

**CHARLES UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Institute of International Studies

Department of North American Studies

**Master's Thesis**

**2019**

**Nataša Heleta**

**CHARLES UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Institute of International Studies

Department of North American Studies

**War on Terrorism Through the Prism of the US:  
The Case Study of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Master's Thesis

Author: Nataša Heleta

Study programme: International Area Studies

Supervisor: PhDr. Ondřej Žíla, Ph.D.

Year of the defense: 2018/2019

## **Declaration**

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on

Nataša Heleta

## **Abstract**

The main goal of this paper is to examine the perceptions related to Bosnia and Herzegovina as a country that fosters terrorism. The concepts of radicalization, extremism and terrorism are examined as separate entities in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the confusion of these contexts is particularly harmful, prompting negative attitudes and conclusions. It includes a review of the origins of Jihad in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the 1992-1995 war and transformation into the Salafi Movement after it. Some theoretical concepts consider the popular perspective on the Salafi community, relations between the Salafi Community and the Islamic Community the responses of media who propagate both the valid and stereotypical information, the motivations that drive the Salafist community, but also the motives of Bosnia and Herzegovina's society for the exploitation of this community. Other focuses are the changes that take place after the September 11th terrorist attacks, and their effect on Bosnia and Herzegovina are discussed in the context of the fight against terrorism and the re-examination of the intentions of the Salafi communities. Finally, conclusions are drawn about the perception of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a terrorist threat. In addition, the relationship between the Salafi community and the violent extremism localized in Bosnia and Herzegovina is highlighted.

## **Keywords**

Terrorism, Salafism, Bosnia and Herzegovina, United States, Jihad, Bosnian Muslims, Collective responsibility, Radicalization.

## **Title**

War on Terrorism Through the Prism of the US: The Case Study of Bosnia and Herzegovina

## **Abstrakt**

Hlavním cílem této práce je prozkoumat, jak je Bosna a Hercegovina vnímána jako země, v níž se rozvíjí terorismus. Koncepty radikalizace, extrémismu a terorismu jsou zkoumány samostatně, neboť právě jejich záměna v kontextu Bosny a Hercegoviny může být matoucí. Práce zahrnuje zkoumání počátku Džihádu v Bosně a Hercegovině během války v letech 1992 – 1995 a jeho pozdější transformaci do hnutí Salafí. Některé teoretické koncepty považují popularity hnutí Salafí a vztahu mezi touto komunitou a islámskou obcí jako reakci na mediální obraz. Média často nezobrazují reálné motivace, které pohání komunitu Salafí, místo toho pouze prezentují stereotypy, které vedou k vykořisťování této komunity. Práce se také zabývá změnami, které přinesly teroristické útoky v New Yorku z 11. září 2001 a jejich dopad na boj proti terorismu v kontextu komunity Salafí. Výsledkem práce je posouzení, zda je Bosna a Hercegovina vnímána jako teroristická hrozba v kontextu vztahu mezi komunitou Salafí a násilným extrémismem v Bosně a Hercegovině.

## **Klíčová slova**

Terorismus, Salafismus, Bosna a Hercegovina, Spojené státy americké, Džihád, Bosňáci, Kolektivní vina, Radikalizace, Salafismus.

## **Název práce**

Válka proti terorismu z pohledu Spojených států: Případová studie Bosny and Herzegoviny

## **Acknowledgment**

I would like to express my gratitude to my sister, for endless support, unconditional love and for being always my anchor and wind, whenever I needed it.

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Preliminary Thoughts Towards Definition of Terrorism and its Causes .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1. Rhetorical Approaches to Terrorism Framing .....	10
1.1.1. Individual Pathology .....	10
1.1.2. Normal Psychology .....	10
1.1.3. War .....	12
<b>2. The Process of Radicalization: Pathways to Terrorism .....</b>	<b>13</b>
➤ “Individual Radicalization by Personal Victimization” .....	13
➤ “Individual Radicalization by Political Grievance” .....	14
➤ “Individual Radicalization in Joining a Radical Group—The Slippery Slope” .....	14
➤ “Individual Radicalization in Joining a Radical Group—The Power of Love” .....	14
➤ “Group Radicalization in Like-Minded Groups” .....	14
➤ “Group Radicalization Under Isolation and Threat” .....	15
➤ “Group Radicalization in Competition for the Same Base of Support” .....	15
➤ “Group Radicalization in Competition with State Power—Condensation” .....	15
➤ “Group Radicalization in Within-Group Competition—Fissioning” .....	15
➤ “Mass Radicalization in Conflict with an Outgroup—Jujitsu Politics” .....	16
➤ “Mass Radicalization in Conflict with an Outgroup—Hate” .....	16
➤ “Mass Radicalization in Conflict with an Outgroup—Martyrdom” .....	16
<b>3. Concept of Collective Responsibility, Identity and Terrorism .....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.2. Concept of Collective Guilt in the Context of Terrorism .....	24
<b>4. Observing Al-Qaeda: Differences Between Bush and Obama Administrations</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>THE CASE STUDY OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>5. The Occurrence of Jihad in Bosnia and Herzegovina .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>6. Salafism in Bosnia and Herzegovina .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>7. Para-Jamaats, Vision and Terroritorial Prevalence .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>8. Recruitment Process in Salafi Movement and Contribution Factors.....</b>	<b>47</b>
8.1. The Departure of the Bosnian Contingent on the Side of the Foreign Fighter .....	50

<b>9. The Perceptions of Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina Regarding the Salafi Movement .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>10. The Relationship of the Islamic Community to the Salafi Movement .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>11. Antagonism Between the Salafi Community and the Islamic Community.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>12. Is Bosnia and Herzegovina a Terrorist Threat?.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>13. State Security Reports of Bosnia and Herzegovina .....</b>	<b>73</b>
13.1. 2012.....	74
13.2. 2014.....	76
13.3. 2015.....	78
13.4. 2016.....	81
<b>14. Observations of Strategy for Prevention and Combating Terrorism.....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>15. United States Country Reports on Terrorism for 2016.....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>16. Bosnia and Herzegovina Travel Advisory: Exercise Increased Caution.....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>17. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>89</b>

## **Introduction**

The central aim of this thesis is to examine the source of terrorist motivation and their realization in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It examines the relationships between Islamic radicalism, extremism, and terrorism through the observation of the phenomenon of Islamic radicalism as a potential basis for the development of terrorism in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In discussing the phenomenon of radicalization, we abandon the often used interchangeable interpretation of extremism, radicalism, and terrorism concepts, instead defining them as separate ideas.

The analysis of the correlation between these concepts in the context of Bosnian society, especially within specific communities that are presented in a selective way, provides a review of narratives that represent Bosnia and Herzegovina as a potential terrorist threat on the regional and global level.

Since global awareness of terrorism has been revised as an aftermath of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, the presentation of the case study of Bosnia and Herzegovina represents a post September 11<sup>th</sup> perspective. Nevertheless, in order to avoid the reduction of the whole context, which has enormous significance within this issue, part of the work is dedicated to the war (1992-1995) and post-war period.

The reason for the selection of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a case study is partially subjective, due to my personal history and the ability to observe the fusion between reality versus stereotypes regarding the security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nevertheless, the conclusions reached in this work are based in objective observation to the highest possible degree.

The objective reasons for the choice of Bosnia and Herzegovina is to contribute to the scientific discourse in the field of security, especially to the context of radicalization, extremism, and terrorism. Also, this study can stand as a basis for future research and discussions on the topic of these phenomena. Along with providing the social context of Bosnia and Herzegovina and presenting the dual narratives through which these issues become propagated, this thesis offers insight into the subject of radicalization and terrorism. This insight provides the essence of each of these phenomena, but primarily offers a clarified, nuanced understanding of each subject.

The information provided by this research aims to fill some gaps in knowledge about the Bosnian population, the media, and involvement of authorities in this area, a gap that has resulted in in misguided perspectives and the standstill regarding terrorism prevention programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This thesis is based on qualitative research.<sup>1</sup> The methods of qualitative research that seek to answer the research question are content analysis, case analysis, and interviews.

The first section of this thesis describes and analyzes the filtration of the Jihad movement into Bosnian society.

The next section discusses the subsequent establishment of para-jamaats and Salafist communities and their territorial distribution and expansion within Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This section includes a description of the recruitment process into the Salafist community and further recruitment of members of the Selafi community to war zones.

The analysis of the relationship between the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Salafi Movement, provides insights into the problems of this relationship and the failure of resolution attempts that are aimed at resolving religious disagreements and the reduction of security threats in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In addition, the relationship between the selection into communities and beliefs is analyzed, and comparisons are made within the Islamic community, including through factors such as the relation to the principles of certain groups, and the self-reflection of the Islamic community, all through the context in both peaceful and conflict.

---

<sup>1</sup>Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively developed from a description of details to general themes, and the researcher interpreting the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation.

John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* 4th Edition, SAGE Publications, Inc; 4th edition, 2014.

Throughout the work, I analyze reports on the state of security created by the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2012,2014,2015,2016.

Also, a review of the American perspective is added, through the Country reports on terrorism, which extends the scope of the examination of the state of security in BiH regarding terrorism.

Research questions are:

- 1. Is Bosnia and Herzegovina validly perceived as a terrorist threat because of the existence of the Salafi Movement?*
  
- 2. Is the Salafist Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in its entirety, inclined to violent extremism?*

# **1. Preliminary Thoughts Towards Definition of Terrorism and its Causes**

“Terrorism has been practiced by the Right as well as by the Left, by atheists, agnostic, and religious millenarians, by Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and members of most other religions. It has taken place in rich countries and poor, under authoritarian regimes and democratic governments. Terrorists’ objectives range from Maoist revolution in Peru and Nepal to bringing about the apocalypse in Japan; from the destruction of capitalism in Europe to the destruction of the state of Israel; from the expulsion of U.S. influence from the Middle East to the return of the caliphate; from the expulsion of Russia from Chechnya and Britain from Northern Ireland to creating homelands for Kurs, Tamils, Sikhs, and Basques. Any attempt to reduce all of them to one simplified notion of terrorism will only cloud out understanding.”<sup>2</sup>

The causes of terrorism cannot be validated exclusively within certain religious groups, nations, or members of particular cultures. Whether we set the boundaries of a phenomenon that can be detected globally, through the various vertical and horizontal social, political and cultural dimensions, we deduce only a partial conclusion, which will contain a wholly reduced presumption, instead of the truth and complete facts. Throughout history, we have an insight that certain groups have committed terrorist acts more than others, yet their background is not always something that contains the seeds of terrorism. However, this seeds of terrorism were transmitted from different parts of the world, from one culture to another, from one religion to another, so in some way, the exchange of a terrorist seed, which was almost always present, is often in the hands of various owners with different backgrounds.

However, to understand what leads to the phenomenon of terrorism, it is essential to select factors that classify a particular act as a terrorist or not. Specific authors have tried to analyze whether it is possible to justify terrorism and under what conditions or any justification of the theorizing is not possible.

---

<sup>2</sup> McCauley, Clark. *The Psychology of Terrorism*. Brooklyn, NY: Social Science Research Council. 2011.p.11

Therefore, author Taylor Wikins cites that through the prism of psychology, certain social situations can lead to moral operability in the event of terrorism.

*“One thing that makes terrorism of interest philosophically is that it compels us to rethink from a somewhat different perspective the question of when, if ever, it is morally justifiable to do violence to another person.”*<sup>3</sup>

If we decide to analyze individual terrorist acts, to have an analytical balance and objectivity, it is necessary to look at both sides in either case.

However, we will explain these considerations in the continuation of the work, after we first understand what constitutes terrorism in the first place and what leads to the differentiation between terrorism and common crime.

McCauley says that it is vital that the causes of terrorism are visible within what he calls a deadly cocktail, which contains dysfunctions of the individual, community, or ideology. Areas of poverty or potential domination are not, in his opinion, a fertile territory where we find the calls of terrorism.

Nevertheless, in his work, he highlights seven facts that best define terrorism as what it is, concerning the act itself and the yield to other factors.

*“First, a terrorist act is politically inspired. If not, then it's simply a crime.”*<sup>4</sup>

If we start from the initial parameters of terrorism, then we always examine whether political aspirations drive a particular part. Achieving a political goal or from a terrorist perspective, a violent protest against political injustice is a terrorist drive.

*“Second, if an act does not involve violence or the threat of violence, it is not terrorism.”*<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Taylor Wikins, B. Terrorism, and Collective Responsibility (Points of Conflict). Hoboken: Taylor and Francis. 2003.  
p.4

<sup>4</sup> Ibid p.4

<sup>5</sup> Ibid p.5

As we just said, the word violence is inseparable from terrorism. Consensus and other types of peace agreements are unknown within terrorist ranks. All that seeks to achieve, terrorists achieve themselves through threats of violence or violence itself, as the author himself emphasizes.

*“Third, the point of terrorism is to defeat the enemy but to send a message.”<sup>6</sup>*

However, while maintaining a specific political aspiration, whose attainment is sought to be carried out by violence, terrorism does not only want to lead to the destruction of the opposite, enemy side or target list. The ejection of terrorist bombs usually denotes the echo of a particular message that they are trying to emphasize.

*“Fourth, the act and the victim usually have symbolic significance; Bin Laden referred to the Twin Towers as “icons” of America’s “military and economic power. The shock value of the act is enormously enhanced by the symbolism of the target. The whole point is for the psychological impact to be greater than the actual physical act.”<sup>7</sup>*

Though terrorist acts always cause specific physical damage, measured in categories of human lives, destroyed property, and so on, terrorists are still trying to occupy the psychological sphere of a particular target group. Determining the target of their attacks, they often opt for symbols of individual nations, cultures, or religions. By knocking out the epicenters of a particular society, they want to point out their power and accessibility to what usually every government considers as the most symbolic. In this way, in the very heart of individual nations, they want to point out their failures, while promoting a terrorist vacuum, as a space in which all external substances that could produce a particular effect will become eliminated.

*“Fifth - and this is a controversial point – terrorism is the act of substrate groups, not states. This is not to argue that states do not use terrorism as an instrument of foreign policy.”<sup>8</sup>*

Analyzing the main actors of terrorism, we must always state that they are certain groups. Terrorist acts can have an impact on other states, but usually, these works are the product of certain groups.

---

6 Ibid p. 5

7 Ibid p. 5

8 Ibid p.6

For this reason, most countries have anti-terrorist policies and preventive programs aimed at identifying primarily internal and external threats and working on their disinfection.

*“A sixth characteristic of terrorism is that the victim of the violence and the audience the terrorist are trying to reach are not the same. Victims are used as a means of altering the behavior of a larger audience, usually a government. Victims are chosen either at random or as representative of some larger group.”*<sup>9</sup>

Occupation of security within a defined territory, which usually evolves to human victims, contains a specific differentiation in itself. Victims of terrorism are generally in terrorist eyes, tools that they use to degrade or effect a particular political machine. Violent provocation is a method that terrorists use to achieve their goals. The choice of the victim often determines the final result, because by attacking specific individuals or groups, they try to commit terror to themselves, but part of the identity that they contain.

*“The final and most important defining characteristic of terrorism is the deliberate targeting of civilians. This is what sets terrorism apart from other forms of political violence, even the most proximate form, guerrilla warfare.”*<sup>10</sup>

Attacking civilians, terrorists attack the weakness career of each state. The ones that the state ought to take care of, which is why it builds security systems, whose lives and safety are priorities or should they be.

Pointing to the essential components of terrorism, we now have a particular insight into the diagnosis of the current infection, whose parasites are expanding globally. By entering into the various pores of society, these parasites create networks that destroy the fundamental axioms of human civilization. However, when we consider terrorism as the pathology of modern society, it is also necessary to differentiate the various forms in which it terrorist project it.

