Dodged Arms Embargo, *The Washington Post* 22.9.1996, was referred to by a number of other U.S. newspapers at that time. In 1992-1994 all those who were interested in TWRA's weapon shipments knew of them and so did many in Vienna who were not. "Revealing the secret" as well as relating TWRA to Bin Ladin and all kinds of terrorists (even in case if this had been true) in the fall of 1996 served Republican electoral purposes and indirectly those of Serbian propaganda.
- <sup>26</sup> 16 January 1997 report of the U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee titled *Extended Bosnia Mission Endangers U.S. Troops*
- <sup>27</sup> E.A. Hassanein, A. Dzu-l-Fikar Basha, *At-tariq ila Foca* (The Road to Foca), Khartoum, Dar al-Asala, 1988; E.A. Hassanein, *Ya Uht Andalus* (Oh Sister of Andalus), Khartoum, Dar al-Asala, 1990. Their contents are more emotional than scholarly.
- <sup>28</sup> E. Imamovic, Dzamija po glavi bosnjaka, *Dani* 1997:61; E. Stitkovic, Demolition of Places of Worship in the War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, *AIM* 21.3.1994; M. Paunovic, Ten New Mosques This Year in Sarajevo, *AIM* 22.4.1998
- <sup>29</sup> E. Karic, Islam in Contemporary Bosnia: A Personal Statement, *Islamic Studies*, *op. cit.*
- <sup>30</sup> Dz. Karup, Homeini je kriv za sve, *Dani* 1998:72
- <sup>31</sup> D. Pilsel, Ambasadori Talibana, and S. Mulic, Tribina zenska, frustracije muske, *Dani* 1998:71
- <sup>32</sup> *Islamski fundamentalizam sta je to?*, E. Karic, N. Cancar eds., Sarajevo, Biblioteka "Preporod", 1990; *Glasnik RIZ u SFRJ* also published on this topic: E. Stitkovic, Na izvorima bez fundamentalizma, and A. Kadribegovic, Fundamentalizam koji to nije, 1990:1, I. Kasumovic, Problem tradicionalizma i fundamentalizma, 1990:4
- <sup>33</sup> N. Curak, Dr. Resid Hafizovic (interview), *Dani* 1998:73
- <sup>34</sup> J. Esposito, J. Voll, *Islam and Democracy*, Oxford U.P., 1997, attempt to explain authoritarianism in today's Muslim countries by cultural particularities and semantic elasticity. Different approaches to this problem were the "Islam and Liberal Democracy" debate in *Journal of Democracy* 7:2, 1996, the studies in *Democraties sans democraties: politiques d'ouverture dans le monde arabe et*

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*islamique*, Gh. Salame ed., Fayard, Paris, 1994, and the June 1993 conference at Columbia University's Middle East Institute "Under siege: Islam and Democracy". In May 1992 a similar symposium was organized by the United States Institute of Peace. Its findings were published in a monograph entitled *Islam and Democracy: Religion, Politics, and Power in the Middle East*. Attempts of hermeneutic mediation, pragmatic reconciliation, overlapping consensus, etc. are in vogue in today's "interfaith dialogue" between western, mainly American, experts of international affairs and westernized Muslim intellectuals living mostly in the West.

<sup>35</sup> M. Andrejevic, The Sandzak: A Perspective of Serb-Muslim Relations, *Muslim Identity...*, *op. cit.*; S. Bisevac, Borba za Izetbegovicu naklonost, *AIM* 8.1.1996

<sup>36</sup> E. Stitkovac, Endless Love for Power, *AIM* 1.3.1997

<sup>37</sup> Police Detain Belgrade Mufti, *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty* [RFE/RL] 21.1.1998

<sup>38</sup> Gy. Lederer, Islam in Albania, *Central Asian Survey* 13:3, 1994

<sup>39</sup> *RFE/RL* 10.8, 30.8.1996, 22.7, 17.8, 24.8, 19.10, 21.10, 26.10, 5.11, 9.11, 16.11, 10.12.1998; S. Lipsius, Politik und Islam in Albanien - Instrumentalisierung und Abhängigkeiten, *Sudosteuroopa* 47:3-4, 1998; E. Cela, Albanian Muslims, Human Rights and Relations with the Islamic World, *Muslim Communities...*, *op. cit.*; For understandable reasons practically all Albanians are now loyal to the U.S., right and left alike.

