

## BOSNIA–HERZEGOVINA AT WAR: RELATIONS BETWEEN MOSLEMS AND NON-MOSLEMS

YESHAYAHU A. JELINEK

*Beer-Sheva, Israel*

**Abstract** — During the Second World War, Bosnia and Herzegovina were a part of the Independent State of Croatia, a German–Italian satellite. The ruling Ustasha movement wished to remove Serbs, Jews and Gypsies from Croatian soil. The Moslem inhabitants of the region were categorized as Croats by the regime who claimed to grant them all rights and privileges. Moslems participated in the bloodbath which the Ustasha initiated against the proscribed minorities.

This article argues that Moslem dignitaries repeatedly protested the iniquities of the Ustasha regime, both towards their people and against the minorities. These protests emphasized the traditional Moslem tolerance in relations with members of other monotheistic religions. While Moslems shared numerous advantages of the regime, they were discontent, and the protests were among the signs of the dissatisfaction.

Yugoslavia has one of the largest Moslem populations in present-day Europe. Most of them live in Bosnia, Herzegovina or southern Serbia. This paper investigates the relations which existed in Bosnia–Herzegovina during the Second World War between the Moslems and the minorities who were persecuted during that period — the Serbs, Jews and Gypsies.

Particular attention will be paid to the political and military attitudes of the Moslems, and to the conditions under which they lived as a consequence of the civil war that devastated Yugoslavia from 1941 to 1945.

No attempt has been made to describe the Moslem minority exhaustively. The aim is rather to shed some light on a lesser-known episode of Yugoslavia's history, namely Moslem relations with the Jews, and also the Christians, under German occupation.

Some sections of the Moslem population tried to live up to the Moslem tradition of tolerance towards other monotheistic religions. In the midst of a merciless civil war some Moslem clergymen displayed humanitarian attitudes. Such behaviour, at a time when Serbs, Jews and Gypsies were being subjected to vicious persecution, is worthy of special attention. To understand these humanitarian attitudes, the status of the Moslem minority in the independent state of Croatia, will be examined.

### THE HISTORICAL SETTING

In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are three large religious groups: the Greek-Orthodox (Pravoslavs), the Roman Catholics and the Moslems. In addition there are smaller communities: Jews, Greek-Catholics (Uniates), Protestants and others. It was customary to regard the Greek Orthodox as Serbs and the Catholics as Croats,<sup>1</sup> but the national affiliation of the Moslems was unclear, because each side claimed them for its own. The

problem was exacerbated in the period between the two world wars, as Serbs and Croats struggled for predominance in the Yugoslav state.

In the event, although thousands of Moslems did identify themselves as either Serbs or Croats, the great majority adopted a pragmatic approach. They identified essentially with their Moslem faith, attaching less importance to nationality. The Moslem political party (the Yugoslav-Moslem Organisation) participated in most of the successive governments while pursuing its own main objectives: to look after the interests of the Moslem population. Other lesser Moslem bodies active in the political arena were similarly motivated.

The local patriotism characteristic of the non-Moslem groups was also common amongst Moslems. Consequently the latter aspired to autonomy for their region without feeling compelled to choose between Serbian or Croatian nationality. However the rivalry and animosity among religions and nationalities culminated in bitter enmity.

When the Balkans were part of the Ottoman Empire, the position of Christians and Jews was regulated in accordance with Islamic law. They were subordinate to Moslems, but, as monotheists, they enjoyed a protected status and religious toleration. In the period of the German occupation and the civil war, Moslems were to argue over and over again that tolerance had reigned in the past among the religious groups in Bosnia–Herzegovina.<sup>2</sup>

In point of fact, tolerance of the kind described by the Moslems was a myth. The Christian population, who had suffered in the past from the status of *raya* (serfs), and were virtually enslaved by the aristocratic Moslem land-owners, found it difficult to believe in Moslem toleration. Nevertheless, the myth was a positive one because it was to have a positive influence on Moslem attitudes and behaviour during the bloody events of the occupation and the civil war.

With the rise of national consciousness in the Balkans during the 19th century, relations between Moslems and Christians became more and more tense. The Christians of the peninsula, who had until then been subservient to Constantinople, strove for liberation from Ottoman oppression. Liberation from Moslem domination became a cherished objective, and the rebellion which broke out in 1875 led finally to annexation by the Austro-Hungarian empire.

The fighting exacerbated the friction between Christians and Moslems. The Christian insurgents were conscious of the Moslems' allegiance to Ottoman authority. Hatred of alien rule, which burned in the hearts of the Christians, was directed against all those perceived as serving the interests of Constantinople, be it foreign Moslems, emissaries from the imperial capital, or local Moslems. It was these religious and national tensions which eroded belief in mutual tolerance, at least in the minds of the Christians, if not those of the Moslems.

The Austrian government also contributed to the raising of tension between the two religious groups. Austria was suspicious of the influence exerted by independent Serbia on the southern Slavic nationalists living in various regions of the Habsburg empire, and was looking for ways of neutralising that influence. One of the methods adopted by Vienna was 'divide and rule', in other words, to inspire anti-Moslem prejudice among the Christian Slavs in the empire by showing a preference for the Moslems. The resulting inter-communal hostility was inherited by the new South-Slavonic kingdom of Yugoslavia established in 1918, after the First World War.

The Serbs, who had been at the bottom of the social scale, now became the dominant element in the new Serbian–Croatian–Slovenian kingdom. Eager to avenge past injustices — real and imagined — and to derive the greatest possible advantage from their new



Fig. 1. *Editor's Note.* The Editor wishes to thank Martin Gilbert, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford for his generous assistance in preparing this map.

position of political hegemony, they did not lack motives for showing intolerance towards the Moslems. At the same time the hostility between Serbs and Croats was also increasing. It is therefore very difficult to sustain the belief that inter-communal friendship or even tolerance reigned to Bosnia–Herzegovina up to the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia in 1941.

With the German onslaught on Yugoslavia, and the creation of the Independent State of Croatia on 10 April 1941, all the pent-up hatred was unleashed, and there followed a spate of violence which was to engulf all the groups of the two regions.

In April 1941, the Jewish community in Bosnia–Herzegovina numbered only 14,000.<sup>3</sup> Approximately 10,500 of them — Sephardic Jews — lived in the Bosnian capital Sarajevo, where they enjoyed the respect of the other ethnic groups in the city. The Pravoslavs were dispersed over the entire region, and their allegiance was to Belgrade and their Serbian kinsmen. The nomadic Gypsies, an inseparable feature of the Balkan scene, lived their traditional separate existence, adhering either to the Moslem faith or to one of the dominant Christian persuasions.