---

9 Ibid p.6

10 Ibid p.6

## **1.1. Rhetorical Approaches to Terrorism Framing**

### **1.1.1. Individual Pathology**

By perceiving terrorism as an individual pathology, the author McCauley states that thirty years ago, it was easy to adopt the idea that terrorists are crazy, suicidal, or only psychopaths, operating without any axiomatic principles. Today, taking into account various factors, for example, the same background of terrorists or people who are not, researchers have concluded that both groups contain a similar level from the aspect of psychopathology. Therefore, we can not reduce the terrorists by such categorization that only from the psychopaths will initiate the potential for becoming a terrorist.

*“Indeed terrorism would be a trivial problem if only those with some kind of psychopathology could be terrorists. Rather we have to face the fact that normal people can be terrorists, that we are ourselves capable of terrorist acts under some circumstances.”<sup>11</sup>*

Terrorists encode their true identities to be interconnected, and yet unrecognizable in the world of ordinary people. Masquerading their true identities, they succeed in integrating into different spheres of society, to create positions from which they have the accessibility to achieving their goals. By summarizing these facts, we understand the real complexity of terrorism and why it is difficult to scan the guilty parts of the social organism to eradicate it.

### **1.1.2. Normal Psychology**

One of the perspectives from which we can approach the phenomenon of terrorism is the observation of terrorism from the aspect of basic psychology. In the book *The Psychology of Terrorism*, author McCauley states when we simulate the notion of terrorism; then we conclude that terrorists share the reasons for murders, as the groups did for centuries.

---

<sup>11</sup> McCauley, Clark. *The Psychology of Terrorism*, Brooklyn, NY: Social Science Research Council. 2011.p.6

Since every average person is striving to adopt certain beliefs that are an upgrading their life, what differentiates terrorists from the others in the context of normal psychology and leads to the abnormal slope is the intensity of the group dynamics.

It also states that psychology recognizes two types of aggression, both emotional and instrumental. By aiming to achieve long-lasting effects on specific groups, we realize instrumental aggression in terrorists.

The author states that instrumental aggression is different from the emotional concerning a period of the consequences. Terrorist aspirations may have a combination of psychological and instrumental aggression, but the elements of the instrumental are consistent with what they are trying to achieve, which is a long-term benefit for themselves and a commitment to the enemy side.

Besides, the incineration of fear and uncertainty for the enemy side and the victims to whom this project is dedicated is their priority. Observing the massive budgets that stand out and spend on security programs are proof of their success for terrorists.

Also, the author states in his work the fact that we will further explain in more detail as follows, regarding the terrorist aspect of the Arabs and Muslims in the United States.

*"Rudeness, suspicion, and hostility directed toward Arabs and Muslims in the U.S. is good news for the terrorists."<sup>12</sup>*

The reaction of the American but also the vast European population and their governments to the Muslims or the Arabs is precisely what the terrorist goal was. Such treatment causes aggressive behavior in these groups or triggers the process of victimization, which terrorists want to embed in everyone.

---

<sup>12</sup> McCauley, Clark. *The Psychology of Terrorism*, 2011. Brooklyn, NY: Social Science Research Council. p.6

### 1.1.3.War

Since the 9/11 event, the term "War on Terrorism" has been used in the media, reports, and all other means of communication at the same time. The vocabulary transfer from criminal justice to the war has automatically occurred. McCauley, for this reason, states in his work what the consequences it has left to set precautions and a general understanding of its danger.

*"The shift to a rhetoric of war also signals the possibility of more extreme and expensive measures against terrorism. A more pro-active policy against terrorism is being called for. There are some unfortunate models of what this kind of policy might look like."*<sup>13</sup>

By declaring war, in this way, this phenomenon gets a different dimension. The responsibility is experiencing expansion, in that all citizens are responsible for leading this war and protecting their state. All those who oppose it or in some way support terrorism, are considered to be the enemy side of this war. The author, in the continuation of his work, also states that terrorists want to achieve their perspectives and goals within Muslim societies. They want everyone to watch the U.S. as an enemy who has degraded Muslims since WWII and do not want to be responsible for what they do as individuals, but exclusively as representatives of all Muslims.

Summing up all the above mentioned, we realized that various factors define terrorism. We also analyzed psychological spheres through which it can be filtered to understand the phenomenon itself better. By combining theoretical considerations of terrorism with realities, we tried in this part of the paper to make an introduction to what we will further explain. The main goal of this part of the work was to create a specific sequence that will survive throughout the work as a thread that will remind us of what terrorism actually is and in what way we can critically analyze and differentiate everything that terrorism is or is not.

---

<sup>13</sup> McCauley, Clark. *The Psychology of Terrorism*. Brooklyn, NY: Social Science Research Council. 2011.

## 2. The Process of Radicalization: Pathways to Terrorism

The book *Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism. Terrorism and Political Violence*, signed by the authors Clark and Moskaleiko, allows us to learn and analyze the mechanisms of radicalization that are important for the genesis of terrorism. Considering the conditions or reasons why individuals, groups or countries are transporting their peaceful solution to the problem or taking a stand, into violence and conflict or war itself, we will try to analyze events related to 9/11.

The authors, as the initial thought of the occupation of their work, are mentioning the "focus on the common usage in which radicalization refers to the increasing extremity of non-state challenges to the state authority. We aim to show, however, how state action can contribute to the radicalization of non-state groups."<sup>14</sup>

We can find out the dual relationship between state and non-state actors and how countries drive a radicalization to non-state actors, and how these actors influence state authorities. Through the triple prism of radicalization, individual, group, and mass, we will explain in the article below how radicalization has been formed and projected.

➤ *“Individual Radicalization by Personal Victimization”*<sup>15</sup>

The author states that through this form of radicalization, it is possible to explain why terrorist commit suicide. Setting up in the role of the victim, doing everything they need to achieve their goal, and putting their own lives as a stake, does not pose a problem for them.

---

<sup>14</sup> McCauley, Clark, and Moskaleiko, Sophia. (2008). *Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism. Terrorism and Political Violence*, 20 (3), 415 - 433.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

➤ *“Individual Radicalization by Political Grievance”*<sup>16</sup>

Sometimes individuals make invidious radical action or violence in response to political events. Although this kind of sight is rare, it is still one way of showing radicalization in the context of terrorism. The author states that most of this category of radicalization is the apparent type of psychopathology. We usually testify to group reactions to specific political movements, but it doesn't exclude the fact that individuals advocate for all groups.

➤ *“Individual Radicalization in Joining a Radical Group—The Slippery Slope”*<sup>17</sup>

The process of preparation for one individual usually doesn't occur abruptly, but gradually, to build confidence which is necessary for the terrorist to handle specific missions, especially those that contain risk or violence in themselves. Sometimes this kind of self-radicalization appears suddenly, but for this, however, there are usually extreme reasons that convert the person's behavior or the need of the group in that intensity.

➤ *“Individual Radicalization in Joining a Radical Group—The Power of Love”*<sup>18</sup>

There are always specific personal connections between terrorists and invaders who decide to join terrorist groups. For this reason, the choice they make is from known circles or circles of trust.

➤ *“Group Radicalization in Like-Minded Groups”*<sup>19</sup>

Bonding a terrorist group and individual requires a specific approach. For this reason, in the process of discussing a particular topic for which both parties have an interest, their axiomatic norms need to be in the same diapason, as this usually creates extreme opinions leading to radicalization.

---

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

➤ *“Group Radicalization Under Isolation and Threat”*<sup>20</sup>

The cohesion that occurs in conditions of isolation or threat has an intense/extreme character. By dividing isolation as a space of unlimited possibilities, a high level of radicalization potentially occurs within the group. The author states that this kind of connection leads to a symbiosis, which is comparable to the one between the siblings. Relying on each other, they make everything to create mutual trust, which is visible through this group cohesion.

➤ *“Group Radicalization in Competition for the Same Base of Support”*<sup>21</sup>

Although group radicalization is the basis of the theorist group, however, there must be a certain balance in the level of this radicalization. Although there is a tendency for centralized thinking, it can, however, happen that a particular group concentrates in itself radical components, which then lead to the loss of their base.

➤ *“Group Radicalization in Competition with State Power—Condensation”*<sup>22</sup>

Group radicalization usually ends in conflict with state power. Therefore, police forces are often the ones that are involved in the relationship between these groups and the state. Especially in that case, when the groups do not have a large percentage of public support, they tend to reckon public attention to gather new members and then become even more problematic in the eyes of the state.

➤ *“Group Radicalization in Within-Group Competition—Fissioning”*<sup>23</sup>

Group radicalization, as we have already stated, must contain an inevitable centralization of thinking and general cohesion within itself. In the case, when there is an uncontrolled diversion of

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

misconduct, then the divergence of the members of this group arises, which then usually decompose into smaller groups.

➤ “*Mass Radicalization in Conflict with an Outgroup—Jujitsu Politics*”<sup>24</sup>

To create radicalization within terrorist groups, it primarily requires their internal connection, so that the terrorist machinery has all the parts in operation. Dependent on each other, all parts of a terrorist group, more precisely, members must have concerted activities. However, mass radicalization is something that is needed to provide additional support for their actions and increase the level of terrorist credibility itself. Therefore, although terrorists can do a lot of things themselves, they still need to involve their supporters in some instances and use their capacity to achieve goals. In this way, the advantages of the enemy become assessed, and they are just trying to use them to weaken the enemy side.

➤ “*Mass Radicalization in Conflict with an Outgroup—Hate*”<sup>25</sup>

The scale between positive and negative emotions varies concerning what is happening to the enemy group. If positive things happen, the feelings of terrorists are negative - usually filled with hatred. When an enemy group faces some difficulty or defeat, then it is the reason for the celebration of terrorist groups. When terrorists opt for specific attacks against the enemy side, in the case of strong impulses, they do not make a selection about age, sex, or any other civil status. For them, all enemies are a target list, and there is no differentiation.

➤ “*Mass Radicalization in Conflict with an Outgroup—Martyrdom*”<sup>26</sup>

As the last form of radicalization, in this case, mass radicalization is recognized by martyrdom, which represents the sacrifice of one's life for a specific personal interest or advantage.

After we have briefly presented all the forms of radicalization that become synonymous with the establishment of terrorist groups, the author states in the end that it is crucial that we understand these groups to understand the phenomenon of terrorism itself.

---

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

In this case, understanding is a priority, so that we can talk about the first steps. It does not only mean an understanding of any support or acceptance.

“The degree to which radicalization of non-state groups occurs in response to the actions of others must be the starting point for understanding these groups. Political radicalization of individuals, groups, and mass publics occurs in a trajectory of action and reaction in which state action often plays a significant role. Radicalization emerges in a relationship of intergroup competition and conflict in which both sides are radicalized. It is this relationship that must be understood if radicalization is to be kept short of terrorism.”<sup>27</sup>

However, regardless of how useful these definitions may be, they exist only on the theoretical level until they are applied to a case. In this case, we observe the process of radicalization in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and strive to create distinct definitions for radicalization, extremism and terrorism.

In his work, author Bećirević emphasizes these differences and their independent qualities by referring to certain authors. “Searching for the best way to conceptually distinguish between the terms “radicalization” and “extremism” (often used interchangeably) and “violent extremism” and “terrorism” (also often used interchangeably) is a tedious exercise. One of the most quoted definitions of radicalization was offered by Peter Neumann, Director of the International Center for the Study of Radicalization, who referred to it as “what goes on before the bomb goes off.”<sup>45</sup> However, radicalization does not always imply violence. Most people who hold radical or extremist views are never personally involved in committing acts of violence, even if they may justify such acts or excuse those who commit them.”<sup>28</sup>

The next section is devoted to the observation and analysis of the Salafi Movement, which proposes a radical interpretation of Islam.

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Edina Bećirević, *Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims*, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. p.35

This section is crucial in establishing the connection between the radicalism contained in the movement and the potential for extremism or terrorist aspirations.

What is even more important is to make a distinction between the extremist ambitions of certain individuals within that Movement versus extremism as something with which the entire movement is connected.

In order to establish that there is still a distinction between radicalism and extremism / terrorism, we call on Azinović, who points out:

“It has been well documented that many cases of radicalization in the region, especially of younger individuals, have been initially motivated by the desire to meet immediate psychosocial needs, rather than by adherence to extremist or violent ideologies. The dynamics of extremist groups are such that they offer disenfranchised youth a sense of belonging, inclusion, equality, dignity, and purpose, and often fill psychosocial gaps left open in their previous lives. Indeed, in an alarming number of cases, individuals who join these groups come from broken families where they were exposed at a young age to some combination of neglect, domestic violence, and various forms of addiction on the part of a parent, most frequently their father. These types of childhood experiences, particularly in people who suffer from mental disorders, can make them more susceptible to seduction by “a simplified structure and low complexity of thinking,” such as that demonstrated in the discourse of extremism.”<sup>29</sup>

The transition of communities from traditional, yet non-radical communities to radical communities can take place in a number of ways. Azinović emphasizes that the transition is the most critical part of the process, a psychological separation from the family and previous life into a new type of ideological existence.

---

<sup>29</sup> Vlado Azinović, *Between Salvation and Terror: Radicalization and the Foreign Fighter Phenomenon in the Western Balkans*, Sarajevo, 2017. p.13

### 3. Concept of Collective Responsibility, Identity and Terrorism

Exchanging perspectives related to the perception of terrorist attacks of 9/11 were enormous. However, most of the points, although starting from different points, ended up in one conclusion center. Summing up the assumption that Muslims are in the US, but also around the world, those who should apologize for terrorist attacks and take responsibility. The expectations of such action were pre-eradicated by past events in the context of terrorism, and any criticism was unwelcome. Nevertheless, while not eliminating the voice of Muslims, especially in the United States, for this unique purpose, to utter words of indulgence and apologies, they left open space for an explanation of what did happen. Although their words did not have a significant echo in the socio-political spheres, some of them managed to break through the margins of collective guilt. One such example is Ebrahim Moosa, and in this part of the paper, we will consider his views on this issue. He made a parallel between the expectations of Muslim apology and the concept of collective guilt or responsibility. For this reason, he states:

“Post 9/11 many people asked Muslims to apologize for 9/11. I adamantly refused. To apologize, I said to myself, was to accept responsibility and accept collective guilt for something I did not do, nor what the majority of Muslims did. So I still refuse to accept responsibility for a crime I did not commit. And despite the crazy and vile deeds of a vocal minority of craven Muslims either rejoicing, or worse, denying 9/11 ever happened, the majority of Muslims do not condone terrorism.”<sup>30</sup> With this statement, Moosa does not want to deny what happened, but only selects the culprits. The generalization leads to prejudices that have justified crimes through history and irreversibly inflict damages. That is why, in the continuation of his statements, Moos emphasizes that we can reconstruct the event and determine whether there are specific connections.

---

<sup>30</sup> Moosa, Ebrahim. Muslim Apology? Nicolas Kristof's Column. (September 19, 2010). Available at: <https://ebrahimmoosa.com/2010/09/19/muslim-apology-nicholas-kristof-s-column/>. Accessed at May 10, 2019.

“But I did realize something: I need to apologize to my fellow Americans and all victims of terror who suffered for harm committed in the name of Islam. I have to do so unconditionally, irrespective of creed, ethnicity or citizenship for the terror committed in the name of my faith, my deity, my Prophet and my community. I also make this apology to Muslim victims of terror.”<sup>31</sup>

In this way, in only one statement, Moosa points out a significant factor in the analysis of terrorism and collective responsibility. Addressing his apology to Muslims who are also victims of terrorism, we can even consider the double terror they have experienced. On the one hand, there are Muslim communities or members who were also victims of terrorist attacks.