<sup>40</sup> R. Lani, Albania Not Present at the Islamic Conference, *AIM* 30.12.1997; R. Lani, Adieu..., *AIM*, *op. cit.*

<sup>41</sup> N. Clayer, Islam State and Society in Post-Communist Albania, *Muslim Identity...*, *op. cit.*

<sup>42</sup> K. Mehmeti, Department of the Interior Prohibiting the Work of Humanitarian Organizations in Macedonia, *AIM* 26.1.1995; Macedonian Muslims Activate Defense Mechanisms, *Večer* (Skopje) 31.5.1995; Life of Population Groups in Macedonia Organized by Muslim Religious Laws, *Nova Makedonja* 26.3.1995; L.K. Nizami, "Yugoslavization" of Macedonia, *AIM* 23.2.1996; D. Dauti, The Islamic Religious Association Under (New) Party Cap, *Fijaka e Vlazimirit* 26.1.1999 (English versions of these articles); N. Gaber, The Muslim Population in FYROM (Macedonia): Public Perceptions, *Muslim Identity...*, *op. cit.*; R.W. Mickey, Citizenship Status and Minority Political Participation: The Evidence from the Republic of Macedonia, *Muslim Communities...*, *op. cit.*

<sup>43</sup> M. Najcevska, E. Simoska, N. Gaber, Muslims State and Society in the Republic of Macedonia: The View from Within, *Muslim Communities...*, *op. cit.*

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<sup>44</sup> N. Duvnjak, *Muslim Community in the Republic of Croatia* - I am grateful to the author for sending me his manuscript.

<sup>45</sup> Quoted by N. Duvnjak, *ibid.*; On the Croat-Bosnian antagonism see T. Ambrosio, *The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Failure of Implementation, State and Nation Building...*, *op.cit.*; H. Hadzic, *Razlaz zbog pijace i policije*, *Dani* 1998:70

<sup>46</sup> I. Ilchev, D. Perry, *The Muslims of Bulgaria, Muslim Communities...*, *op.cit.*, 133

<sup>47</sup> K. Engelbrekt, *Nationalism Reviving, Report on East Europe* 1991:22

<sup>48</sup> *24 Chasa* 29.5.1993; *Demokratiia* 12.5.1993; *Trud* 5.9.1994; *Kontinent* 24.2.1993; *Zora* 26.1.1993 - Bulgarian papers referred to by Ilchev and Perry, *op. cit.*, note 46

<sup>49</sup> A. Eminov, *Turkish and Other Muslim Minorities in Bulgaria*, London, Hurst, 1997, 70 - Most of the above data are from him. For a Bulgarian viewpoint see A. Zhelyazkova, *Relations of Compatibility and Incompatibility between Christians and Muslims in Bulgaria*, Sofia, International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations, 1994

<sup>50</sup> Gy. Lederer, *Islam in Romania, Central Asian Survey* 15:3-4, 1996

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> B. Szajkowski, T. Niblock, G. Nonneman, *Islam and Ethnicity in East Europe: Concepts, Statistics and a Note on the Polish Case, Muslim Communities...*, *op.cit.*; P. Borawski, A. Dubinski, *Tatarzy Polscy - Dzieje, Obrzedy, Legendy, Tradycje*, Warsaw, Iskry, 1986 (with bibliography); Gy. Lederer, I. Takacs, *Among the Muslims of Poland, Central Asian Survey* 9:2, 1990

<sup>53</sup> J. Ridzvanavichius, *Buvome, esame ir busime su Lietuva, Lietuva Totoriai* (the Lithuanian Tatars' periodical) 1997:5(15); Gy. Lederer, *Islam in Lithuania, Central Asian Survey* 14:3, 1995

<sup>54</sup> The Czech Muslims publish a newsletter, *Hlas*. Its summer 1998 issue reported on the Brno mosque. On the house of worship of the Hungarian Islamic Community see *Magyar Nemzet* (Budapest) 8.7.1997. The project of an "Islamic Center" in a Bratislava suburb had been raised by Arabs residing in Slovakia in 1993 and was rejected by the local authorities - *Hospodarske Noviny* (Bratislava) 10.1.1994