#### THE AFTERMATH OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA

At the beginning of April 1941 the Axis forces invaded Yugoslavia, quickly conquering it and dividing it into zones of occupation. Bosnia and Herzegovina were incorporated into the Independent State of Croatia, which became a satellite of the Third Reich and Italy. Croatia was governed by the extremist Croatian nationalist movement Ustasha, which held the Moslems in high esteem. In the ideology of Ustasha the Moslems were regarded as the purest Croats from a racial point of view. Croatian nationalist writers in the 19th and 20th centuries took the view that the Moslems were direct descendants of the medieval Croatian settlers of the Bogomil sect, although no convincing scientific evidence was offered to support this view. It was argued that once they had accepted Islam, and then led a separate existence, the Moslems were less affected by the mixing of races which the Catholic Croats had undergone.<sup>4</sup> The new authorities in Zagreb declared that their policy was to help the Moslems to attain equal rights, and to inspire them with a feeling that they were indeed a cherished and integral part of the nation.

The deep hostility between Croats and Serbs now erupted into violence, and the entire region was engulfed in a bloodbath. Not all the Croats and Serbs took part in the massacres, but it was the nationalists on both sides who set the tone.

A few days after the German conquest, Croatian nationalists — members of the Ustasha and their sympathisers — set out to slaughter the Serbs. The massacre reached all areas inhabited by Serbs — Bosnia, Herzegovina, Lika, Krbava and others. The Serbs were not passive victims, but retaliated with similar massacres, usually under the banner of the Royal Serbian Nationalist Movement, the Chetniks, which was raised, and soon afterwards led, by General Dragoslav-Dražža Mihajlović.

The controversy between Croatian and Serbian nationalists over who started the massacres has not been resolved to this day. The Serbian nationalists charge that the Ustasha aimed at ridding the country of Serbs. The Croatian nationalists allege that the Serbians were out to take revenge on the Croats for the partition of Yugoslavia and the establishment of the Croatian state.

It is interesting to note that the Moslems suffered from both sides, but particularly at

the hands of the Serbs, and this was one of the main reasons why the Moslems later participated in the attempt to wipe out the Serbs.<sup>5</sup>

Moslem sources argue that only the wildest elements from the lowest social strata of their society took part in the atrocities, having been incited and equipped by others, meaning the Catholic Croats. Moslems allege that the Ustasha would dress up in Moslem robes when they went out to 'purify the air' of Serbs.<sup>6</sup> There is ample testimony to substantiate this charge.<sup>7</sup> The Ustasha evidently hoped to create the impression that the massacres which they perpetrated had really been committed by Moslems. In this way they would not only absolve themselves of blame, they would also incite the Serbs against the Moslems, an approach characteristic of the new government, and very much in accordance with what it perceived to be its interests.

Provocations of this kind would also create confusion among the Moslems, and force them to take sides. The available testimony leaves no doubt that Serbs and Chetniks also massacred Moslems.<sup>8</sup> Croatian nationalists maintain that the Chetniks wished to get rid of all the Moslems and Catholics in large areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to annex those regions to 'Greater Serbia' which would then have a homogeneous Orthodox population, without minorities.<sup>9</sup>

The Italian legation in Zagreb provides an intriguing view of the outbreak of the civil war, in a report alleging that there is an anti-government coalition consisting of Jews, Moslems, Serbs and Communists.<sup>10</sup> This report, however, must be treated with caution, as Rome was not sympathetic to the Croats, in particular the Ustasha. Such documents do, however, testify to the complexity of the developments which were taking place in the region. In any case the Ustasha were anxious to aggravate the tension between the Moslems and the Orthodox, in order to enlist the support of the former and to isolate the latter.

Massacres perpetrated by the Serbs, whether at their own initiative or in retaliation for acts of murder committed against them, did cause a massive flight of Moslems in the early months of the Ustasha state, and in the years that followed. Moslems fled from their homes to obtain protection from the government or the German forces.<sup>11</sup> Thus the Chetniks fulfilled the role which the Ustasha intended for them. On the other hand the inability of the Zagreb authorities to protect the Moslems from the Chetniks, and later the Partisans, had unfortunate consequences for the Ustasha in the long run, because the Moslems turned elsewhere for protection, and that part of the Moslem community which had thrown in its lot with the new government gradually began to abandon it.

### SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MOSLEM COMMUNITY

It must be acknowledged that a considerable proportion of the Moslems sympathised with the newborn state and identified with the principles for which it purported to stand. It is difficult to arrive at an accurate figure, due to the absence of precise data and the misleading effects of the intense propaganda in which all the parties to the conflict were indulging at the time. Nevertheless, various archival sources leave the distinct impression that at least half the Moslems living in the territory of the independent state, and perhaps more, sided with it from the outset. (The Ustashi were able to enlist some goodwill even from Moslems living in the Sandžak!)

As time passed, some sections of the Moslem population remained faithful allies of the Serbs, while others sought autonomous solutions, such as a closer involvement with the

Moslem world, maintaining neutrality in the struggle raging around them, or joining the anti-Axis struggle, whether on the national or the international front.

The ideological split in the community might be explained in terms of the bitter lessons which they had learned, and the need to adjust to a constantly changing situation. However historical motives, the heritage of the past, and political and social divisions also played a role.

The Moslem community was divided along political and ideological lines. The Yugoslav Moslem Organisation, which had represented Moslem interests in the old Yugoslavia, was preoccupied with the material welfare of the community rather than national or ethnic matters. It was supported by the peasantry, who constituted the majority of the Moslem population. The Moslem peasants, however, did not possess real power. They were still subject to the ancient, landed nobility, and the latter kept a firm hold on political power.

Under the conditions created by the war, some of the organisation's political echelon formed an alliance with the Ustasha, but the Moslems as a whole followed their traditional practice of not committing themselves to any particular party, while expressing opposition to persecution of other religious groups.

The organisation's allegiance to the regime produced lavish rewards for its leaders, especially members of the Kulenović family, and others in their constituency. They received government appointments including those of deputy premier, minister, and high regional and municipal office. Moreover many Moslems were induced to side with the regime out of fear of the Chetniks, or in response to some of the gestures of the government, such as the construction of a huge mosque in Zagreb, or the plan to raise the Moslem town of Banja Luka to the status of state capital.

Thus, in its early months, the regime benefited from widespread support among the Moslems, some of whom continued to support it to the bitter end. In being attracted to the regime, the Moslems were no different from the Catholic Croats, many of whom initially supported the Ustasha out of elation at the creation of a state of their own. It was present political expediency that determined the hostile attitudes of these Ustasha fellow-travellers towards the Serbs and the Jews.