On the other hand, the existence of Muslims after 9/11 in the US and Europe has been exposed to scans of each step. Precisely because of the concept of collective responsibility, the burden of the entire event fell on them. After terrorist attacks, due to belonging to their religious group, all those under the religious velvet of Islam were covered with a new veil of guilt.as

Remarkably, the author Bozan in his book from 2009, analyzes the relation between terrorism and collective responsibility. Incorporation of collective responsibility in the context of terrorism is one of the topics that are often mentioned in reality; however, in the theoretical sphere of research, this correlation is not sufficiently explored and theoretically suppressed.

“According to the morality of collective identity, the members of some oppressor or enemy group are guilty purely by virtue of membership of their national, racial, ethnic or religious group.

...All Americans are guilty of oppressing Muslims simply by virtue of being American citizens according to some extremist Al-Qaeda pronouncements.”<sup>32</sup>

Analyzing the perspective of members of terrorist organizations, which comes down to the attack on US society, and not on specific individuals, is a two-way road in condemning the entire nation, religious group, etc., which, due to their belonging, are in a certain way situated in the range of that blame.

---

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Boylan, M. Terrorism and Collective Responsibility. In Blackwell Public Philosophy (pp. 60-82). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing 2009. p.61

Let's say this is a two-way road because, on the one hand, we have members of Al-Qaeda who set attacks without selective targets. On the other hand, we have American citizens or political groups, whose convictions also do not have a target group, but they have covered the entire Muslim community through their exchanges.

“The morality of collective identity determines the moral guilt of a person not by the actions that he or she as an individual chooses to do or not do, but by virtue of his or her membership of some racial, ethnic or national group.

...

As such, the morality of collective identity elevates the category of membership of racial, ethnic and national groups above the category of individual human moral agency when it comes to the ascription of moral responsibility; a person is a wrongdoer – and thus liable to lethal attack by the way of response – not by virtue of what he or she as an individual has deliberately done, but rather by virtue of (more or less) unchosen aspects of his or her collective identity.”<sup>33</sup>

The degradation of individuality over collective guilt, which in many cases is merely an assignment concerning actions, leads to the discrimination of one's identity relative to the other. That is why, in the next part of this paper, we will analyze more Muslim treatment in the United States after 9/11.

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. p.61

### **3.1. The Pursuit of Truth About American Muslims**

One year after 9/11, Haynes writes an article that features the rhetorical name What is the Truth About American Muslims.

It states that anti-Muslim movements in the United States led to an aversion to Shariah laws. As a result, these movements led to the creation of anti-Shariah laws in almost half of the states and also supported anti-mosque protests. The author states that it is essential to stop the violence that comes from this group, but it also has to end with violence that is being unfairly committed against American Muslims.

“At a time when the world is threatened by extremists committing violence in the name of Islam, the American people have every reason to be worried about the dangers of terrorism at home and abroad. The vast majority of American Muslims strongly share that concern. That’s why so many imams in the United States preach and work against extremism and why many American Muslims actively help law enforcement foil terrorist plots.”<sup>34</sup>

Although terrorists are calling for Islam in carrying out their attacks, there is still a huge number of Muslims condemning their religion being abused in this way. Terrorists thus make their deeds linked to all Muslims, concealing their crimes behind a religious paravan. However, this all leads to tremendous consequences. Instead of invidious responsibility and guilt directed at those who have committed attacks, society begins to blame with caution to observe the entire Muslim community.

However, the way most can contribute to the prevention of this problem is when members of American Muslims join the fight against terrorism. It is precise because of this that the author states that this is a way to find a resolution, because if we have a practice in which the American Muslims generally take part in the fight against terrorism, then terrorists are amputated the possibility of hiding behind religious curtains.

---

<sup>34</sup> Charles C. Haynes , First Amendment Center and Interfaith Alliance. What is the Truth About American Muslims? Questions and Answers. Washington, DC: Religious Freedom Education Project. 2012.

The author also states that huge budgets were spent on various campaigns that sought to hypnotize the public with statements that American Muslims practice violence, which is undermined by the constitution itself.

“It’s time for voices of reason to counter dangerous and often vicious propaganda with balanced and accurate information about American Muslims.”<sup>35</sup>

It is immeasurable to remove terrorist calls from American society, but action must be directed in the right direction. The source of the information must be valid, and any error in the selection of them can have massive sequences. Religious Freedom is something that is guaranteed by the Constitution and therefore can not deny anyone the right to practice a particular religion, solely because certain groups have used religious labels and committed crimes under the brand of that religion.

All of this initiates a crucial need, which is to bring facts and truth about the American Muslims. To search for the culprits within certain terrorist attacks, we can not perform in an experimental way, but we need expertise in the area. We can not use a random sample method within a single religion to find out who is actually to blame. Generalizations are in this case, only something that fits all members of one religion, culture or group of their rights, and yet does not enclose one state against terrorists and those who are trying to use violence in achieving their goals.

---

<sup>35</sup> *Charles C. Haynes*, First Amendment Center and Interfaith Alliance. *What is the Truth About American Muslims? Questions and Answers*. Washington, DC: Religious Freedom Education Project.2012.

### **3.2. Concept of Collective Guilt in the Context of Terrorism**

Exchanging perspectives related to the perception of terrorist attacks of 9/11 were enormous. However, most of the points, although starting from different points, ended up in one conclusion center. Summing up the assumption that Muslims are in the US, but also around the world, those who should apologize for terrorist attacks and take responsibility. The expectations of such action were pre-eradicated by past events in the context of terrorism, and any criticism was unwelcome. Nevertheless, while not eliminating the voice of Muslims, especially in the United States, for this unique purpose, to utter words of indulgence and apologies, they left open an explanation for what happened. Although their words did not have a significant echo in the socio-political spheres, some managed to break through the margins of collective guilt.

One such example is Embrahim Moos, and in this part of the paper, we will consider his views on this issue. He made a parallel between the expectations of Muslim apology and the concept of collective guilt or responsibility. For this reason, he states:

“Post 9/11 many people asked Muslims to apologize for 9/11. I adamantly refused. To apologize, I said to myself, was to accept responsibility and accept collective guilt for something I did not do, nor what the majority of Muslims did. So I still refuse to accept responsibility for a crime I did not commit. And despite the crazy and vile deeds of a vocal minority of craven Muslims either rejoicing or worse, denying 9/11 ever happened, the majority of Muslims do not condone terrorism.”<sup>36</sup>

With this statement, Moosa does not want to deny what happened, but only selects the culprits. The generalization leads to prejudices that have justified crimes through history and irreversibly inflict damages.

That is why, in the continuation of his statements, Moos emphasizes that we can reconstruct the event and determine whether there are individual connections and how they are established.

---

<sup>36</sup>Moosa, Ebrahim. Muslim Apology? Nicolas Kristof's Column. (September 19, 2010). Available at: <https://ebrahimmoosa.com/2010/09/19/muslim-apology-nicholas-kristof's-column/>

"But I did realize something: I need to apologize to my fellow Americans and all victims of terror who suffered for harm committed in the name of Islam. I have to do so unconditionally, irrespective of creed, ethnicity, or citizenship for the terror committed in the name of my faith, my deity, my Prophet, and my community. I also make this apology to Muslim victims of terror."<sup>37</sup>

In this way, in only one statement, Moosa points out a significant factor in the analysis of terrorism and collective responsibility. Addressing his apology to Muslims who are also victims of terrorism, we can even consider the double terror they have experienced. On the one hand, there are Muslim communities or members who were also victims of terrorist attacks. On the other hand, the existence of Muslims after 9/11 in the US and Europe was subjected to scans of each step. Precisely because of the concept of collective responsibility, the burden of the entire event fell on them. After terrorist attacks, due to belonging to their religious group, all those under the religious velvet of Islam were covered with a new veil of guilt.

In an excellent way, author Bozan in his 2009 book analyzes terrorism and collective responsibility. Incorporation of collective responsibility in the context of terrorism is one of the topics that are very topical in reality, but they were not so terribly considered about them.

“According to the morality of collective identity, the members of some oppressor or enemy group are guilty purely by virtue of membership of their national, racial, ethnic or religious group.

...All Americans are guilty of oppressing Muslims simply by virtue of being American citizens according to some extremist Al-Qaeda pronouncements.”<sup>38</sup>

Analyzing the perspective of members of terrorist organizations, which comes down to the attack on US citizens, and not on specific individuals, is a two-way road in condemning the entire nation, religious group, etc., which, due to their belonging, are in a certain way situated in the range of those blame.

---

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Boylan, M. Terrorism and Collective Responsibility. In Blackwell Public Philosophy (pp. 60-82). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing. 2009. p.61

Let's say this is a two-way road because, on the one hand, we have members of Al-Qaeda who carry out attacks without selective targets. On the other hand, we have American citizens or political groups, whose convictions also do not have a target group, but they have covered the entire Muslim community through their exchanges.

“The morality of collective identity determines the moral guilt of a person not by the actions that he or she as an individual chooses to do or not do, but by virtue of his or her membership of some racial, ethnic or national group.

...

As such, the morality of collective identity elevates the category of membership of racial, ethnic and national groups above the category of individual human moral agency when it comes to the ascription of moral responsibility; a person is a wrongdoer – and thus liable to lethal attack by the way of response – not by virtue of what he or she as an individual has deliberately done, but rather by virtue of (more or less) unchosen aspects of his or her collective identity.”<sup>39</sup>

The degradation of individuality over collective belonging, which in many cases is merely an assignment, and not selected, in relation to actions, which are always part of our selection rather than an assignment, leads to discrimination of one's identity relative to the other. That is why, in the next part of this paper, we will analyze more Muslim treatment in the United States after 9/11.

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. p.61

#### **4. Observing Al-Qaeda: Differences Between Bush and Obama Administrations**

Author Gerges Fawaz, in his book 'The Rise and Fall of AL Qaeda' stated that the Al Qaida question was an instrument for Western politicians to enhance their careers. As long as the threat existed, a possibility for them to grow politically, to influence and have input on foreign and security policies was there. Ironically, the terrorist threat made them relevant, a powerful job and new career opportunities.

A considerable amount of all discussions were focused on differences between the Bush administration's and Obama administrations' approach to 9/11. While the Bush administration emphasized ideological perception in relation to Al Qaeda, always promoting the state of War on Terror, Obama focused more on adopting the term "a new strategic approach." In this way, the Americans had more confidence and faith that the administration will do everything to reduce this threat. The National Security Agency collection center was swamped with emails and calls, averaging 1.7 billion per day.

Western agencies were hoping the Al Qaeda's internal issues with leadership crisis will destroy it internally, and it will crash at the end. Stressing the fact, most of the Muslim countries' perception of the 9/11 was not feeling of victory since most of them were fighting terrorism for years.

That generalization, the idea that the Muslim countries were celebrating 11<sup>th</sup> of September as a day of the victory, made all Muslim countries perceived as enemies and the overall threat to the Western world. Muslim countries were facing two enemies, constant internal conflict with terrorists and the rest of the world on the other side, seeing them as opponents to democracy and criminals. The author stresses that antagonism between Arab Muslims and the USA and that the animosity is based on the mistreatment of millions of Arabs and Muslims after 9/11 under the excuse they do not acknowledge the universal values.

Obama's speech to the graduation class of 2010 at the United States Military Academy at West Point, gave back the faith and enhanced the solidarity towards the Arab world.

One of the more memorable parts of the speech discredited the idea that terrorist has a nation, color or religion:

“Al Qaeda and its affiliates are small men on the wrong side of history. They lead no nation. They lead no religion. We need not give in to fear every time a terrorist tries to scare us. We should not discard our freedoms because extremists try to exploit them.”<sup>40</sup>

Although Obama in his speech, portrayed the Al Qaeda as a 'small man' author stresses the fact those 'small man' drastically changed the course of USA's and worlds history. By destroying the World Trade Center, a general impression is they crashed the system, managing to destroy the pillars America was built on. In comparison, during the Cold War, the Great Soviet Union was not able to achieve what those 'small man' carried out. Autor also states that they achieved most of their aims, even during so-called 'benevolent' emphasizing the fact Al Qaeda was created only five years before the attack on the USA. And not only they got to attack the biggest nation of the world, democracy, and temples of capitalism they accomplished to polarized American society.

Images of the Twin Towers ruined were everywhere the symbol of the terrorist's attempts to break down the democracy. On the other hand, organizations understood that defending freedom will take more than usual democratic methods, especially after the attacks on the USA and Iraq, to save democracy and to potentially win the war against terrorism.

The agenda of these new antiterrorist groups, created as a reaction to 9/11 attacks, was to fight the terrorist threat in any way possible and any method possible.

Just the idea of it was absurd, democracy was the only way and if we use any other method will that make us any different than terrorists?

The same story that happened in America after the 9/11 when hatred toward Muslims was almost by default, same as anti-American ideas and the anti-American sentiment was generally accepted in Muslim countries.

Muslim Countries tried to protect themselves from being labeled as terrorists, expressing the values of Islam as a benevolent and peace-loving religion, separating the religion from terrorism.

---

<sup>40</sup> Gerges, Fawaz A. The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda, Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2011. p.23

Terrorist organizations gained more members, ironically selling them the same story to protect original Islamic values before the western world diminishes them ultimately. The sad fact is that all the anti-terroristic efforts had the complete opposite effect, instead of lowering the numbers of terrorists, it created even more people wanting to protect the world they lived in or protect Islam and its values from the Westernization.

The Al Qaida expected all Muslim countries to see them as the savior of all Muslims, but that never happened. Even though more and more Muslims agree with the idea that Islam is under the attack by the whole Western world, they still don't give a free card to Al Qaeda to continue attacks similar to 9/11. The need of the Muslim countries to protect their values and their world under the threat of the western forces and in general is understandable, but still for many reasons Al Qaeda never got to have hearts and minds of the Muslims.

The war on terrorism is complicated, the complexity of it depends on many factors, but first, we need to define what is security and change our perspective and definition of security in general. The author Fawaz suggests that the idea of absolute safety nowadays is absurd, and using just one method will not clean the world from the terrorists and terrorism, and for sure, it will not happen instantly. The war on terrorism needs long term strategy starting with the change in people minds and by creating new mental consciousness and opposite rhetoric focused on spending money where it will count, the most, saving human lives.

Georges Fawaz underlines that it is impossible to fight terrorism with guns, military forces or any fast solution because history showed it usually backfires in the even more massive terrorist attack, never less always more.

USA intentions to combat terrorism throughout the invasions are transparent, but by now it's easy to conclude that with every new action they implement, stray from the values they try to protect so badly. And all negative consequences of the Iraq and Afghanistan invasions, author Fawaz states that there is a possible connection between an external enemy and suicide terrorism basing it on the case it never happened before the USA invasion on Iraq.

All these experiences stress that implementation of the whole process of democracy should be executed carefully valuing the culture and using methods that will give results.

The copy-paste democracy to Muslim World will not work, and the process of adaptation is crucial for the success of the project. By creating a climate that is adaptable and willing to accept new ideas and values that will be the right atmosphere to carry out democracy and its purposes.

The main goal after 9/11 was arresting all famous Al Qaeda members. This war on Al Qaeda quickly metastasized in the generalized War on Terror. Various programs and the Patriot Act have been created to achieve these goals. However, these anti-terrorist laws encompassed much more than Al Qaeda defeats. Their goal was the erosion of all terrorist organizations, from Hamas to Turkish Kurds to pro-democracy activists in Iran, unlike the erosion of democracy they contributed.