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<sup>55</sup> The “Conference on the Future of Islam in East Europe” took place in August 1991 in the Sarajevo Holiday Inn - M. Omerdic, Osnivanje saveza islamskih zajednica Istocne Evrope, and I. Kasumovic, Prvi susret muslimana Istocne Evrope, *Glasnik RIZ u SFRJ* 1991:5; Al-Semmari, *op. cit.*; C. Sorabji, Islam and Bosnia’s Muslim Nation, *The Changing Shape of the Balkans*, *op. cit.*

<sup>56</sup> <http://sunnah.org/iiuc98>

<sup>57</sup> The Libyan Gam’iyya ad-Da’wa al-Islamiyya contributed to the construction of a number of mosques, as that of Gdansk, invites East European Muslim spiritual leaders to visit Libya and youngsters to study in its schools of Tripoli and Al-Beida.

<sup>58</sup> Muslim extremists, possibly foreigners, have also been suspected - V. Selimbegovic, Magicni trougao sve do tvrdnje gospodina, *Dani* 1999:98

<sup>59</sup> B. Lewis, Islamic Fundamentalism, *The Washington Quaterly* 8:3, 1985

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in A. Applebaum, The Crusade Against Islam Can Only be a Phoney War, *Daily Telegraph* 7.2.1995

<sup>61</sup> One particular American author is to be mentioned here for her passionate commitment to the Kosovars’ cause: J. Mertus, *How Truth and Myths Started a War*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999

<sup>62</sup> H. Silajdzic, Islamski fundamentalizam na Kosovu izmedu cinjenica i motiva, *Glasnik RIZ u SFRJ* 1990:3, 12

<sup>63</sup> In early 1991 the “Rezolucija o Kosovu” (*Glasnik RIZ u SFRJ* 1991:1) of the Sarajevo Muslim leadership is already sympathetic to the Kosovars’ plight and talks of “Islamic duty and human solidarity”. A few months later the Reis al-ulumama’s “Memorandum on the Muslim Community in Yugoslavia” (*Glasnik RIZ u SFRJ* 1991:5) speaks of (Serbian) “police regime” and “mass violation of human rights of the Albanian population”. (The same document already envisages the possibility of genocide against Bosnian Muslims.) This issue of *Glasnik* also reports on the arrest of the Head of the Islamic Community in Prishtina: A. Kadribegovic, Hapsenje poglavara Islamske zajednice

<sup>64</sup> A few days before the bombing started (16.3.1999) Dr. Boja had attended a Vienna meeting with Kyr Sava, Bishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and Marko Sopi, Catholic Bishop of Kosovo. It was convened by President of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation New York Rabbi Arthur Schneider. (Austrian Information Service Washington DC 12.3.1999) This was the last, to date, in a series of U.S.-initiated “peace conferences” between Balkan, particularly Bosnian, religious leaders whom the specialists of the State Department had obviously assumed to represent someone - E. Djerejian, *U.S. Policy of Islam and the Arc of Crisis*

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(<http://msanews.mynet.net/MSANEWS/199605/19960506.8.html>); J. Slomp, "One for All": The Vienna Dialogue Process, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* (Jeddah) 18:1, 1998; Priests, rabbis and imams have more prestige in America or the Middle East than in Europe.

<sup>65</sup> *Hena e re* (Skopje) 1.7.1994, quoted in N. Clayer, Identite nationale et identite religieuse dans le discours des dirigeants des musulmans albanais (Albanie, Macedoine, Yougoslavie), *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies* 1994:2, pp. 5, 7 - Boja and other Albanian Muslim leaders often stressed that 90 p.c. of the Albanian nation are Muslim. This figure would assume a 70 p.c. Muslim population in Albania (without the refugees) which is controversial as we saw it above. Many, including intellectuals of Islamic ancestry, reject the direct correlation between national and Muslim identities which has been the religious leaders' main thesis.

<sup>66</sup> Quoted by J. Landay, Should Iran Help Fund War, <http://www.csmonitor.com/durable/1998/04/15/p9.s2.htm>

<sup>67</sup> H. Kane, Media Reports from Bosnia: A Mixture of Outright Lies, Staged Events and Untold Stories, *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto) 17.10.1992

<sup>68</sup> *Jerusalem Post* 15.10.1998

<sup>69</sup> Kosovo Crisis Presents Iran with Policy Dilemma, STRATFOR, <http://209.53.120.100/newsletters/giu/apr99/040899.asp>