Another section of the Moslem peasantry, notably the more prosperous, joined the prominent Croatian Peasant Party. The war caused a split in this party. A large section of the veteran leadership, headed by Vladko Maček, strongly supported the Western Allies, and rejected the overtures of the Germans and the Ustasha. Maček and his supporters certainly did not approve of persecution and massacres of Jews and Serbs. A minority, however, chose to support the new regime.

After the German conquest the party leadership was in a state of shock, and was unable to offer guidance to its followers. Consequently most of those who were not arrested adopted a 'wait-and-see' policy.

The Moslem commercial and industrial bourgeoisie had also been pro-Serb during the period of the Yugoslav kingdom.<sup>12</sup> During the war many remained so, and even joined or supported the Chetniks. However, others participated enthusiastically in the pillaging of Serb and Jewish urban property.

The Communists enjoyed quite strong support among the Moslem working-class, and to a lesser extent among other Moslems, urban and peasant. During the war these Moslems regarded the National Liberation Movement (the Partisans) as their representatives. Since the Communists' motto was Brotherhood and Unity (of the Yugoslav people), and since they were fighting the foreign invaders and local collaborators, the Serbs and the

Jews had less to fear from them than from Moslems who supported the new regime.

Admittedly the Moslem peasants disagreed with the Communist ideology of the Partisans, insofar as they understood it. As time went by, however, the Partisans grew in strength, and the Moslem peasantry, who came into contact with them during the fighting in Bosnia, learned to appreciate their positive attributes. The Moslems suspected that the Ustasha and the Chetniks were both out for their own ends, whereas the political branch of the Partisans offered new solutions to the problems of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>13</sup> It offered regional autonomy in which the Moslems would be free from the ethnic constraints of the past.<sup>14</sup> As the influence of the National Liberation Movement increased, more and more Moslems came over to it, abandoning other camps.<sup>15</sup>

Moslems who supported the Italian occupying power generally did so because they saw it as a source of protection against other forces which they feared, hated or distrusted. A significant part of the Moslem population was under direct Italian rule in Mostar, capital of Herzegovina, and tended to cooperate with Italian civil and military institutions.<sup>16</sup> Guerilla units set up by leading Moslems also cooperated with the Italian authorities. These units were under the umbrella of the Chetnik movement<sup>17</sup> and established contact with the Italian authorities through pro-Italian Serbs.<sup>18</sup>

The Moslems who joined the Chetniks did so out of nationalist motives. They regarded themselves as Serbs, detested the Ustasha, and feared the Partisans and the Communists. Therefore they chose to side with the Italians, both as a gesture of goodwill and for self-protection.

Moslems who supported the Ustasha were for the most part nationalist and pro-German, and the register shows that many of them were intellectuals. Extremists among them took an active part in the atrocities committed by the Ustasha. They also mobilised support for the new regime among different sections of the Moslem population, especially supporters of the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation and the Croatian Peasant Party. Their success, at least in the early period, can be seen in the considerable numbers of Moslems who volunteered for military units raised by the Croatian government or the Germans, such as the Croatian brigade that fought alongside the Germans in Stalingrad and was wiped out in the fighting.<sup>19</sup>

Not all the Moslem nationalists identified completely with the pro-German Moslem faction. Whereas the nationalists aspired to a unified Croatian state, the pro-German faction were more inclined to an autonomous Bosnia–Herzegovina, not unlike the administrative entity of Habsburg times. The pro-German Moslems drew support and took their lead from the German occupying forces who encouraged and exploited latent Austro-Hungarian traditions. The German commanding general, Edmund Glaise von Horstenau, was a veteran of the Austrian army. The Germans endeavoured to be seen as the heirs of the Austro-Hungarian imperial rule. They bestowed patronage on the local Moslems and extended aid to them, even when the Croatian government in Zagreb was opposed to this.<sup>20</sup>

They raised Moslem military units, notably the infamous 13th. (Hanjar) Waffen SS Division, and other smaller formations. In their propaganda the Germans tried to exploit local patriotic feelings and to convey a sense of security to the Moslem population by telling them that the volunteers would be defending their homes. In practice the promise was only partially kept, and many of the Moslem soldiers were used as cannon fodder.<sup>21</sup> There were cases in which Moslem recruits mutinied on being informed that they were to be sent abroad — to France for example — ostensibly for training.<sup>22</sup>

The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin el-Husseini, took an active part in the

German effort to recruit Moslems. Through the Mufti's mediation Berlin hoped to achieve a number of goals: to use the Moslems of Bosnia–Herzegovina as a bridge to the Arab and Islamic worlds; to endow the Moslems of the region with an identity different from that of the other peoples in the region, yet easy to interpret in terms of Pan-Islamic values; to strengthen the direct relations between the Nazis and the Moslems; and to increase the number of volunteers.

The Croatian government in Zagreb was enraged by the visit of the Grand Mufti, and it was only under heavy German pressure that the Croats were induced to be civil towards him.<sup>23</sup> The Germans also encouraged the separatist aspirations of many Moslems, and demonstrated their approval of those who were aiming to achieve autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>24</sup> It must be admitted that the German policy was successful, at least in the creation of pro-German sentiment and in the recruitment of volunteers.

Moslem participation in pogroms and in the extermination of proscribed minorities was led by the nationalists or German supporters among them. Most of the Moslem military units, including the Hanjar Division, were not established until after most of the Jews of Croatia, and consequently Bosnia–Herzegovina, were already in extermination camps in Poland or on Croatian soil. It was German troops and the Ustashi who carried out the deportations.

From all this it is clear that the Moslems of Bosnia–Herzegovina were far from united during the Second World War. In this respect they were just like other national and ethnic groups in the region. Consequently one has to be very careful when defining Moslem attitudes to other minorities during this period.

#### THE POSITION OF THE MOSLEMS IN THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA

From the available documentary evidence it appears that the Moslems had misgivings about the policies of the authorities in Zagreb, even though the latter made considerable efforts to conciliate them, at least in certain areas. Of course the Moslem attitude varied from time to time, and from place to place, and was affected by the divisions among the Moslems themselves and among the Ustashi. Not all factions of the Ustashi treated the Moslems in the same way, and this affected the Moslem reaction. The bombastic proclamations that the Moslems formed an 'organic and integral part of the Croatian people' were not borne out in practice. Relations between the Catholic Croats and their Moslem 'bretheren' were not as warm and friendly as hoped for. There was a wide gap between rhetoric and reality.