Herman Susan refers to historian Geoffrey Stone and by stating this emphasis, represents and bring back the mind of the past that Americans had. Stresses that extreme reactions during times of war or crises often repeat and that there is always an overwhelming reverence for the was done. It is mainly what Obama accentuated by stating that terrorism is a tactic. We are facing the obstacles from completing a metaphorical war, by the same methods as was fought during other wars. There is no peace agreement, which can provide a peaceful solution in such situations. Because the enemy, in this case, can never be strictly identified and centralized but decentralized through different organizations and memberships.

Author Herman Susan repeatedly quotes "*Roya's case*," a migrant girl from the US, who serves as an example to underscore the fact that this was not just a war on Al Qaeda and related anti-American groups, but something more extensive than that.

"When I came to the United States," Roya says, "I thought, I will be the voice of those who cannot have their voices heard. But for the past ten years I have been silenced."<sup>41</sup> It remains to be seen whether the metaphorical American" prison "she describes will become an actual prison. Given these statements, we can wonder whether the War on Terror spanned the entire world?

It is possible that Americans believe if everyone can be the target as a terrorist, then a goal must be to increase security.

---

<sup>41</sup> Herman, Susan. *Taking liberties the war on terror and the erosion of American democracy*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, USA. 2011.

For the Bush administration, the due process has been misleading to defeat terrorism. Al Qaeda, as an external organization, was named the enemy in this war. That is why the administration agreed that those who in any way support Al Qaeda should also be treated as an enemy and should be stripped of any constitutional rights, same as Al Qaeda.

However, this attitude only led to inclusion. Without some fair process, it was not even possible to know whether someone supports Al Qaeda and does not deserve constitutional rights, or not. In this case, there were no innocents until proven otherwise. The legal process was not one of the possibilities in many cases. Tagging a terrorist has become a phenomenon based on mere assumptions created a relation between the victim and the aggressor.

The victimization of all Americans, the anti-Muslims, in this case, left room for terrorists to walk freely on the streets. While on the other hand, tagging all Muslim-Americans or Muslims as a terrorist, took away all the options for a fair trial.

However, the argument the government used, they based on the mosaic theory. The essence of this theory was that no reduction should be allowed when it comes to the possibility of accumulating information that might be of some significance. For this reason, the assumptions were justified and enough to reach conclusions.

Anyone who could be, in any way, associated with terrorist organizations, even based on racial or religious origin, should have been treated as a potential terrorist for stringent scrutiny. With these procedures, the entire American democracy turned into a labile mosaic, where certain parts disappeared, and only the outline of all rights guaranteed was left.

# THE CASE STUDY OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

## 5. The Occurrence of Jihad in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Two different narratives regarding the Muslim population in Bosnia and Herzegovina emerge in current discussions. The differences between these narratives and the relationship between them is discussed in the following section.

Specifically, this part of the thesis addresses some of the reasons that motivated the arrival of Jihad members to Bosnia and Herzegovina during the 1992-1995 war and the reactions of the Muslim population to this phenomenon. Given that the effects of the Jihad movement continue to be felt through occurrences of terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is important that we understand its genesis and the ways in which this movement has been absorbed into the Bosnian-Herzegovinian context.

In his analysis of the reasons for the arrival of foreign mujahideen during the war, Azinović points out that the motivation for choosing Bosnia and Herzegovina as the destination was not solely based on religion. If religion was the only factor, the mujahideen would seek to contribute exclusively to the defense of the Muslim populations and their Islamic principles without pursuing their own personal interests, which is reflected in the attempts to influence the traditional Islamic principles of BiH.

The assessment of how many mujahideen arrived in BiH during the war remains controversial, as we learn through Radio Free Europe from the interview with Esad Hećimović, “Chapter V - Foreign Mujahedins and the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina”<sup>42</sup>. Hecimović maintains that the estimates differ depending on the sources. For example, domestic sources point out that there were about 3,000 members. At the same time, Hecimović says that the criteria for data collection are not standardized and can also vary between local authorities, who may or may not have access to list

---

<sup>42</sup> Radio Slobodna Evropa, Strani mudžahedini i Armija Bosne i Hercegovine, Available at: [https://docs.rferl.org/sh-SH/specials/al\\_kaida/05\\_strani\\_mudzahedini\\_i\\_armija\\_bosne\\_i\\_hercegovine.htm?fbclid=IwAR1Lt05OnqOov89oQCZRMwvT6IOkiVcUIwn--On\\_Us71WAYA\\_2Zufx8z-nA](https://docs.rferl.org/sh-SH/specials/al_kaida/05_strani_mudzahedini_i_armija_bosne_i_hercegovine.htm?fbclid=IwAR1Lt05OnqOov89oQCZRMwvT6IOkiVcUIwn--On_Us71WAYA_2Zufx8z-nA)

of the El Mujahid military unit, which indicates about 400 people, in any case. However, these official sources are also incomplete as many mujahideen conceal their identities.

In documentary series "Selefis, Episode 1: Context", Vlado Azinović also points out that "the questions of to what extent they came of their own free will, how much help they received and encouragement they received, how many weapons were delivered or how much money was moved because these people entered...these are issues that it seems to me, neither at the academic level nor at this police information level, are still not yet fully resolved."<sup>43</sup> However, after they arrived at the destination of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Herzegovina, Azinović points out that "the establishment of the El-Mujahid Detachment, on 13 August 1993, was ordered by the Commander of the Main Staff of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rasim Delić. The order states that the detachment should be formed "immediately, and by August 31st at the latest."<sup>44</sup> This is the beginning of a close connection during the war between members of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Mujahideen movement.

"In Bosnia and Herzegovina, it was the religious fanatics who mainly participated in the fighting. Many of them were members of terrorist organizations, such as Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, Hamas, and Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya. A significant number of 'Warriors of Allah' remained on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina after the end of the civil war, thus contributing to the development of the terrorist network connected with the radical factions of Islam."<sup>45</sup>

Using the data derived from the Defense Foreign Policy Strategic Policy, Gibas-Krzak states that the Mujahideen came to the Balkans "from different Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Turkey, Algeria, Afghanistan, Egypt, Sudan, Iran and Syria.

In addition to the concealment of mujahideen identities, current perspectives reveal that the intentions that the mujahideen had in connection with their arrival in Bosnia and Herzegovina were also masked. Although the primary goal was to defend the faith, even from initial contact there was conflict between the religious convictions of the new arrivals versus Bosnian Muslims.

---

<sup>43</sup> Selefije u Bosni i Hercegovini, Dokumentarni serijal, <https://projects.voanews.com/salafism-in-bosnia/>

<sup>44</sup> Vlado Azinović, Al-kai'da u Bosni i Hercegovini "Mit ili stvarna opasnost", Radio Slobodna Evropa, 2007.p.24

<sup>45</sup> Gibas-Krzak, D., 2013. Contemporary Terrorism in the Balkans: A Real Threat to Security in Europe. *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 26(2), pp.203

The Wahhabi interpretation of Islam versus traditional Bosnian Islam is different, and the lack of tolerance by the Jihadi during the war in relation to the Bosnian vision meant that they would try to replace this representation with their imported ideas. Such missionary ideas, Azinović said during the Documentary serial “Selafis in Bosnia and Herzegovina” found fertile ground in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina as war-time destruction and instability created a vacuum to be filled by revolutionary ideas. The urgency of the Bosnian Muslims provided an excellent opportunity for members of the Mujahideen movement to further their cause. Turčalo and Veljan confirms this thesis, recounting that "using the impoverished and war-torn society they found, these mujahideen spread their religious doctrine, while questioning and undermining the millennial tradition of tolerance that distinguished Bosnian Islam. Until the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Salafism was present only in central Bosnia and only later gradually began to spread to other populated areas in the country."<sup>46</sup>

Referring back to the work of Azinović, he points out that the arrival of Arab Mujahideen in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the main trigger for the installation and expansion of Wahhabi ideas: “The admission of domestic young men to the mujahideen formations was, as a rule, preceded by a 40-day religious tutorial, which was managed by the main ideological authority of the El-Mujahid Misri detachment. By the end of 1995, more than 2,000 Bosnians had passed through them.”<sup>47</sup>

This account provides some evidence for the underlying intentions of the mujahideen in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which were successfully concealed during the war.

Bosnians were exposed to the facets and teachings of the mujahideen faith, which completely directed their lives and activities. The willingness to die for an ideological vision in a different country indicated a strong, inspired commitment to the cause. This commitment was appealing to many Bosnians and the Mujahideen movement gained respect and followers.

However, the cooperation between the Jihadists and some Bosniak authorities continued, even after the war, because, as Azinović pointed out referring to the German publicist Jürgen Elsässer,

---

<sup>46</sup> Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, *Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini*, 2016.p.2.

<sup>47</sup> Vlado Azinović, *Al-kai'da u Bosni i Hercegovini “Mit ili stvarna opasnost”*, Radio Slobodna Evropa, 2007.p.24

the authorities in Sarajevo granted Bosnian citizenship to about 700 to 800 mujahideen members. The act of granting citizenship violated the Dayton agreement, which mandated that all foreign fighters depart from the territory. Gibas-Krzak states in the article that the international community during the war in BiH had direct contact with this type of terrorism through members of the Mujahideen who had a large share in the creation of a terrorist network in this area and worldwide.<sup>48</sup> Also, the expansion of the Mujahedin in this area was supported by Izetbegović because he called on members of the Islamic countries to join the war against Croats and Serbs.

Scholar Edina Bećirević, points out in her work that "the Salafi ideology that arrived in Bosnia during the war was more rigid than the version that spread in Western European countries, and even more rigid than the version preached in Saudi Arabia, the home of Salafism. The mujahideen and da'is that flowed into Bosnia at that time - some of which came from training camps in Afghanistan - promoted Salafism in its most militant form"<sup>49</sup>

In addition, Azinović emphasizes that it is certain that the goal of these people was not the defense of Bosnia, nor members of the Muslim population, but the expansion of their vision for faith. Also, their efforts to modify traditional Bosnian Islam have especially benefited from war-time military collaboration between members of the Mujahedeen Movement and the Bosniaks. "The ideology of the international jihad movement has just undergone a very important formative phase during the war in BiH. Bosnia served as an intersection of people who at that moment were unimpeded by time and space, to jointly master the war experience, acquire newcomers, establish ideological and logistical support, acquire new personal identities, and soon spread from Bosnia and Herzegovina unnoticed by the rest of the world and continue its war."<sup>50</sup>

Three parties were in physical conflict in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, fighting for the preservation of their territories, but the Mujahedeen were striving for the ideological occupation of the Bosniaks, which after the war experienced its continuum in a different form.

---

<sup>48</sup> Gibas-Krzak, D., 2013. Contemporary Terrorism in the Balkans: A Real Threat to Security in Europe. *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 26(2), pp.218

<sup>49</sup> Edina Bećirević, *Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims*, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. P.36

<sup>50</sup> Vlado Azinović, *Al-kai'da u Bosni i Hercegovini "Mit ili stvarna opasnost"*, Radio Slobodna Evropa, 2007.p.80

After the war, the ideological occupation was localized in the regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the Salafian communities and paradzematates were formed, and the Mujahideen in Bosnia and Herzegovina continued with its primary ideas.

However, the core of this problem can be found in the moment when the warring parties in BiH withdrew, while members of the "Warriors of Allah", as Gibas - Krzak points out, "were restrained in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina after the end of the civil war, thus contributing to the development of a terrorist network linked to radical Islamic factions."<sup>51</sup>

American influence in the emergence and continuation of the Mujahideen movement in BiH was reflected, as Azinovic puts it, through "frequent US pressure on the Bosniak leadership. Washington has repeatedly asked BiH Presidency President Alija Izetbegovic to deny them hospitality, and from Turkey and Saudi Arabia to use their influence and urge Bosniak leaders to dispatch Islamic fighters from exile. But there was almost no progress."<sup>52</sup>

In this way, members of the Jihad infiltrated the Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, without any intention to assimilate, as is explored in the following section.

This part of the work serves to create a perception of the occurrence of jihad in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the basic focus of the work, links to the post-war period, when the Salafi communities are formed, in which members of these movements carry out territorial expansion within Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the mentality of traditional Bosnian Muslims.

In the continuation of the thesis, an attempt is made to give an answer to who Selefi is in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Selafism is widely explored in general scholarship and, therefore, it is important to analyze whether the Selafism in Bosnia is a movement that requires certain religious autonomy and territorial isolation for its radical convictions, or if it is a movement that has the potential to convert its radicalism into violent extremism, which can then be a basis for the development of terrorism in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

---

<sup>51</sup>Gibas-Krzak, D., 2013. Contemporary Terrorism in the Balkans: A Real Threat to Security in Europe. *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 26(2), pp.200

<sup>52</sup>Vlado Azinović, Al-kai'da u Bosni i Hercegovini "Mit ili stvarna opasnost", Radio Slobodna Evropa, 2007.p.38

## 6. Salafism in Bosnia and Herzegovina

After the war ended in Bosnia and Herzegovina, members of the Salafi Movement tried to stay in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Beyond the Bosnian-Herzegovinian context, Salafism has expanded in the modern era. Azinovic mentions that "this was largely due to the crisis of legitimacy in the Islamic world in the last quarter of the 20th century exacerbated by the investors of the Saudi oil exports."<sup>53</sup> Several members of the el-mudzahid in Bosnia and Herzegovina formed an active Islamic youth organization after the war, which continued the development and the reconstruction of Bosnian and Herzegovinan society according to their version of Islamic principles.

Presently, Bosnia and Herzegovina contains Salafi communities which have a divergent understanding of Islam, compared to the Islamic traditions of the Bosniaks, an interpretation that is not validated by the established Islamic community. To protect their Islamic tradition against divergent narratives, the official structures of the Islamic Community are defined by the Constitutional Proclamation, which empowers them as the only Muslim community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, in accordance with the provisions of the State Law 24, requests the state not to allow the registration of other organizations with the attribute "Islamic" in its name and the disruption of their activities, as stated by Puhalo.<sup>54</sup>

Currently, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian context encapsulates a pluralism of narratives about who really are the Salafists and their connection with terrorism. For this reason, Puhalo points out that the media, insufficiently informed, has often made conclusions about the Wahhabi as potential executors of terrorist attacks and marked them in a negative context.

Research by Srdjan Puhalo, who since April 2016 has examined 126 respondents who declare themselves as Salafists, contributes to an authentic portrayal of the Salafist community. He visits their communities in Jablanica, Sarajevo, Zenica, Bočanj, Osh, Maglaj, Tuzla, Gornja Maoča, Ključ, Sanski Most and Dobož. Taking into account demographic criteria such as gender,

---

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.53

<sup>54</sup> Srđan Puhalo, *Selefije u Bosni i Hercegovini, ko su oni, kako ih drugi vide i kako se izvještava o njima*, Pro Educa, Banja Luka 2016. p.29

education, age, place of growth, number of household members, Puhalo provides detailed insights into the perception of Salafists.

Scholar Edina Bećirević underlines that "the most radical homegrown Salafis in Bosnia - whose leader, Jusuf Barčić, died in a car accident in 2007 - was first influenced by two Bosnian clerics living in Austria, Nedžad Balkan from Sandžak and Muhamed Porča from Sarajevo. Later, these clerics allegedly had a strong influence on the extremist Salafī community in Gornja Maoča and on some other similarly isolated communities, from which the highest a number of fighters have been recruited to battlefields in Syria and Iraq. Militant Salafis generally lives in very isolated villages or on the peripheries of towns, segregated from mainstream society. They tend to circle around para-jamaats that strongly oppose inclusion to the Islamic Community."<sup>55</sup>

This develops the further question of whether the Salafī community in Gornja Maoča or some other areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina is an implicit movement that is related to violent extremism.

It is an exploration of how the choices of a few individuals can lead to the creation of generalizations which potentially condemn the entire community, instead of, for example, the individuals, who express extremist and terrorist ambitions.

Edina Bećirević stresses that "the majority of Salafis in Bosnia do not advocate for violence and simply want to live their lives according to their interpretation of Islam."<sup>56</sup> However, a problem emerges because their vision of Islam is not the same as that of the radicals, but still there is a perception that all Salafists are radical. Nevertheless, if all connotations point to terrorism without any true connection with extremism or terrorism, both within the Selefī communities, as well as within the media, the authorities, the Islamic Community, the question is whether Bosnia and Herzegovina would ever perceive itself as a potential terrorist threat.

However, the existence of moral superiority in the Salafī communities and the pursuit of expansion is what provokes the Islamic community and creates various reactions in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society.

---

<sup>55</sup> Edina Bećirević, *Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims*, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. p.39

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.p.29

Their mission to execute the "purification" of Bosnian Muslims is a priority, in addition to the desire to live their lives in accordance with these principles and without any obstacles. Nevertheless, the attitude of the Islamic community towards the Salafi Movement is discussed in the second chapter.

Originally from the interview with Salafis, Becirevic states that when they discussed various topics, "including domestic politics and economics, and the situation in Syria and internationally they were most passionate when discussing the "purification" of Bosnian Muslims, whom they identify as the 'other 'and on whom, in a twisted interpretation of eschatological justice, they have conditionalized the moral and just future of the state."<sup>57</sup> This confirms their missionary nature in regards to the Bosnian-Herzegovinian context, which becomes problematic not because of the existence itself, but because the missions are imposed on others.

Regarding the organization of the activities of the Salafi Movement not only within Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in the countries of the region like Kosovo, Macedonia, Becirevic points out that they have a very centralized and well-developed strategy: "Lectures organized by NGOs are well attended not only by locals but usually by people from surrounding villages who are provided with transport."<sup>58</sup>

Nevertheless, as these interviews show, members of the Salafi Movement do not see themselves as a foreign organism within this state, which has in a certain way established a presence without assimilation. On the one hand, they have the right to do so, because they were welcome during the war, and even after the war as presently mentioned, they were granted citizenship and an approved stay. However, they also state that they are being discriminated against because of their own appearance and the differences that have been made in relation to the Bosnian society. "Salafis generally see themselves as disadvantaged minorities who must constantly respond to other members of society for their choices."<sup>59</sup> The question arises as to whether there is a need for this quantum of inquiry and whether it is justified for security reasons or there are more links to stereotypes and the political and social climate in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

---

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.p.54

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.p.66

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.p.80

"All of them benefit from it, these politicians, above all, the authorities, the media with two bombastic titles can raise cynicism, services justifying their actions and their work, the fear of those Wahhabi and Salafi, citizens who no longer think what to eat, how to eat, how to treat them, how they get educated, but everyone is thinking about terrorism."<sup>60</sup> This account complements the statement by Azinovic in the same series, where he points out the manipulation of the Salafis position. This provides a connection between their sense of discrimination and the treatments they enjoy.

"It's an issue that for 20 years after the war, especially after September 11, 2001, has huge potential for daily political manipulation. In this context it is regional conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but examples can be used manipulate internationally."<sup>61</sup>

Such statements were the motive for the selection of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at least partially by removing stereotypes that link the entire Salafi Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of this points to the pluralism of perspectives that are tackled within this thesis. Salafis who differ within their communities, their narratives that differ in relation to the traditional Bosnian Muslims, the communities that perceive them in various ways, are all factors that must be fused together in order to form a complete analysis from which it is possible to indicate to some degree where the truth begins and where stereotype ends.

Often, Salafis standards are analyzed through an examination of the private sphere, because this provides insight into the differences between them and the rest of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as Becirevic points out in part of the interview with a member of the Salafi Movement. Their attitude towards women is quoted, which directly gives insight into whether they are violating Constitutional rights, a topic that will be returned to in future sections:

"He is not married, but says he will find a wife once he finds a job. Will his wife have to wear a hijab or niqab? Will he let her work? As if he suddenly remembers that the woman interviewing him lacks a scarf on her head (though, before the interview, he said there was no need), he directs

---

<sup>60</sup> Selefije u Bosni i Hercegovini, Dokumentarni serijal, <https://projects.voanews.com/salafism-in-bosnia/>

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

his eyes to the male interviewer and says with the conviction that a Muslim man must marry a proper Muslim woman, who will respect him by wearing a hybrid at a minimum, and maybe even a niqab. 'No, she will not work,' he adds, 'there is no need for a woman to work if a man can support his family. If she works, she will not have time to properly raise children and educate them in the Islamic tradition.'<sup>62</sup>

According to this account, although it is personalized by the common norms of the Salafi Movement, it is clear that according to their interpretation of Islam, common activities are characterized by rigidity, a tradition is not common among the Bosnians in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nevertheless, the most important question is how much such behavior and approach has the potential to affect and harm the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The geographical area that has so far found itself at the center of media attention, in connection to the existence of Selefis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is Gornja Maoča. Turčalo and Veljan states that besides the media, this area has entered the sphere of interest of other subjects: "Security officials told researchers that at that time all of their activities were directed from Gornja Maoča, a Salafi stronghold formed in 2000 and connected with diaspora selections, mainly in Austria, but also in other European countries and the United States."<sup>63</sup>

In addition, Salafism has been rooted in other parts of the country, which are recounted in the next chapter. Regarding the Salafi Movement and its incorporation into the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is stated that the movement in this city is encouraged by the construction of the King Fahd mosque and presents a part of the Saudi diplomatic mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The significance of this institution is valuable, because, Turčalo points out, "although it is officially integrated into the Islamic Community, this the mosque is still a recruitment center for new Salafis followers and offers free courses on various subjects, where other course participants often access colleagues from their group and try to accustom them to a new interpretation of Islam."<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> Edina Bećirević, *Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims*, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. p.76

<sup>63</sup> Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, *Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini*, 2016.p.7

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*10

Yet, only basic information about the Salafi Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been reported, including details of their perception or perception of others about them, and the validity of these perceptions.

The paper continues with a gaze at the existence of para-jamaats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the territorial distribution and diversity that they possess within themselves. It is important to emphasize their prevalence and, at least, certain differences between these communities, so as to avoid the selection of certain communities while omitting others.

## **7. Para-Jamaats, Vision and Territorial Prevalence**

Former members of the El-Mujahid unit have established communities that have become known as para-jamaats in different areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to Turčalo and Veljan, "these places were especially concentrated in the ZDK; however, former members of the AIO publicly acknowledged that they had formed the first paradise in Sarajevo, just after the war. Nearly two decades later, as the number of terrorist fighters from Bosnia and Herzegovina in Syria and Iraq grew, these unofficial congregations were forced to get out of the shadow, as it became clear that each of these foreign terrorist fighters was associated with certain Salafi communities and paramilitaries."<sup>65</sup>

The center of para-jamaats units is linked to the area of Gornja Maoča. The formation of this para-jamaats, in some ways, has magnetized and developed other units and contributed to their functionality.

The 2016 Report of the Islamic Community indicates that the spread of para-jamaats is not represented evenly on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It indicates that the largest presence of these communities is on the territory of Zenica, Sarajevo and Tuzla. After that, the next most dense areas are the territory of Bihać, Travnik and Mostar, while in the areas of Banja Luka and Gorazde, the existence of such groups could not be recorded at all.

---

<sup>65</sup> Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, *Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini*, 2016.p.42

Because of this uneven distribution, the focus remains primarily on those areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina which contain para-jamaats communities. The data can also be analyzed to provide understanding on whether the selection of the area by Salafi was targeted by specific criteria. The Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which maintains the greatest control of Islamic thought, has a great influence on the perception of para-jamaats, and it is able to evaluate whether these communities should be seen through positive or negative connotations by the general population.

After the negative implications and comments of the Islamic Community began, the media escalated the rhetoric by providing commentary without valid basis. "The media created an image of para-jamaats as places where people are 'brainwashing,' from where people are sent to the battlefields, in which they openly call for an open conflict with the Islamic the BiH community, and that they are an instrument of the destruction of the Bosniaks people."<sup>66</sup> During the interview with Puhalo, it is stressed that no one has the right to prevent people from gathering or organizing, even the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It also states that the Salafis are angry with the behavior of the Islamic Community and their representatives, not the interpretation of Islam.

It should be noted that although it is natural that the Salafis are dissatisfied with the relationship of the Islamic Community towards them because of the competition to achieve a religious monopoly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is not entirely clear whether the Salafis are truly unbothered by the traditional Bosnian interpretation of Islam over their imported interpretation.

The Islamic Community has called on the Salafi community to join them, and to abolish the para-jamaats, after talks and attempts to establish cooperation on this basis, the Islamic Community has provided the following information:

"Based on the information collected during the implementation of this Instruction, the statistics are, inter alia, as follows: a total of 38 para-jamaats were interviewed, of which: Zenica Muftis 13, Sarajevo Muftis 12, Tuzla Muftis 7, Bihac Mufti 3, Mostar Muppetry 2, Travno Mufti 1. No group was registered in the territory of the Banja Luka and Gorazde mufti. The number of para-jamaats used by these groups, which are not registered in the Islamic Community in BiH, is 29. Of the total number of groups interviewed, representatives of 14 groups signed the Protocol and accepted the

---

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. 45

inclusion in the Community. These are: Debeljak, Salem Bajramović, Čaršija - Kakanj, Osijek, Dragulj - Vreoc, Rakovica, Briješće Brdo, Bistrik, Bakarevac, Rujnica, Borovnica, Bajvati, Mećevići, Bočinja. The representatives of the 22 groups were not signed by the Protocol: Stijena, Brezićani, Hodžići - Kakanj, Pobjeda - Feth, Briješće Brdo II, Aleja Bosne Srebrene, Gornja Mahala, Kuljani, Bar, Oshve, Kaloševići, Stmokos - Zenica, Lješnica, Kotorsko Donje, Gornja Maoča, Gornji Rahić / Dizđaruša, Čehaje 1, Selo Gračanica, Old Railway Station Bihać, Kula - Tuzla, Dubnica, Delići-Hukići. There are para-jamaats in which activities are performed, and they are not in the Taricat Center system. There are para-jamaats that have separated from the Community and thus operate illegally - they are Stranjani and Klokot."<sup>67</sup>

Although interviews were conducted with 38 groups, only 14 of them signed Protocol and accepted the inclusion into the Community. That's why Bećirević points out that "despite talk of inclusion, there are still over two dozen para-jamaats that refuse to join the Islamic Community, some of which are rather militant. When we raised this issue with research participants, they offered somewhat conflicting thoughts on the topic. Some stressed that there is no connection between the mainstream Salafis - who want to be under one umbrella with the Islamic Community - and the militant Salafis, who the participants said issue threats against them as well as against other Bosnian Muslims."<sup>68</sup>

This statement provides insight into the existence of two narratives regarding the Salafi Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, suggesting a complex approach over generalizations that regard the entire Salafi community of Bosnia and Herzegovina as identical, in relation to the level of radicalism and extremism.

---

<sup>67</sup> Islamska zajednica u Bosni i Hercegovini, Rijaset predstavio izvještaj o razgovorima sa nelegalnim džematima, April 23th 2016, <http://www.islamskazajednica.ba/vijesti/aktuelno/23732-rijaset-predstavio-izvjestaj-o-razgovorima-sa-paradzematima>

<sup>68</sup> Edina Bećirević, *Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims*, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. p.62

As Bećirević points out, ideological currents differ between individuals, even within one para-jamaats and especially between para-jamaats. Most individuals want to limit their actions to impact only their own private sphere of life.

Nevertheless, there are those whose behavior has pointed to the existence of violent extremism, and precisely because of such individuals, the entire Salafi Movement is generalized as violent.

This perspective is supported by Becirevic, who points out in the Documentary Series “Salafism in Bosnia” that “certain media are promoting and compelling us to think that in every Salafi there is a potential terrorist. It is simply not true.”<sup>69</sup>

Such allegations point to what is the primary goal of this paper, which is the rejection of generalizations. Instead, it provides an analysis of the Salafi Movement, in order to conclude if every Salafi is inherently prone to violent extremism and thus in mental and physical readiness for terrorist actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Looking at the distribution of para-jamaats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the question arises why this inequality occurs. The existence of para-jamaats in certain territories is not marked on the map of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war. However, as Turčalo and Veljan deduces from the example of BPK (The Bosnian-Podrinje Canton), "the seed of Selefism was not sown during or immediately after the war"<sup>70</sup> in the BPK, explaining that the area is not necessary in itself inherently more resilient than others, but its isolation during the war prevented the exposition of the community to Salafism, which is now rarely chosen as a destination, shows a lack of incoming resources, and an absence of departures to Syria and Iraq. This evidence shows that war circumstances influenced para-jamaats communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In terms of certain criteria within para-jamaats members, Turčalo and Veljan points out that those in affected communities mostly have either very limited or no religious education. The lapse in formal education is replaced by listening to lectures and going to informal medres.

---

<sup>69</sup> Selefije u Bosni i Hercegovini, Dokumentarni serijal, <https://projects.voanews.com/salafism-in-bosnia/>

<sup>70</sup> Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini, 2016.p. 11

Regarding the cult of the leader, Turčalo and Veljan points out that "the common characteristic of nonviolent and violent extremist groups in the affected communities included in the study is the unequivocal role of leadership and friendship within group dynamics."<sup>71</sup>

This section is intended to provide insight into the distribution of para-jamaats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and establish a connection between the selection of certain territories, and not others. Salafi and para-jamaats differ, as evidenced by the opinions of the authors Becirevic, Turcalo, Veljan or Azinovic and Puhalo. Although not all para-jamaats units have agreed to conform to the establishment Islamic community, these communities are not necessarily under the influence of the same kind of radicalization and extremism, if any.

Therefore, it could be concluded that Selefism is not a major social problem of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In any case, those individuals and groups are truly influenced by and subject to violent extremism should be scanned and questioned.

The continuation of the work is dedicated to the recruitment processes of the Bosnian population into the Salafi Movement, and also to the member recruitment processes within the Salafi Movement to the war zones.

The question considered is whether all individuals who have the intention of joining the Salafi community, along with those who become fighters in Syria or Irak from the Salafi Movement, are motivated by terrorist ambitions or by factors independent of terrorism.

---

<sup>71</sup>Ibid. 17

## 8. Recruitment Process in Salafi Movement and Contribution Factors

An important part of the functioning structure in the Salafi Movement is the recruitment process. The first part of this chapter is dedicated to the Muslim population of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the recruitment process into the circles of Salafism, while the second part addresses the transition of members of the Salafi communities into fighters.

An analysis of the recruitment aspect can illuminate the reasons that individuals have for turning to the Salafi Movement and choosing to depart to the warzones.

Becirevic reveals during the interviews with the Islamic Community that the recruitment process occurs differently than what is portrayed in the media. "One of the most surprising of our findings was that this assumption was incorrect. In fact, the interviewees told us without exception that their recruitment to Salafi circles always involved in-person interaction."<sup>72</sup> However, the issue is complicated as individual motives vary.

As stated previously, Bosnian-Herzegovinian society provided a fertile ground for the cultivation of Salafist ideas before, after and during the war in a continuous situation that was financially, morally and ideologically stagnant. They offered an ideological and material alternative to this status quo.

First, the financial aspect is a strong motivator among poor Bosnian Muslims who were recruited. Scholar Bećirević states, "this type of humanitarian action is propagated by Facebook and other Salafi online platforms, and for poorer Bosnian Muslims, they can attract them to Salafism."<sup>73</sup> The topic of who sponsors the Salafi Movement is complex and requires research beyond the scope of this paper, but it is important to note that the sources are diverse and significant.