It was not long before the results of this discrepancy became apparent. Moslem dignitaries protested vehemently in public against preferential treatment which Catholics were receiving from the government in various fields.<sup>25</sup> The number of protests of this kind which have been examined was greatest in 1941. It dropped in 1942 and 1943 and rose again in 1944. The reason for this fluctuation may lie partly in the government's preoccupation in 1941 with the establishment of the new state. In 1942 and 1943 fierce fighting was taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and many Moslems were driven from their homes, while in 1944 the anti-Fascist forces were slowly consolidating their hold on the country, and the international situation was also turning against the Nazis. Nevertheless, the fluctuation in the stream of protests requires explanation, and merits more thorough social and political research.

Moslems complained about religious discrimination<sup>26</sup> and expressed the fear that the Catholics would turn against them once they had finished off the Orthodox and the Jews.



(Gypsies are rarely mentioned in the Moslem documents from this period. Since they lacked the identity of a social force, their extermination was not perceived by the Moslems as a threat to themselves.) Catholic Croats, transferred from other districts to govern parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, lacked the expertise and leadership qualities necessary for dealing with Moslem civil and religious interests.<sup>27</sup> Typical of their ineptitude was the case of a local Croatian official who, unaware of Moslem dietary laws, replied to complaints from a Moslem village about the scarcity of olive oil and fat for the Ramadan holiday festivities, with the suggestion that the residents use lard instead, as this was readily available.<sup>28</sup> Moslem hostility was aroused when the Ustasha-imposed mayor of Banja Luka annexed neighbouring Catholic villages to the town, to reduce its former Moslem majority to a minority.<sup>29</sup> Moslems also complained of open discrimination in job appointments, in the award of privileges and distribution of property.<sup>30</sup> Whether the complaints were justified or not, they bear witness to a prevailing mood.

To put the persecution of Moslems and the discrimination practised against them in perspective, it is enough to recall the ferocity with which the Ustashi and other armed elements of the Croatian regime persecuted the Jews and the Serbs. Such was the frenzy of the Ustashi, that Moslems were frequently murdered too. There are reports of massacres of innocent Moslems, acts of vengeance by armed mobs, torture of Moslem prisoners and civilians, and deportation of Moslems to concentration camps on Croatian territory.<sup>31</sup>

The horrors of these camps, particularly the one at Jasenovac, were comparable with the worst of the Nazi concentration camps. Moslems who expressed sympathy for the Serbs and the Jews in their suffering were themselves subjected to frightful ill-treatment. For other Moslems, the horrors of war came to their very doorsteps, and it became increasingly difficult for them to remain aloof.

When the Independent State of Croatia was established, Moslem dignitaries asked the authorities to enact a law to improve the status of the Moslem religion,<sup>32</sup> but nothing was done, although the Moslems raised the matter repeatedly. The old legislation, which the Moslem religious establishment regarded as unsatisfactory, remained in force, at least for as long as any law was respected at all in the Ustasha state.

The authoritarian regime distrusted the Moslem dignitaries, and was not interested in granting a special position to Islam, since this would free the Moslems as a religious group from total dependence on the state, and their religious leaders from state supervision. In 1943, when the spiritual leader of the Moslem community, the *Rais ul-Ulema*, died, the government refused to approve the appointment of his successor. Their experience with the deceased had not been favourable, and they found the candidate to succeed him even less acceptable. In addition, the head of the *Maharamat* — the Religious Welfare Association, one of the principal institutions of the Moslem community, was accused of having pro-British leanings.<sup>33</sup>

Initially the regime declared that it intended to improve the lot of the Moslems, but its policies were so oppressive that it was impossible to implement the improvements. It is therefore not surprising that the Moslem clergy and dignitaries distanced themselves from the regime and its actions, or that Moslem clergymen protested against the persecution of religious minorities by the Ustashi. Even the Germans shuddered at the atrocities committed by some of the Ustashi battalions.

The divisions among the clergy reflected those among the Moslem community as a whole. Some were vehemently pro-Ustashi, for example the Mufti of Zagreb, Ismaet Muftić, who served in the *Sabor*, the pseudo-parliament of 1942. Hafiz Mohamed Pandža

supported the Germans, and Sulejman Filipović supported the Partisans. True to Moslem tradition, the clergy were fluid in their allegiances. Mohamed Pandža later deserted the Germans and formed his own organisation, which fought for an autonomous Bosnia–Herzegovina against both the Ustasha and the Partisans. Sulejman Filipović also changed sides.

#### THE MOSLEMS AND THE DOMESTIC POLICIES OF THE CROATIAN GOVERNMENT

In the circumstances of the Croatian state, with bloodshed and hatred everywhere, the myth that peaceful coexistence had reigned among religious groups in Bosnia–Herzegovina under the Turkish empire, assumed particular importance, and was invoked by the Moslem clergy who protested against the persecution of other religious minorities. The Archives of Military History in Belgrade and other archives contain many petitions, open letters, newspaper articles and records of meetings with government officials, in which Moslem dignitaries protested against what was happening in the country.

A copy of such a petition, dated 14 November 1941, was sent by Dr Lemr, the local representative of the Company for South-Eastern Europe Ltd (a front agency for the German secret service) to his superiors.<sup>34</sup> The petition complained about the bloodshed in the region and stressed that the Moslems had nothing to do with the crimes being committed. It stated that under Turkish rule tolerance had reigned in Bosnia, and all religious groups had been recognised and could practice their faiths without fear. Now, by contrast, the Moslems, not the Catholics, were the victims of discrimination, in spite of the policy of religious equality proclaimed by the government.

In the strongest possible terms, the Moslems demanded an end to the bloodshed, the punishment of the perpetrators, security for all citizens without distinction, respect for private property, and heavy penalties for any manifestation of religious intolerance.

On 20 August 1941 the office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Džaferbeg Kulenović, sent a letter to the local government of the Sana and Luka district discussing the equality of the Moslem and Catholic religions.<sup>35</sup> This was in response to a complaint from the *Rais ul-Ulema* listing places where Orthodox Christians and Jews who had converted to Islam were nevertheless sent to concentration camps or simply murdered, whereas converts to Catholicism were spared. Jews who converted to Catholicism were allowed to remove the yellow patch, but not those who embraced Islam. In his letter the Deputy Prime Minister asserted that converts to Islam deserved the same privileges as converts to Catholicism, and that discrimination against the former should cease.<sup>36</sup>

On 29 September 1941 the Executive Committee for Autonomy of Bosnia–Herzegovina in Mostar (in the Italian zone) published an open letter protesting against the iniquities suffered by the Moslems. Although it held Serbs partly responsible, it placed most of the blame with the Catholic authorities in Zagreb<sup>37</sup> and attributed the attitude shown to Moslems living in the Croatian state to the teachings of the Catholic Church.<sup>38</sup>

On 12 November 1941 a number of Moslem personalities gathered at the village of Prnjavor and drew up an open letter to Deputy Prime Minister Kulenović, in which they referred to a letter written on 12 September, by a group of Moslems in Sarajevo. It accused the government of taking a negative attitude to the Moslems in comparison with the Serbs (i.e. the Orthodox). It also accused the Ustasha of provoking the Chetnik attacks on Moslem villages, and charged that attempts were being made to convert to Catholicism Serbs who had embraced Islam. In conclusion, the letter stresses traditional Islamic tolerance towards other religions.<sup>39</sup>

On the same day another open letter was published by the Moslem community of Banja Luka.<sup>40</sup> It protested against the pressure being exerted on the Orthodox to convert to Catholicism, and the obstacles being placed in the way of those wishing to convert to Islam, and against the pillaging of Serbian and Jewish property of Ustasha members. The fact that some leading Moslems also benefited from such plunder, as other sources show,<sup>41</sup> was not important. Once again it was the Moslem tradition of tolerance that was invoked.