The second aspect attracting individuals to Salafism is the need for identity and acceptance into a community. Since the traditional Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina is already established and quite rigid, it is not possible for every member to encounter the same kind of

---

<sup>72</sup>Edina Bećirević, *Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims*, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. p.66

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.72

attention and satisfaction as is possible in smaller, closed Salafi communities. Also, these Movements flourish because they offer alternative opportunities and instructions on how to live. Salafi communities provide opportunities to make friends, find suitable partners for marriage, and receive financial support.

After interviewing members of the Salafi community who had initially been members of the traditional Islamic community, Bećirević reiterates that “most of our interviewees were attracted to the idea of a brotherhood before they were even very familiar with the theological doctrine of Salafism.”<sup>74</sup> In addition, the simplicity offered by this religious narrative also attracts new adherents. So, referring again to the findings of Becirevic, "most of our Salafi interviewees emphasized that the five daily prayers they practice take less time than those practiced by Hanafi Bosnian Muslims."<sup>75</sup> From the knowledge we have obtained by analyzing the content of the author Bećirević, we see that the basic reasons for joining Salafi Movement are the quest for creating a new, more acceptable identity, financial issues and simplified religious practice.

Research by Turčalo and Veljan elaborates on these facts, as from the interviews conducted with members of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina:

"The decline of prolific institutions often leads to a sense of uncertainty which may cause anxiety and defeatism. Even in the BPK that have managed to avoid these factors, all the respondents in the survey described how they were persecuted by a constant feeling of insecurity, which they say personally affected them more than any other threat."<sup>76</sup> To understand why the respondents own this the feeling of insecurity, it is enough to look at the knowledge Turcalo offers referring to the authors Hogg and Adelman. By emphasizing that such communities reduce the sense of insecurity among new members, they say that they offer "clear boundaries, internal homogeneity, social interaction, clear internal structure, common goals and common destiny."<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. 66

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. 71

<sup>76</sup> Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, *Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini*, 2016.p. 14

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. 14

By sharing a similar understanding of meaning with others, they develop an instant connection between these members, one that is difficult to break.

A review of the real picture of Bosnia and Herzegovina and statistical benchmarks also supports this claim. "BiH has the highest unemployment rate among young people aged 15-24 (60.9%) in the world (ILO International Labor Organization, 2016), and the dissatisfaction of young people with limited or no opportunities for social and economic advancement makes them susceptible to new doctrines, especially those offered by abstract, utopian solutions for seemingly unsolvable problems."<sup>78</sup> The importance of this factor is indicated by the fact that BPK (Bosnian-Podrinje Canton), which has the lowest unemployment rate, is one of the cantons in Bosnia and Herzegovina that does not contain Salafi communities, while the cantons with the greatest problem of employment contain isolated Salafi communities.

Youth perceives a potentially stunted future within the Bosnian-Herzegovinian circles, which is why they turn to alternative systems of thought. They may see the change of identity is a risky investment in the future. Through the renegotiation of religious identity, which is connected to a sense of belonging and security, Salafi communities become a market that is easily accessible to young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In addition, Turčalo points out that education, both formally and informally, is one of the factors for joining Salafi communities. It states that these communities have enabled new members to receive financial assistance, especially in the form of scholarships in order to have access to youth and potential converts that can submit to radical religious norms. Although certain members of the Salafi Movement, as can be seen from the Documentary Series on "Salafism in Bosnia", emphasize that their help is unbiased, the reality expresses otherwise "Some of these organizations even included doctrine in their humanitarian aid, especially to members of the families of fallen combatants, through the mandatory enrollment of children in Islamic schools that explicitly promoted Salafism."<sup>79</sup> However, such concepts are not mutually exclusive. Assistance is provided to anyone who is not a member of the Salafi community, but then it may become a binding commitment to the party receiving aid.

---

<sup>78</sup> Ibid 17

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 15

However, apart from the strategies used by the Salafi Movement to gain new members, it is also emphasized that the level of education of a particular individual significantly determines their ability to think critically about new narratives that they can accept or disregard.

The final factor discovered by Tučalo through interviews with respondents is the influence of the diaspora. "In the affected communities, the interviewed persons mentioned the influence of the diaspora as another important factor of radicalization, especially in the most isolated communities and paradoxes. According to experts and security officials, diaspora enabled the formation of Gornja Maoca, and several persons from Austria who were subsequently charged with financing terrorism were regularly attending para-jamaats in Zenica."<sup>80</sup> The formation of para-jamaats and financial support by diaspora groups or individuals indicates that the influence of Salafism is not only present on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also beyond its borders.

### **8.1. The Departure of the Bosnian Contingent on the Side of the Foreign Fighter**

The transformation of radicalization into violent extremism and its involvement in terrorism is a process that occurs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but is clarified by comparing the situation with other Balkan countries. The motives for joining a Salafi Movement may differ from the motives to participate in violent extremism.

Before addressing this topic in the general Balkan region, and later localizing it exclusively in the Bosnia and Herzegovina, Azinović refers to the difference between the communities in which the recruitment process takes place in the West and the Western Balkans. "Radicalization into violent extremism and recruitment for terrorism in the region typically occurs in communities and amid circumstances that are significantly different from those associated with this process on the West. While extremist narratives in the West are often designed to appeal to immigrants who face the

---

<sup>80</sup> Ibit 19 (Interview January 10<sup>th</sup> 2018)

consequences of failed integration, socio-economic marginalization, and a sense of injustice and inequality, radicalization in Western Balkans generally takes place within native communities."<sup>81</sup>

The observation of the situation within Bosnia and Herzegovina shows that in local communities, citizens feel threatened for many reasons, as shown in the previous section. The feelings that relate to socio-economic marginalization or injustice, inequality, and unemployment dominate the discourse in the native communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. "The Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) estimates that over 300 fighters from Kosovo have travelled to warzones in Iraq and Syria, while 330 fighters have come from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 110 from Albania, 100 from Macedonia, 50 from Serbia and 13 from Montenegro. This places Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina as the top two European countries by percentage of population who have joined terrorist organisations, while Albania is ranked in fourth place just behind Belgium."<sup>82</sup>

The further analysis of content indicates that although foreign fighters are leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina to join terrorist or other organizations, we can not yet state that the reasons for their departure are in any case linked to terrorism.

Compared to the other Balkan states, Bosnia and Herzegovina is not an exception. Although the media in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or even the region, and globally, focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the negative depictions of terrorism, it is important to compare the situation with the surrounding states in order to assess the validity of these statements.

According to Azinovic, "ideological radicalization, and recruitment for departures to Syria and Iraq - at one time centered in traditional Salafist strongholds in remote areas of BiH, Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania - has gradually, but rather visibly, moved into new and less formal communities and congregations that have mushroomed over recent years in and around major cities. This trend is particularly evident in BiH, where many sub-urban areas around Sarajevo, Zenica, Tuzla, Travnik and Bihać now harbor Salafist settlements; and similar developments have been observed in Kosovo and in Macedonia. Indeed, a whole network of small businesses,

---

<sup>81</sup> Vlado Azinović, *Between Salvation and Terror: Radicalization and the Foreign Fighter Phenomenon in the Western Balkans*, Sarajevo, 2017. p.12

<sup>82</sup> Predrag Petrović, *Islamic radicalism in the Balkans*, 2016, available at: [https://wb-iisg.com/wp-content/uploads/bp-attachments/4732/Alert\\_24\\_Balkan\\_radicalism.pdf](https://wb-iisg.com/wp-content/uploads/bp-attachments/4732/Alert_24_Balkan_radicalism.pdf)

community centers and charities are financially facilitating this relocation effort, with "pop-up" mosques that increasingly provide spiritual guidance."<sup>83</sup> Evidently, apart from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the cases in which citizens leave their countries for Syria and Iraq, can also be found in Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo. Azinovic also states that, in certain cases, the mobilization of fighters and their recruitment is more successful in those countries where Muslims are a minority. This evidence is consistent with the supposition that the presence of a Muslim population or certain communities in which individuals have extremist aspirations and goals, does not give the right to evaluate and mark the entire community or state as extremist or terrorist.

The interview with Srdjan Puhalo further supports this thesis, because he points out that "the truth is that one part of the Salafis has gone to Syria and Iraq to fight on the ISIL or some of the factions, but many of them remained in Bosnia and Heryegovina. We have several terrorist actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which we have one-hundred percent certainty that they are the work of the Salafis and some of the actions, but we do not differ much in relation to any other country. Being radical is not in itself bad (it means that you are exclusive), but this does not mean that you are automatically extreme and ready for terrorism."<sup>84</sup> In this way, we have insights into the socio-political generalization of facts, which link to individuals, and the description of the whole society is viewed through this lens.

The case studies by Azinović and Muhamed Jusic provide a similar conclusion, and Turcalo and Veljan refers to them, pointing out, "The Bosnian contingent of foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq was thoroughly analyzed by the researchers of the Atlantic Initiative, Vlado Azinović and Muhamed Jusić, who published two studies on this subject in which they explored key trends and patterns, analyzing open sources, as well as police and intelligence sources. They concluded that it was believed that a maximum of 950 people from the Western Balkans traveled to Syria and Iraq from the end of 2012 to the end of 2016, including 230 men and women originating from BiH. This study will use the term "migrants" instead of "foreign terrorist fighters" when speaking

---

<sup>83</sup> Vlado Azinović, *Between Salvation and Terror: Radicalization and the Foreign Fighter Phenomenon in the Western Balkans*, Sarajevo, 2017. p.14

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Srdjan Puhalo, 10.07.2019

generally of adults who traveled to Syria and Iraq because it can not be shown that all these adults (especially women) joined the battles as fighters (2017: 10)."<sup>85</sup> The research of the Balkan Research Regional Network indicates that a total of about 900 people have left the Balkans on the side of the war, and the largest percentage of them are for citizens from the region of Kosovo.

The selection of words, which relate to these processes, is of enormous significance. The use of the term “foreign terrorist fighter” alludes to exclusively one motive: terrorism. By evoking the concept of a migrant, the assumed motivations are different to the user. For this reason, in the following we are focusing on certain reasons, in order to determine what motivates individuals to become fighters.

Regarding Gornja Maoča, as a major source for individuals who depart to fight and engage in extremist action, Turčalo points out that 52 men (38 men and 14 women) were abducted from Gornja Maoča for a certain period from the of Bosnia and Herzegovina, traveling to Syria.

However, evidenced by a conversation with a member of the Salafi community who stayed in Syria for 50 days and returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina, his motives were not related to terrorist activity. Ibrahim Delic, a Salafi scholar in Bosnia and Herzegovina residing in the village of Gornja Maoča, said that he had gone to Syria from Bosnia and Herzegovina during 2013 to examine the situation and inform his choices. He states that his, as well as the departures of other people, was spontaneous and not organized. He traveled to Syria by his own means to share his experience of the struggle against the Asad regime with the people there. However, he points out that the circumstances were not what he assumed they would be, and that he realized that there would be a war and he left the territory of Syria. Mutual conflicts, antagonisms within factions and murders that followed this situation prevented migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina from staying there. Ibrahim Delic emphasizes that he himself advised young people, after their return, to stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Additionally, he adds that he is not a supporter of this kind of conflict, and that any circumstance that forces the use of weapons or protests are those of which should be avoided.

---

<sup>85</sup> Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, *Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini*, 2016.p.7

Moreover, the interview with Srdjan Puhalo shows that the motives of members of the Salafi communities differ: “The truth is that people were leaving Gornja Maoča and Ošve in Syria and Iraq, but they were also leaving from other places in BiH.

It is true that the undisguised leaders from Gornja Maoča have gone to Syria and Iraq, but in the last few years almost no one has gone there, either from Gornja Maoca or from Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, the departure to Syria and Iraq can be explained in various ways, the duty of the Muslims to help their troops in the war, the solidarity with the Muslims, who came to fight in BiH in the 1990s, fighting the crimes against Assad.”<sup>86</sup>

As can be seen, the Salafis’ departure motives differ. They vary from duty to members of the same religion because of a sense of solidarity, to the fight against Asad's regime.

Turcalo’s analysis of factors which mobilize members of Salafism to Syria and Iraq from Bosnia and Herzegovina relies on the results obtained from various research, with him concluding that motives are connected "to the fragile Bosnian-Herzegovinian state and the dominant institutional anomie that further strengthen the already existing sense of victimization by the unjust system.”<sup>87</sup>

In addition, social and economic circumstances, which were also factors for the recruitment of the Bosnian population into the Salafi Movement, are also highlighted. Inability to adjust, reflected in phenomena such as unemployment and feelings of ideological ostracism, may cause some individuals to leave for Syria or Iraq.

In summary, although there is a possibility that individuals have gone under the guise of terrorist intentions, most of the population from the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina were motivated by different factors. These factors indicate that the whole community can not be termed as “terrorist.” Although their occurrence exclusively in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society and instances of radicalization can potentially can be a factor related to extremism or terrorism, in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we encounter a range of motives that are not convergent with the phenomenon of terrorism.

---

<sup>86</sup> Interview with Srdjan Puhalo, 10.07.2019

<sup>87</sup> Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, *Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini*, 2016.p.8

## 9. The Perceptions of Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina Regarding the Salafi Movement

The ways that the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina perceive the Salafi community is described in the following section. The description and analysis is based on two separate investigations, the first conducted by Srdjan Puhalo, and the second by Edina Becirevic. The perceptions of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina are a key factor that completes the full understanding of Salafi communities and their connection to terrorism.

The research conducted by Srdjan Puhalo was performed in the second half of May 2016 and the sample included 1004 citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the method of face-to-face interviews. He divided the results of the research into five segments, which assess the knowledge of Bosnian citizens have concerning the Salafi Movement, and then the type of social relations they have or have established with this community. Furthermore, he investigates stereotypes within their opinions, and placement on a scale measuring dogmatism, Machiavellian traits, locus control, the inventory of the HEXACO person, and in the ending their opinions regarding the the Wahhabi / Salafi Movement.

This section selectively presents certain segments that support or contradict the research question. Pulhalo provides a description of citizens' attitudes regarding Salafis:

"For the majority of respondents, this is a different (more radical) approach to Islam, which is followed by a special appearance (bearded, trimmed socks on pants, etc.), special rites and a special way of life. Here, respondents are divided into a smaller group of those who do not condemn them, but they also do not support this way of practicing Islam, and a larger group who thinks it is a sect that has accepted learning from the outside (Saudi Arabia) and thus deforming Islam that is practiced in BiH."<sup>88</sup> As we can see from the above, the Salafi communities are

---

<sup>88</sup> Srđan Puhalo, *Selefije u Bosni i Hercegovini, ko su oni, kako ih drugi vide i kako se izvještava o njima*, Pro Educa, Banja Luka 2016. p.109

primarily described as sects, with a negative effect on the traditional interpretation of Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The crucial question takes into account the attitude towards terrorism and extremism. Puhalo concludes that "Wahhabi / Salafi are most often described as extremists and terrorists who bind the Islamic state and its ideology. They are described as sick people, criminals, rapists who forcibly impose their way on others to others and kill those who does not agree with them. Because of them, Muslims in the world have a bad reputation and we have to fight them."<sup>89</sup>

Such statements reveal why Bosnia and Herzegovina is actually perceived as a terrorist threat. By shielding itself from any of its own responsibilities, including the fight against misinformation and perpetuation of stereotypes, the Bosnian community places the task of breaking stereotypes solely on the Salafi community.