On 28 and 29 April 1944, 15 of the most prominent Moslem personalities in the country met in Sarajevo with the head of the government, Dr Nikola Mandić. The protocol of this meeting is enlightening. Speaking to Mandić and the governor of Upper Bosnia district, Dr Mohamed Kulenović, the Moslem spokesman declared that for generations tolerance had prevailed in Bosnia–Herzegovina, a region sheltering people of many faiths. He pointed out that Moslems are opposed to the notion that man is his own enemy. Turning to the catastrophic conditions now prevailing in the country, the spokesman dwelt on the persecution suffered by the Moslems at the hands of the Chetniks, the Partisans, and above all the Ustasha. The document extends over six closely-typed pages, and about a third of it is devoted to discrimination suffered by the Moslems in the Croatian state.<sup>42</sup>

Other documents containing similar testimony are available, but one more example will suffice. In the April/May 1944 issue of the main Moslem organ in Croatia, an article was published entitled 'The Relations of Moslems with Non-Moslems', analysing in detail the attitude of Islam towards non-believers in general, and towards the other religious groups in Bosnia–Herzegovina in particular.<sup>43</sup> The writer repeatedly stressed the tolerance which, in his opinion, was characteristic of his faith, and condemned bloodshed, torture, sadism and all manifestations of merciless cruelty. He contrasted the events of his time in the region with the entry of the Kaliph Omar into Jerusalem in 638 A.D. at the head of the victorious Moslem forces. The Kaliph promised the Jews and Christians that their lives would be safe and that they would be free to practice their religion, and warned his followers against harming them in any way.

The Moslem author of the article mentioned the Jews explicitly several times. He demanded the undisturbed continuity of Christian — including Orthodox — life in Bosnia, and religious liberty for all. 'Under Turkish rule there was religious liberty for all communities', he stressed, 'whether Moslems, Serbs or Jews' (in that order) and there were no transgressions against their lives, places of worship or property. The tolerance demonstrated by all the Moslems in their respective domains (i.e. Bosnia, Herzegovina and Sandžak) towards Christians and Jews is probably unique in the history of the European continent.<sup>44</sup>

The official ideology of the Ustasha was replete with racist statements aimed particularly against Jews and Gypsies, and Croatian nationalist declarations aimed mainly against Serbs. The Ustasha's objective was to extirpate the Serbs as a separate ethnic entity from what they believed to be Croatian soil, through expulsion, massacre or conversion to Catholicism. The forced conversions caused a great deal of controversy, echoes of which are still heard. The spearhead of Croatian nationalism in Herzegovina was the Order of Franciscan monks, who believed it was their mission to defend 'the true faith' and their fellow believers, the Croats. Croatian nationalism combined with religious fanaticism nurtured intolerance against nationalities, races and religions regarded as alien.

It should be pointed out, however, that this fanatical religious devotion was not always devoid of certain secular features. Religious devotion was regarded as a mark of Croatian national identity, and as such it outweighed personal ethics. Consequently it is not

surprising that dignitaries of the Catholic Church complained about the restrictions to which they were subjected by the secular Ustasha regime, and accused the authorities in Zagreb of being two-faced.<sup>45</sup>

The Moslem statements quoted above were free of racist hatred or national antagonism but were loaded with a strong inter-religious tension. They repeatedly condemned the violence and the massacres in general, and the attacks on the Orthodox or the Serbs (the two terms are used alternatively), in particular. They demanded equal rights, justice and security for all, regardless of religion. The tension between the two recognised religions may be partly responsible for the humanitarian stand taken by the Moslems, and the cruelty practised against individual Moslems is also reflected.

Nevertheless, it is also possible that Moslem protestations of tolerance were made for the purpose of self-justification, or to cast the guilt for crimes committed by Moslems onto others. After all, Moslems had been involved in atrocities against the minorities. To take just one example, the *Crni*, the Ustasha Black Legion (so-called because of its black uniform) of Jure Francetić recruited many Moslems, and the atrocities committed by it are proverbial.

Many of the Moslem complaints must also be attributed to greed and envy. Time and again the documents betray competition among Croats, Moslems, *Volksdeutsche* and *Reichsdeutsche* to seize confiscated Serb and Jewish property, and the Moslem charges of discrimination may simply conceal a desire for a bigger share of the loot. Altogether it is difficult to avoid the feeling that there was more than a hint of hypocrisy in the Moslem statements. These statements display both a need for self-justification and a willingness to express Moslem discomfort openly.

It is very difficult to estimate what percentage of the population supported the protests wholeheartedly, but the fact that the same points were made time and again in the glare of publicity, suggests that they must have enjoyed widespread support.

The Moslem religion in Yugoslavia was accustomed to maintaining a low profile. It was neither aggressive nor missionary in essence. It seems that the conversion of Jews to Islam was as much a way of saving their lives as of increasing the numbers of the faithful. It was conversion to Catholicism that caused suffering to Serbs and Jews alike. Catholic missionaries, even during the Holocaust, looked upon conversion of unbelievers as the fulfillment of St. Paul's command to bring light unto the nations. This applied particularly to the Jews, who were perceived as the descendants of the ancient people who had refused to recognise the redemption by the Cross. Documents cited in this paper seem to indicate that it was mainly out of humanitarian motives that the Moslems allowed conversions to Islam, and that they did their best for the converts (as they had done for Moslem Gypsies).

There is no clear evidence of how many Jews converted to Islam to save their lives, nor of how many of them managed to survive. The documents at our disposal bear witness to the fact that in Croatia both the government and the Germans carried on with their policy of 'purging' — sending both Jewish converts and Jews who had married non-Jews to the concentration camps and their deaths. It was the racial, not the religious criterion which determined the individual Jew's fate.<sup>46</sup> However, evidence exists that some Jews who had converted to Islam survived, and later reverted to the faith of their ancestors.<sup>47</sup> The documentary evidence is vague, and one has to fill the gaps with oral testimony. The subject of Jews who converted to Islam and later returned to Judaism has never been investigated by scholars.

Conversion worked differently for Orthodox Serbs, for whom conversion to Islam seems to have meant a real chance of survival. Since conversion for self-protection was

prevalent, many Orthodox, faced with death or eviction, chose Catholicism in order to save their lives and property. In this way thousands underwent forced conversions virtually overnight.<sup>48</sup> Unlike the Jews, they were judged by national, not racial criteria, and were therefore permitted, and even encouraged to convert. At a later stage, pressure from the Germans forced the Zagreb authorities to abandon forced conversions and create a category of 'Croats of Orthodox faith'. By changing their nationality from Serb to Croat, the Serbs were able to preserve their lives and property. This pleased the Germans, who felt that by such changes, the tranquility, so necessary for their military activities, could be restored. The device did not always work, however, because the Ustasha frequently broke their pledges and were quite cold-blooded about it. Nevertheless it did open for some a door to salvation which was hermetically sealed to the Jews.

No doubt the Moslems showed a certain good will in trying to protect the lives of Jewish converts, or at least to obtain the same rights for them as those enjoyed by converts to Catholicism. In this context the article in the official organ of the Moslem community deserves special attention. At a time when Hungarian Jews, only 100 km from the Bosnian border, were being deported to extermination camps, and when the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem was doing his best to torpedo any attempt to save even Jewish children, it was the spokesman of the Moslems in a Balkan country who publicly declared his opposition to the persecution and liquidation of the Jews, even going so far as to demand religious freedom for them, in accordance with Islamic doctrine. True, he may have been trying to establish an alibi for the Moslems — and some of them needed one — but the public stand taken by the Moslems compares very favourably with the silence of many Catholic dignitaries in Croatia in the face of murder and persecution of Jews.

It must be admitted that in April 1944 the Croatian government controlled only Zagreb and its outskirts, and much of the country was controlled by the Partisans. Still, when the article appeared in the official organ of the Moslem community, Sarajevo was still in German hands. Therefore, it took considerable courage on the part of the writer and the publisher to print an article openly opposing the official ideology of those in power. It cannot be denied that the article appeared when the regime was on the verge of collapse, but it was not the first of its kind. Similar, though less outspoken articles had appeared in previous years. It may therefore be concluded that at least some of the Moslem intelligentsia, religious and secular, felt a genuine revulsion at the bestial acts of the Ustasha and the Germans against the national and religious minorities.

#### MOSLEMS AND NON-MOSLEMS IN DAILY LIFE

The above review throws light on Moslem statements. It does not establish how Moslems actually behaved towards members of persecuted minorities. Since we have already discussed the extent to which Moslems were involved in massacres, and the role of Moslems in the armed forces, it is appropriate now to examine other aspects of the issue. Regrettably we do not have at our disposal sufficient documentary evidence to make a complete historical reconstruction of Moslem behaviour towards the Jews.<sup>49</sup>

Most of the existing evidence refers to the Bosnian capital Sarajevo. In the past, Jews, Moslems and Christians had lived there side by side. A large proportion of the shops and businesses belonged to Jews, and this was true also in other parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>50</sup>

Under the Ustasha regime, businesses owned by Jews and Serbs were expropriated and placed under the control of 'supervisors', who were simply privileged individuals in

favour with the new authorities. In Sarajevo most of them were Moslems. Due to their lack of expertise they caused a great deal of damage to the confiscated businesses. Taking advantage of their power in the city, and of the shortages of essential commodities, they were able to make enormous profits.

Competition for the expropriated property caused tension between Moslems and Catholics. In Sarajevo the regime tended to favour the Moslems, since it was anxious to win them over. Consequently the envy of the local Catholics was acute.<sup>51</sup> Similar rivalries existed in other places where Jewish and Serb property was 'available', and the authorities were inundated with applications from Moslems wishing to be appointed 'supervisors'.

The Moslems in Sarajevo took an active part in the plunder of Jewish communal property, for example the pillage and destruction of the Great Sephardic Synagogue. The ancient synagogue in Dubrovnik was handed over to the Moslems by the Ustasha in 1944.<sup>52</sup> When Moslem peasants were evacuated from battle zones in Eastern Bosnia, the Black Legion drove Jewish families from their homes and allowed the peasants to take their place.<sup>53</sup> In his memoirs, Srećko Bujas, the officially-appointed administrator of the Sephardic Jewish congregation in Sarajevo, attacked the local Moslems and accused them of collaborating with the blood-thirsty Ustasha official Ivan Tolj, who planned and implemented the expulsion of the Jews from the city.<sup>54</sup>

The expulsion was carried out with extreme brutality, and Jews were hunted down in the streets. At the same time, some, who sought refuge in the Moslem quarter, were taken in and hidden, thereby surviving the war.<sup>55</sup> Documents from a Croatian army source describe the bitterness felt in Sarajevo in all strata of the Moslem population over the brutality and sadism which characterised the expulsion of the Jews.<sup>56</sup> Moslems, including the mayor, boycotted the opening of an antisemitic exhibition in the city in the fall of 1942.<sup>57</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

The behaviour of the Moslems in Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the persecuted minorities was complex and multi-faceted. Although there were certain anti-Orthodox and anti-Jewish traditions in the two regions, the period under discussion should not be viewed in the light of the negative aspects of the past. On the contrary, the Moslems cited tolerance towards other monotheistic religions as a basic precept of their faith. During the centuries of Ottoman rule, the situation of 'unbelievers' in the Balkans was reasonable, and certainly much better than that of non-conforming religions in the Christian world. To understand the behaviour of the Moslem community, its history and political and social structure, as well as the pressures to which it was exposed, must all be examined. That is what this paper has attempted to do.<sup>58</sup>

The civil war, and the bloodshed that engulfed Yugoslavia after its defeat, affected Moslem localities too. While signs of unquestionable humanitarianism can be found in the behaviour of the Moslems in this period, the observer will also encounter a certain primitive quality coupled with vindictiveness, probably engendered by the harsh attitudes of the 'unbelievers' towards Islam in the past. The Moslem scriptures have no love for non-Moslems, and in certain circumstances they even command the faithful to behave in a cruel and merciless fashion towards them. It was therefore not inconceivable that the more primitive Moslems or those indoctrinated with the tradition of holy war against the infidel, would willingly join the unequal battle initiated by the Ustasha against the Serbs. The Serbs, inspired by hatred for their erstwhile conquerors, reacted in a similar manner.