A paradigm into which only some information enters can have detrimental effects on the Bosnian-Herzegovinian community, but the Salafi community receives the strongest negative backlash.

The spread of opinions based on false information perpetuated by the media has a strong, palpable effect on Bosnian society.

It is true that members of the Salafi Movement have a definite goal: the conversion of traditional Islamic interpretations to the principles of Salafism, but this process can not be connected with terrorism, or even violent extremism in of itself. Radicalization may lead to the spread of violence, but it is unlikely that secure, self-confident traditional Muslims would feel compelled to make a transition from their communities to the Salafi community. Nevertheless, such decisions remain a matter of choice, behind which stands a complex array of motives.

In addition, Puhalo points out that for most of the respondents, Salafism is the practice of Islam that is imposed on Muslims by external forces.

From this perspective, Salafism is seen as a threat to the national identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens. Regarding the emotional impact, the participants of the study most frequently expressed indifference, followed by confusion, fear and anger.

Considering that the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina perceive a strong link between terrorism and Salafism, it is surprising that the primary emotion among citizens is indifference.

---

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 110

This prompts the question of whether this reflects a general indifference to the situation of security in Bosnia and Herzegovina? Alternately, this could reflect a lack of interest in the religious alternatives proposed by the Salafist community.

In discussion of why they selected their formulation of certain perceptions, respondents stated that this is mostly based on the behavior they have perceived in person, then on the basis of stories they receive from others and in a certain percentage by the Salafis themselves.

The second part of this section is devoted to the research that originates from the author Bećirević, with a focus on her presentation of perceptions towards Salafi Movement by Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims. This division allows for the determination of whether the general perception of Salafis is more affected by any particular ethnic group. In her analysis of the Bosnian Serbs' attitudes towards the Salafi communities, Bećirević states that most participants expressed awareness of the distinction between Selefi and traditional Bosnian Muslims.

However, none of the respondents were aware of the radicalization nuances within these communities. Nevertheless, Bećirević concludes that "they all believed Salafism is inherently linked with terrorism."<sup>90</sup>

Regarding the responses of the Bosnian Croats, they were generally informed about the Salafi movement and could offer a clear distinction between traditional Bosnian Muslims and Salafis.

Furthermore, concerning the clash between terrorism and Selafis, Bosnian Croats did not express opinions that terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina is rooted in Salafis principles and activities.

Nevertheless, they stated the opinion that the Salafists are trying to force their ideology on others.

Although the views of Bosnian Muslims also overlaps with information provided about the Islamic community, Bećirević pointed out, "most of the Bosnian Muslims who participated in a focus group and individual interviews harbored considerable animosity towards Salafis and did not hesitate to share strong opinions about Salafis they had encountered."<sup>91</sup>

---

<sup>90</sup> Edina Bećirević, *Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims*, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. p.86

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. p.89

For this reason, the next part of the paper is dedicated to antagonisms between the Salafi community and the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in order to broaden the insights into the intertwining of their activities and their distinct principles.

The synthesis reveals that the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina affirm the perception of the Salafist community as the drivers of terrorist aspirations or activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and outside the state.

However, it is therefore important to indicate how much they are actually willing to make a distinction between the Salafi movement and the Islamic Community, how much they are familiar with the principles of Salafism, and to what extent emotionally infiltrated or informed into the overall processes.

## **10. The Relationship of the Islamic Community to the Salafi Movement**

Over the past few years, and especially since September 11, the perception of the Salafist community has changed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This section places a focus on specific fragments of Bosnian and Herzegovinian society, especially the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Relations between the Salafist community and the Islamic community are continuously targeted in various media, and their activities are evaluated by external communities as well, leading to a wealth of perspectives.

Srdjan Puhalo concludes, based on his research, that the Sarajevo media provide more relevant information when they release information about the relationship of the Islamic community and the Salafi Movement than the media from Mostar and Banja Luka.

However, Puhalo points out that “the media supported the activities of the Islamic Community of BiH for the abolition para-jamaats. The para-jamaats, according to the media, are the source of all the conflict and disagreement among Muslims in BiH. These reports suggest that Muslims are educated in the Salafist belief system and sent to the battlefield, from where they openly call for a

public conflict with the Islamic Community of BiH. It was estimated that this approach of the Islamic community represented "Commencement of the Wahhabi community that "anyone would support the IC of Bosnia and Herzegovina" and that the Islamic community started to do something of awaiting justice and state institutions turning their heads, but it is questionable whether it can do without the help of the state."<sup>92</sup>

Although the primary focus in this part of the work is the relationship of the Islamic Community towards the Salafist Movement, it is also important to discuss the media coverage of this topic. If the media in Bosnia and Herzegovina are concerned only with sensational titles and sales, viewers' expectations are lowered and mistrust of the media rises. The role of the media should be the exposition of problems in society, even those that are generally on the margins of information and have a slight impact on the economic, political and, in particular, the security elements of society. If the media informs about Selefi's activities or their intentions in a non-professional manner, one may wonder who is truly more detrimental to Bosnian-Herzegovinian society: the media or the Salafist community being represented?

During his research, author Bećirević points out that most of the Islamic Community immas whom she interviewed promote disseminating the dual idea that Salafism poses a threat to their interpretation of Islam, but also in some ways relates to Bosnian cultural tradition and is not completely foreign. However, when representatives of the Islamic Community sent a call to the para-jamaats to join the Islamic Community, Bećirević points out that their invitation was a display of formal procedures rather than genuine intent to incorporate these communities:

“Despite his explicit call for Salafis to join the Islamic Community and reject para-jamaats, el-Misri and Kuduzović continue to speak in almost identical terms regarding issues of purity within Bosnian Islam and the need for Bosnian Muslims to take responsibility for the purported consequences of their impure practices.”<sup>93</sup> However, a particularly troubling aspect of the Islamic community is the question of who will finance the Salafi Movement, and the failure to achieve co-

---

<sup>92</sup> Srđan Puhalo, Dino Abazović, Milkica Bulajić, Selefije u Bosni i Hercegovini, ko su oni, kako ih drugi vide i kako se izvještava o njima, Pro Educa, Banja Luka 2016. Available at: <http://www.media-diversity.org/en/additional-files/srdjan-puhalo-selefije.pdf>

<sup>93</sup> Edina Bećirević, Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. p.51

operation in that area potentially has negative effects on the Salafi communities who have decided to join the Islamic Community.

"According to a source in the Islamic Community, high-level talks with Saudi representatives have failed to result in any changes in the funding streams that appear to support Salafi proselytism in Bosnia or in how students are selected for the Gulf region scholarship aid."<sup>94</sup> Although the Islamic Community has called for para-jamaats to join their community, while maintaining the authority of the Salafi leaders, criticism without further insight is naive. According to Turčalo, "the practices and employees of the Islamic Community remain the primary ideological targets of the Salaf da'is in BiH. This particularly refers to the extreme da'is who rejected the inclusion, but also to the Salafists who signed the Protocol with the Islamic Community. It seems that this second group has remained focused on the goal of replacing Bosnian Islam by new means."<sup>95</sup> In this case, achieving cooperation is in the interest of both sides, although Salafi are suspicious of the intentions of the Islamic Community, and the Islamic Community has doubts about the Salafis, a conflict which should be pursued separately and only receive a cursory analysis in this paper. A visit to the main website of the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina provides articles which are briefly presented and analyzed in the following section, clarifying the relationship of the Islamic Community towards Salafism.

Although we can not, apart from the timing, prove the existence of other links, due to which the article "*Bosniaks Against Terrorism*", written by Mr. Hamdija Ćustović is published shortly after September 11<sup>th</sup>, it is important to look at the attitude of the Islamic community towards the Salafi Movement.

Ćustović points out that a centuries-old culture and religious tradition, an integral part of the Bosniak identity, and that Bosniak society rejects foreign interference into its culture.

---

<sup>94</sup> Edina Bećirević, *Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims*, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. p.62

<sup>95</sup> Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, *Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini*, 2016. p.12

The arrival of Wahabi phenomenon must be understood in the context of pre-war and war-time conditions: "In order to put the Wahhabis manifest during the war in a clear context, we need to recall the almost 50 years of communist anti-Islamic rule at which the Bosniaks were in a catastrophic ignorance of their faith, and religious identity was merely about giving Muslim names and marking mosques, while the mosques remained almost empty. A short period of Muslim rebirth followed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which was then accelerated by the aggression against Bosnia and the Serb-Montenegrin and Chetnik genocidal campaigns against Bosniaks. The war circumstances led to this process of religious revival no longer occurring in the vacuum of the Bosniak religious tradition led by the CIS in BiH, but now the influences from the Middle East have come, among which the individual, that is, a smaller group, accepted the Salafian, or Wahabi teaching."<sup>96</sup> The bullying of the Bosniak vacuum and the monopoly that they have finally achieved when it comes to practice and the interpretation of Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina is something unacceptable after so many years of struggle for that autonomy. In addition, Custovic points out that some Bosniaks were influenced by the elements of Salafism and Wahhabism during their time as refugees. Since then, the proliferation of Internet usage has an impact on the spread of these ideas. "Here we must emphasize the important role of the Islamic Community in BiH, whose structure as a religious organization and consistency in religious learning have served as a guide to the correct understanding of Islam and the rejection of extremism."<sup>97</sup> This quote implies that Custovic sees the Salafi community as containing elements of extremism. By pointing out the Bosniaks struggle against the Wahabi / Salafi extremism and their difference, he indicates that the Islamic Community does not support their principles, and that extremist epithets potentially link them to factors that affect security in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Finally, it is affirmed again that while most of the members of the Salafist Movement are benevolent, the behavior of some people leads to negative attitudes towards the Bosniaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

---

<sup>96</sup> Mr. Hamdija Ćustović, *Bošnjaci protiv ekstremizma*, 2011, available at: <http://www.islamskazajednica.ba/vijesti/vijesti-arhiva/12129-bonjaci-protiv-ekstremizma>

<sup>97</sup> Mr. Hamdija Ćustović, *Bošnjaci protiv ekstremizma*, 2011, available at: <http://www.islamskazajednica.ba/vijesti/vijesti-arhiva/12129-bonjaci-protiv-ekstremizma>

Thus, the neutral to positive relationship of the Islamic community towards the Selaism in Bosnia and Herzegovina is emphasized, the individual responsibility of addressing their prejudices is emphasized, but the problem of generalizing the entire Salafist movement as a source of extremism and potential terrorism is not addressed.

The second article, also published on the portal of the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is the reisu-l-ulema interview for the Slovenian "Dnevnik", published on November 6, 2011.

Interview: We are still in a concentration camp, reveals the opinion of the highest Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina at that time. Mustafa Cerić, the then reisu-l-ulema of the Islamic community, states that there is no group that has itself been called the Wahhabi, and states that it is a media construction. However, he says that Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina are always blamed for something, because the Turks, because they are Muslims, and are perceived as being always guilty of something.

When asked about the position related to Gornja Maoča, Cerić points out, "Reis dr. Cerić: „Who is this community in Gornja Maoča? You are the victim of what you have heard in the media. Go and see for yourself. The man leading this community in Gornja Maoča was one of the best fighters for Bosnia. He had a girl who left him. After that, he went to study in Jordan, after which he returned. These are his personal frustrations. He decided to live like the Amish. In each country, you will find religious groups that do not listen to the radio, do not watch television, and live the Bible. The Mufti of Tuzla went to them and talked with them. The authorities accuse them of everything possible, among other things, of acting against the Constitution of BiH. That's incredible! In a conversation with the Minister of Education, the mufti of Tuzla intervened and sent their children to school. They did it without any resistance."<sup>98</sup> The interviewee alleges he is not victim of media disinformation. He also states that the individuals do not act in any way contrary to the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and state that they sent their children to schools. In this

---

<sup>98</sup> Aleš Gaube, Intervju: Još uvijek smo u koncentracionom logoru, 2011, available at:

<http://www.islamskazajednica.ba/vijesti/vijesti-arhiva/12152-intervju-jo-uvijek-smo-u-koncentracionom-logoru>

case, Cerić's attitude towards the Salafi movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina indicates he believes they are victimized. He also does not want to regard Bosnia and Herzegovina as an isolated state of Europe, and states that there are thousands of communities in Evropa, such as Gornja Maoča and that Bosnia is the exception in that case because Islam is institutionalized.

Both cases in the two articles suggest that, the attitude towards the Salafi community by the Islamic Community can not be assessed as completely negative. Although they point out that there are individuals who act as extremist, and that the community itself may not be something that they have accepted the disillusioned hands, they are still fringe from the statements that Bosnia and Herzegovina regards as a European source in which security and all potential disappears due to the terrorist potential , which is often associated with the Salafi communities.

Five years after these two articles, the Islamic Community talks on the inclusion of para-jamaats in the structure of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina begin. Although the situation regarding the achievement of these agreements and the statistics concerning para-jamaats that joined the Islamic Community has already been discussed, the third article presented is from January 2016, by Razim ef. Čolić, who is also the Director of the Foreign Affairs and Diaspora of the Riyaset Islamic Community. "All the para-jamaats that emerge beyond the penetration of the Constitution of the Islamic Community are illegal" is the title of this article, in which primarily Colic comments on activities to suppress alternative practice in the organization and conduct of religious duties in Bosnia and Herzegovina. "As things went wrong in Europe, there were groups that began to declare others to be kafes - unbelievers. It's very dangerous. Some groups even declared Reis-l-ulema a kafir. We decided to focus more on the organization of the Islamic Community. We also supported the Coordination of Bosniak NGOs and we appreciate it. At the Reisu-l-uleme consultation with the mufti, it was concluded that the mufti should identify alternative para-jamaats and invite them to return to the Islamic community. We wanted to protect these people from possible blows, but also to ensure our constitutional obligation to institutionally organize the religious life of Muslims in BiH. Para-jamaat is something that was created without the permission of the IC. All para-jamaats that occur outside the procedure of the Constitution of the IC are illegal and we call them paradoxes.

It is interesting that certain people and groups have the need to organize themselves in such pragmatic, instead of satisfying religious needs in mosques. It happens often that in only fifty or a hundred meters from the spacious mosque we have a building, or a house with the inscription 'mesjid'. It is from the Islamic point of view, the least understood, incomprehensible. The paradisees are a foreign body in the Muslim community. Regardless of the intentions of the people who have them they are participating in the disintegration of the existence of Muslims in BiH and we think that the Islamic Community and the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be protected from such action. <sup>99</sup>

After that, it again emphasizes the magnitude of difference between the members of the Salafist orientation and members of extreme tekfir ideology.

Nevertheless, Colic says, it is very important that the existence of para-jamaats is about hoping to join the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina and that they will be given sufficient space for their activities. However, those who nevertheless decide to act outside the scope and frameworks of the Islamic Community, consciously choose to be portrayed as apostates of the Islamic community, and not as a part of it, and can not enjoy the protection of the Islamic community and leave it to existence that will depend on their responsibility and circumstances.

From the analysis of the relationship between the Islamic Community and the Salafi Community, it can be concluded that they do not see all the Salafist communities as extremist or prone to terrorism. However, those para-jamaats who have decided to join the Islamic Community have completely reduced their chances of being described by these terms, unlike those who remain outside the Islamic Community. In the context of generalizations, the actions of individuals within the Salafist community are increasingly emphasized.