As the horrors of the civil war continued, more and more of the Moslems switched their

allegiance to the Partisans, whose nationalist ideology was winning widespread acceptance. The Moslems' change in ideology led to a fundamental change in Moslem–Serb relations. At the same time, we know that the Germans, in particular the SS, were making determined efforts to exploit the weakness of Ustasha influence among the Moslems for German ends. The Germans' aim in Croatia was to reduce the hostility between the Croats and the Serbs, and they recruited Moslem units to serve the selfish interests of Berlin, not those of the Moslem population of Bosnia–Herzegovina. These units ravaged the Serbs and the Partisans and also the remaining Jews.

It is therefore necessary, in judging the actions and attitudes of the Moslems, to take account of the particular period, the inner motivation and the influences to which they were subjected. Only one generalisation holds for the entire tragic period: the Moslem perception of religious tolerance as a token of lasting historical and moral value.

Unfortunately, they did not always live up to it. It seems that they adapted to the canons of intercommunal behaviour prevailing in a country ruled by pitiless violence. In this respect they were neither better nor worse than the rest of the population.

At the end of the war only about 1600 Jews survived in Bosnia–Herzegovina. In the extermination of the Jews, which began in the summer of 1941 and continued during 1942,<sup>59</sup> most perished in concentration camps in Poland and Greater Croatia. However, some were killed in their home towns by any means the murderers saw fit.

There is no authoritative estimate of the number of Serbs and Gypsies massacred. The figures cited depend on the political views of the source. However they certainly run into hundreds of thousands. The Moslems and Croats who were massacred number thousands.

In this study we have dealt only tangentially with the third victimised minority, the Gypsies. Their social and civil status was completely different from that of the Serbs and the Jews. There is virtually no written testimony to their suffering, as they had no chroniclers of their own, and neither their persecutors, nor the few who troubled to help them, saw any need to leave a written record of their fate. Of the large volume of documents scrutinised in the course of the study of which this essay is part, hardly any are devoted to the Gypsies.

Nevertheless we are inclined to believe that the same humanitarian gestures made by Moslems to Serbians and Jews were also made to the Gypsies, albeit in a very reserved and unobtrusive manner. There is evidence that Moslems defended Gypsies of the Moslem faith,<sup>60</sup> but it is difficult to corroborate these acts, or to establish what the Moslem attitude was to the Gypsies as a whole.

In the independent state of Croatia three communities, the (Orthodox) Serbs, the Jews and the Gypsies, found themselves besieged, with no prospect that any foreign power would intercede on their behalf. Other minorities could look to outside powers for protection: the Hungarians from Budapest, the Slovaks from Bratislava, the Czechs from the Reich.<sup>61</sup>

The Moslems were in an advantageous position, being neither the persecuting regime nor its victim. In comparison with other European nations who witnessed Nazi atrocities against minorities in their midst, the Moslems, to their credit, at least protested.

## NOTES

1. P. D. Ostović, *The Truth about Croatia* (New York: Roy Publishers, 1952), p. 109; W. Schneefuss, *Die Kroaten und ihre Geschichte* (Leipzig: W. Goldman, 1942), p. 117.

2. Bundesarchiv Koblenz, West Germany (hereafter BA), SOEG, R63-102, Dr Lemr to SOEG, 14 November 1941; Archives of the Military-Historical Institute, Belgrade, Yugoslavia (hereafter AVII), 2123-6, no. 86, Pro Memorija, 30 April 1944; AVII, 29/33-3, no. 86, Petition to Kulenović, 12 November 1941; Mustafa Busuladžić, 'Odnos Muslimana prema Nemuslimana' (The Relationship of Moslems with Non-Moslems), *Glasnik Islamske Vjerske Zajednice NDH*, XII, 4–5 (April–May 1944).
3. S. Kimhi, ed., *Spomenica 400 godina od dolaska Jevreja u Bosnu i Hercegovinu*, Sarajevo 1966, p. 245. (Commemorative book on the 400th anniversary of the settlement of the Jews in Bosnia–Herzegovina).
4. *Hrvatski Narod* (Zagreb), III, 76, 29 April 1941; III, 94, 7 May 1941; *Za Dom* (Zagreb), III, 26, 12 August 1943; III, 32, 12 October 1943. *Fikreta Jelić-Butić, Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska, 1941–1945*, Zagreb 1977, pp. 196–197.
5. Public Records Office, London, England (hereafter PRO), FO 371/37617, Telegram, Brig. Armstrong to Col. Bailey, 18 November 1943.
6. BA, SOEG, R63-102, Dr Lemr to SOEG, 12 September 1941.
7. BA, SOEG, R63-102, Dr Lemr to SOEG, 14 November 1941; US National Archives, Washington D.C., USA (hereafter USNA), Diplomatic Division, 860.00/1953, Berry (Constantinople) to the Secretary of State, 5 February 1944; Sima Simić, *Prekrstavanje Srba za vreme drugog Svetskog rata* (The Religious Conversion of the Serbs during the Second World War) (Titograd: Graficki zavod, 1958), p. 81.
8. The Hoover Institute Archives, Stanford, California, USA, The Polish Government Collection, Box 35, 59003-8M, no date; *Za Dom* (Zagreb), IV, 14, 12 May 1944; etc.
9. S. Hefer, *Croatian Struggle for Freedom and Statehood* (Buenos Aires: Croatian Information Center, 1959), pp. 171–186; V. Nikolić, 'Dva glasila hrvatskih Muslimana,' *Hrvatska Revija*, II, 3 (September 1952), pp. 292–298.
10. Political Archives of the German Foreign Office, Bonn, West Germany (hereafter PA), Inland II g., no. 290, Casertano to the Italian Foreign Office, 9 July 1941.
11. *Militärbundesarchiv*, Freiburg im Breisgau, West Germany (hereafter MBA), RH 31 III, Note, p. 9, 29 June 1943; AVII, 29/22-3, no. 86, Petition to Kulenović.
12. The members of Charshiya are somewhat similar to those of a 'Bazaar' in the Middle East.
13. Atif Purivatra, *Nacionalni i politicki razvitak Muslimana* (The Political and National Development of the Moslems) (Sarajevo: 'Svjetlost,' 1972), pp. 65–131.
14. The Moslems of contemporary Yugoslavia appear in the census under the name 'Muslimani.'
15. USNA, Modern Military Division, OSS 100813, Report OC-2321, 14 October 1944; PRO, FO 371/37618, Report, 9 November 1943; USNA, Diplomatic Branch, 860H.01/8-5444, Berry (Constantinople) to the Secretary of State, 5 August 1944.
16. MBA, RH 31 III/13, Memorandum Haefner, 11 November 1943, AVII, 26/4, K76, The Second Rifle Company to the Staff of the *Domobran*, Gospić, 5 November 1942.
17. In contrast to the Partisans of Tito, who were active under a Central Command and whose units came under the control of the military-political centre, the Chetniks disposed of a heterogenous and ramified movement, the name of Mihajlović as superior commander and the nickname 'Chetniks' unified them all. In reality, Mihajlović had only direct influence and command over an insignificant part of the force.
18. AVII, 14/4-1, K76, Report Mostar, 3 November 1942; K 260, F 35, d 2, GUS to the Croatian Foreign Office, 24 March 1943.
19. *Hrvatski List* (Osijek), 22 July 1941.
20. PA, Inland II g, no. 404, Telegram, Kasche to RAM, 24 March 1944; MBA, RH 31, III/11, Glaise to Himmler, 24 February 1943. L. Hory and M. Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat 1941–1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1964), pp. 156–160.
21. PA, Inland II g, no. 310, Report Dr Reichel, 3 June 1943; Inland II g, the German Legation, Zagreb, to the German Foreign Office, 9 June 1943.
22. 'Pobuna hrvatskih vojnika u francuskom gradu Villefrancka' (The Rebellion of the Croatian



Soldiers near the French City of Villefrance in 1943.) *Hrvatska Revija*, XVIII, 2 (70), (June 1969), pp. 249–250.

23. BA, NS neu-2255, Berger to Himmler, 19 April 1943, 'Aktion Grossmufti,' See also Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, *Nachlass Erler*, File no. 209, Krausnick to Erler, 12 March 1965.

24. Dr Menahem Shelah, Kibbutz Mishmar Ha-Emek, Israel, drew my attention to the memorandum which a group of Moslem personalities addressed to Hitler on 1 September 1942. In this memorandum Hitler was asked to separate Bosnia from Croatia in the spirit of Bosnian autonomy. Correspondence with the author, 31 May 1985.

25. AVII, 29/22-3, no. 86, petition Prnjavor to Kulenović, 12 October 1941; 45/3-3, K 190, Ulema Medjlis (Sarajevo) to Kulenović, 7 January 1942.

26. AVII, 30/2-1, n. 169, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to the District Sana and Luka, 30 August 1941.

27. AVII, 38/17, 1, 2, K 61a, the Command of Vojena Krajina to Kvaternik, Sarajevo, 4 December 1941; 2/23/6, Pro Memorija, 28 April 1944; Simić, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

28. AVII, 29/22/5, K 86, Munir Salimović-Ekremov to Džjaferbeg Kulenović, 16 December 1941.

29. AVII, 3318-1, K 213, Munir Salimović-Ekremov to Pavelić, Banja Luka, 28 June 1941.

30. AVII, 29/22-3, no. 86, Petition Prnjavor, 12 October 1941; Kimhi, *op. cit.*, pp. 228, 229, etc.

31. AVII, 29/22-3, no. 86, Petition Prnjavor, 12 October 1941.

32. *Donau Zeitung* (Belgrade), Xi, 223, 23 September 1942; PA, Inland I-D, 22/1, German Legation, Zagreb, to the German Foreign Office, September/October 1942.

33. PA, Inland I-D, German Legation in Zagreb to the German Foreign Office, 18 July 1944.

34. BA, SOEG, R63-102, Dr Lemr to SOEG, Vienna, 14 November 1941.

35. AVII, 30/2-1, no. 169.

36. Kimhi, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

37. AVII, 18/3-2, no. 215.

38. AVII, 18/3-4, no. 215.

39. AVII, 29/22-3, no. 86.

40. Simić, *op. cit.*, p. 81; Kimhi, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

41. Kimhi, *op. cit.*, p. 238; AVII, 41/5-8-10, K 239, Vice-consul Marcello Cavalletti, Sarajevo, to the Italian Legation, Zagreb, 21 August 1942.

42. AVII, 2/23-6, no. 86.

43. M. Busuladžić, *op. cit.*, pp. 73–76.

44. *Ibid.*

45. Y. Jelinek, 'Clergy and Fascism: The Hlinka Party in Slovakia and the Croatian Ustasha Movement', in Stein, Ugelvik, Larsen, *et al.*, eds., *Who Were the Fascists? Social Roots of European Fascism*. (Bergen-Oslo-Trømsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1980), pp. 367–378.

46. AVII, 30/2-1, no. 169.

47. The Jewish Museum, Belgrade, Yugoslavia (hereafter JM), Ref. 2698, K.22-2-215, Memoires of Srećko Bujas, p. 120.

48. Emphasis is laid on the fact that Croatian extreme Nationalists asserted that their nation was not of Slavic stock but of Gothic, i.e. German, Aryan descent. Others repeatedly denied the Slavic-racial-purity of the Serbs, who were described by the Croats as being a mixed lot from Balkan nomadic tribes, or simply as inferior Slavs, from a racial point of view.

49. This paper is based exclusively on written primary and related sources. Oral history has not been used.

50. Kimhi, *op. cit.*, p. 228, provides interesting details on the extent of Jewish property in Bosnia–Herzegovina in general, and in Sarajevo in particular.

51. AVII, 41/5-8-10, K 239, Vice-consul Marcello Cavaletti, Sarajevo, to the Croatian Legation, Zagreb, 21 August 1942, see also Kimhi, *op. cit.*, pp. 228–229.

52. M. Shelah, 'The extermination of Croatian Jewry by the Germans and their Allies during the Second World War,' Ph.D. dissertation (1980) Tel Aviv University, Volume I, pp. 77.

53. JM, Reg. 2698, K.22-2-215, Memoirs of Srećko Bujas, pp. 56, 74.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
55. AVII, 41/5-4, K 239, Report of the Italian Consul, 24 August 1942. Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, Israel, S25/10005, Report on the conditions of the Yugoslav Jewry, 31 July 1944.
56. AVII, 22/17-4, 5, K 16a, The Command of the Second *Domobran* Corps to the Staff, 6 December 1941.
57. AVII, 41/5-3, K 239, The Consul of Sarajevo, Alberto Calissa to the Italian Legation, Zagreb, 8 September 1942.
58. L. S. Stravrianos, *The Balkans since 1453* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1963), pp. 89–90.
59. Kimhi, *op. cit.* p. 245.
60. Y. Jelinek, 'The Extermination of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies in the Independent Croatian State,' *Yalkut Moreshet* 26 (November 1978) 66–67.
61. Y. Jelinek, 'Nationalities and Minorities in the Independent State of Croatia', *Nationalities Papers*, VIII, 2 (Fall 1980), 195–210.