---

<sup>99</sup> Radio Islamske zajednice "BIR" Razim ef. Čolić, Svi džemati koji nastanu mimo procedure Ustava IZ-e su nelegalni, January 15, 2016, available at: <http://www.islamskazajednica.ba/vijesti/aktuelno/23408-paradzemat-je-nesto-sto-je-nastalo-bez-odobrenja-islamske-zajednice>

## 11. Antagonism Between the Salafi Community and the Islamic Community

Analysis of sources confirms the existence of antagonisms between the Salafi movement and the Islamic community. Depending on different perspectives, the scale of these antagonisms varies. The tendency for one community to blame the other for their own actions, the differences in interpretation of Islam, and political manouvers to gain a monopoly over the Islamic interpretation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is inevitable.

For this reason, the final section devoted analyzes the relationship between the Islamic Community and the Salafist Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The interview with Srdjan Puhalo highlights his views on the Salafist community and addresses certain criticisms: "It is not true that those in the area of Gornje Maoče and Ošvi live by Sharia law, or at least I do not see it. Their children go to the FBiH schools, they fulfill all obligations towards the state, but how they behave at home is their personal choice."<sup>100</sup>

However, Turcalo's research reveals that Salafis hold mostly negative or skeptical views of the Islamic Community, and even members of those para-jamaats who are now alleged members of the Islamic Community remain consistent with this tendency. "A Salafi member who agreed to join said he thinks that the treatment of his para-jamaat by the IC represents 'rejection' and described it as a 'stepmother's behavior.'"<sup>101</sup> Also, members of the Salafi movement say that the formation of para-jamaats has influenced the behavior of the Islamic community to completely officially rejected Salafism and demand a monopoly over the interpretation of Islam.

Azinovic, referring to the author Richard K. Betts, quotes; "The presence of the confrontational interpretation of Islam (Wahhabism, Salafism or Alkalism) and of the related groups is not the main problem of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, it does add to the yet unresolved

---

<sup>100</sup> Interview with Srdjan Puhalo, 10.07.2019.

<sup>101</sup> Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, *Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini*, 2016. p.13

problems that have been blocking the essential progress of this country for years in a state of 'institutionalized temporality' (Richard K. Betts) and powerlessness."<sup>102</sup>

Just as the Bosnian-Herzegovinian structure after the war revealed weaknesses that could be intercepted by foreign bodies, as was the case with the mujahideen, contemporary society is also prone to damaging influence.

Salafists often see the practice of traditional Islam as unacceptable, as Puhalo discovers in his research. Such views are unacceptable to the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, because, in their opinion, the Salafist community is not qualified to comment on Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

However, Bećirević points out that the negative aspects of the Islamic Community generally have a link to the extreme Salafism. According to his research, the opinions reflected degree of radicalization within the Salafī communities or individuals interviewed. On this basis, these expressions serve as a specific indicator of which groups are in line with mainstream Salafism and which represent Salafi-Jihadism. Nevertheless, Bećirević points out that "the majority of Salafis in Bosnia do not advocate violence and simply want to live their lives according to their interpretation of Islam. The main problem posed by this group - which we can call the 'mainstream' Salafī movement - is that their own sense that they are moderate is not shared by a majority of Bosnian Muslims or Bosnians in general who see almost all Salafis as radical."<sup>103</sup> In other words, members of the Salafist movement criticize the generalized perceptions of Bosnian Muslims and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Similarly to how the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina want to distance themselves from members of the Salafist movement, the members of Salafist communities do not want to be perceived through the actions of a few individuals prone to extreme radicalization. However, Bećirević states that "for now, this seems to be a debate put on hold as both Salafis and the Islamic Community aspire to influence the discourse of the other."<sup>104</sup> As long as there is no intention to find common ground or compromise, there will be no tolerance for the others' narratives and the discussion will be limited to formalities.

---

<sup>102</sup> Vlado Azinović, Al-kai'da u Bosni i Hercegovini "Mit ili stvarna opasnost", Radio Slobodna Evropa, 2007.p.81

<sup>103</sup> Edina Bećirević, Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016. p.39

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.p.60

Bosnian Islam views the Salafist narrative as a threat to their narrative, a fact that prompts aggression towards Salafists who want to bring about a change in their religious sphere. "Indeed, the compromise offered by Salafis - to meet the Islamic Community ' half-way ' - can only be achieved by changing the matrix of traditional Bosnian Islam."<sup>105</sup> However, what Bećirević specifically emphasizes is the difference between the Salafist groups that are housed in rural areas compared to those in urban areas, compared to the proposals of the Islamic Community. However, even members of the Salafī community who are close to cities tend to adhere to the principles aimed at revising traditional Islamic interpretations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. "According to the Bosnian law, only the Islamic Community is institutionally entitled to teach and interpret Islam in Bosnia, and the groups beyond that framework now treat the state security apparatus as potential security threats. Nevertheless, over the past few years, some Salafī groups have begun to establish local citizens' associations across Bosnia to spread the Salafī message and attract new adherents. The focus of this proselytism is no longer just secluded rural villages, but has moved to bigger urban centers like Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zenica and Bihac."<sup>106</sup>

In this way, the antagonism between the Salafī community and the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina is maintained. The one goal of both sides is to influence the narrative of Islam, which must lead to the ousting of the other.

Still, a result of this conflict affects the image of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Until a solution is found that will lead to mutual tolerance between these communities, it is unlikely that Bosnia and Herzegovina will free itself from the stereotypes by which it is labeled.

Agreements between the Islamic Community and the Salafist Community could potentially balance extremism, even at the individual level and change the image of the Salafists as a whole, which would no longer implicitly bind them to being labeled as terrorists.

---

<sup>105</sup> Ibid. p. 60

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. p. 60

## 12. Is Bosnia and Herzegovina a Terrorist Threat?

The aforementioned review and analysis of information provided by interviews and statistics can be synthesized in the final question of whether Bosnia and Herzegovina is truly an international threat.

According to Azinovic, referring to author Kohlmann, "The problem truly does exist and anyone in Bosnia who insists that it is not the case, regardless of whether it is a representative of the US or the BiH government, is lying or uninformed. The scope of this problem is not as great as in Iraq or in Saudi Arabia, but there are groups and individuals who are problematic, both for the national security of the United States and for the security of Bosnia and Herzegovina."<sup>107</sup>

Immediately after that, he also points to the German publicist Elsaasser, author of *How Jihad Arrived in Europe*, who believes that Bosnia and Herzegovina served as a springboard for the spread of international terrorism due to war circumstances when Izatbegovic encouraged cadres to fight Serbs in Bosnia with the help of Osama bin Laden and between 5,000 and 10,000 mujahideen from North African and the Middle East. Nevertheless, Azinović asserts that he selectively publicizes information about terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina: "The videos of 'Bosnian Mujahideen' from the mid-90s are shown in contemporary, respected British television stations to point to 'dangerous tendencies' within BiH. These recordings include cadres in which thousands of armed soldiers of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina shout 'Allahu Akber' at the military parade, and the introductory sentence of a journalist warns of 'thousands of Arab fighters in the heart of Europe,' at which the average viewer develops anxiety, and possibly fear."<sup>108</sup> After September 11<sup>th</sup>, the US authorities clearly expressed their attitude towards countries that contain terrorist groups. However, it is ambiguous whether Bosnia and Herzegovina status as a terrorist state is justified.

---

<sup>107</sup> Vlado Azinović, *Between Salvation and Terror: Radicalization and the Foreign Fighter Phenomenon in the Western Balkans*, Sarajevo, 2017. p.8

<sup>108</sup> Vlado Azinović, *Al-kai'da u Bosni i Hercegovini "Mit ili stvarna opasnost"*, Radio Slobodna Evropa, 2007.p.63

Indeed, Azinović says “It took years of unwavering international pressure as well as efforts by local law enforcement agencies before a list of some 1,500 cases of foreign muja- hideen fighters, and others who had obtained Bosnian citizenship during and after the war, was finally compiled and reviewed by Bosnian authorities in 2007. Eventually, the citizenship of more than 600 people, believed to have been obtained unlawfully, was revoked.”<sup>109</sup>

Azinović refers to Bosnian journalist and scholar Esad Haćimović, journalist and author of the book *Garibi: Mujahideen in BiH, 1922-1999*, where he emphasizes in his work that the arrival of the mujahideen, due to their ideological closeness with international terrorism, automatically brought Bosnia and Herzegovina and perception related to terrorism. In this way, this movement draws attention to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and non-traditional practice of Islam leads to drawn out conflicts.

As evidenced by nearly all of the scholars mentioned, the arrival of mujahideen in Bosnia and Herzegovina later transformed into the Salafist movement, which caused Bosnia and Herzegovina reputation as a terrorist threat.

However, a detailed analysis of certain Bosnian authors including Azinović, Puhalo, Bećirević and others reflects a different narrative in relation to this issue.

Moreover, as mentioned by the authors in the Documentary series “*Salafis in Bosnia and Herzegovina*”, the issue has great potential to be politically manipulated and exploited at personal, local and international levels. Although some terrorist attacks have been carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina whose participants did have links with the Salafist community, it is unfair to label the entire community and state as terrorists.

Individuals with extremist aspirations are responsible for their own actions. Detention of such individuals may be one way of exempting Bosnia and Herzegovina from negative perceptions related to terrorism. Also, the deportation of these individuals can lead to the elimination of these perceptions.

---

<sup>109</sup> Vlado Azinovic, *Bosnia and Herzegovina and Terrorism 1996-2011: Defining the Threat, Devising Counterterrorism Strategy*, available at: [https://it4sec.org/system/files/ctwg\\_13\\_bosnia\\_and\\_herzegovina.pdf](https://it4sec.org/system/files/ctwg_13_bosnia_and_herzegovina.pdf)

Certain disagreements that exist between the Islamic Community and the Salafist community are, however, an intra-religious and permanent issue that should be resolved internally to avoid affecting other areas. This conflict can be exacerbated by the creation of wrong perceptions regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina. As evidenced before, Bosnia and Herzegovina is not the only state, neither in the Balkans, nor in Europe that has such groups, or, rather, problematic individuals.

The categorization of a whole society as potentially terrorists based on some associations is harmful and stunting to development.

All stages of security programs ought to be implemented to create a state of high security and feeling of safety in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The same is true in the economic sphere, because the economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as we have seen, often affects communities that are treated as potentially extremist.

During the interview with Jonathan Lubecky, I asked him a question: What do you think is the best procedure when it comes to countries i.e. Bosnia and Herzegovina when it comes to first stage of diagnosing terrorism?

„I have been working on a thesis. People become terrorists because they see no other avenue for change or even being heard than through violence. Which is why having open avenues for protest or some method or airing greivances publicly is a critical first step in countering terrorism in its infancy.”<sup>110</sup>

From the other side, thinking about the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina, during the interview with Hector Maldonado, I was wondering about his opinion regarding the next question: Do you think that Bosnia and Herzegovina might become in the future a new Iraq or Afghanistan?

“Terrorism can blossom anywhere, if conditions allow it to. There are few aspects about Bosnia and Herzegovina that could potentially enable sleeper cells and terror groups to take hold and breed. For one, Bosnia is largely a Muslim country. The use of Mosque worship messages and sermons is a sure way to have total secrecy and an opportunity to spread messages about past wrong doings onto Muslims by the infidels. Radical influence from Wahhabi imams and or other radical groups seeking to brainwash willing minds about their view of the world will surely spike

---

<sup>110</sup>Interview with Jonathan Lubecky

an increase recruitment of potentially already angry youth. Adding fuel of hatred and distortion of facts will enable terror groups to add to their rosters.

Second, BiH is nestled in the heart of southern Europe. She is just a leap from Germany, France and England. Access to any part of Europe is easy from Bosnia. Additionally, the successful recruitment of Slavic Muslims would make it easier to hide potential would be terrorist into the heart of western Europe. Travel to Europe, England and even to the United States would be very easy. Furthermore, what might attract masterminds of manipulation is the tens of thousands of Muslims that are already in the US and other parts of Europe from the war-torn Balkan states. It would only make sense for those radical influencers attempting to use Bosnia as a springboard for attacks in the US and in Europe to attempt to reach out and penetrate the already settled citizens that are in the US, and all over Europe.

We hear about random attacks from foreign born, Naturalized Citizens and even European or American born youth to turn on the country that accepted them and naturalized them. There is at least one story or two a month in which a Naturalized or local born young man of Arab descent that commits some sort of terror attack on innocent civilians at a music concert or night club. Just about all terror groups out there encourage and try to capitalize of this opportunity, to influence those already in place. I am confident that there are already several sleeper cells in Bosnia. Perhaps there are even some sympathizers already in Europe and in the US that have strong feelings of hate, mistrust and contempt for the Nation that is currently housing them as we speak.

Lastly, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a free state. Movement to and fro is quite easy and secure for terrorist. Border crossings and even air vessel transportation can easily be penetrated with counterfeited or falsified documents. Radicals can easily blend in, live in remote areas of the country to plan, plot and even train the newest Soldiers on their quest for Jihad.

In my travels throughout Bosnia, I came across some potential areas where I believe would be easy to hide and operate. I had read articles and stories about Radicals operating within Bosnia already.

Terrorism as I said can spring and grow anywhere, but only if the residents of that place allow them to take root. The best action one can take to protect against Radical Terrorism is be on the offensive and root it out before it can take deep hold of the soil.

Citizens of all nations should be aware of their surroundings, neighbors and most importantly report any and all suspicious activity to the local authorities.”<sup>111</sup>

In the end, it can be concluded that Bosnia and Herzegovina is indeed a terrorist threat, but at the same level as other countries in the region and much of in Europe. There is definitely room for improvement, but it is important that this space be cleared of everyday minor incidences of stereotyping and generalization so that it can move forward with the development of security plans.

The Salafist community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to all of the above, has principles that conflict with the principles of the traditional Islam, but the activities of the entire community generally can not be linked to terrorism. Individuals from the Salafist community who have violent tendencies should be condemned first by their own communities, and measures should be taken to clear the associations with terrorist at the micro-level first before being addressed at the state level.

---

<sup>111</sup> Interview with Hector Maldonado

### **13. State Security Reports of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

In the last decade, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been affected by actions of the several terrorist organizations or their affiliates and came into the focus of the international agencies explicitly dedicated to dealing with terrorism.

In this part of the thesis, the focus is on the comparative analysis –information collected from the Bosnia and Herzegovina State Security Reports from 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2016. The Ministry of Security creates these reports annually not only for the internal use but also to share information with the international community. These reports contain a lot of data, but a specific part of the analyze is pointed regarding terrorism. It illustrates all issues regarding this topic from security threats, a preventive measure implemented by the Bosnian Government and interdisciplinary approach to terrorism from different security services, all agencies internal communication, operational levels and what kind of strategy is used to avoid and prevent terrorist attacks.

Reports' main aim is to underline the number of terroristic attacks during the year with the objective data of the individuals under suspicion for terrorist activities or individuals already convicted for terrorism. Government institutions are generating different preventive actions from several governmental bodies and institutions. Main points of the report include Bosnian citizens at the foreign battlefields and their return to the Bosnian ground. Also, one of the crucial segments of the Report is the foreign citizens migrating to these areas and spreading radical ideas.

Borderline control is an essential service and plays the most crucial part of the prohibition of all terrorist actions. The considerable part of the report is dedicated to Borderline Control actions in defending Bosnian borders and country in general.

The final part of the report is concentrated around the analysis of the previous cases and transforming experiences from those events and use them to build future preventive strategies.

Balancing between the taken measures and the future action plan to become an integral part of the government strategy to fight terrorism and also the most popular political platform for all political parties regionally and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in last decade is one of the main tasks.

### **13.1. 2012**

All agencies included in safety and security in the country: State Investigation and Protection Agency, Border Police of Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Directorate for Coordination of Police Bodies of BiH, as well as the Service for Foreign Affairs, The BiH Intelligence Security Agency, The Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs, The Ministry of the Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and Police of Brčko District reported there was no terrorist activities in Bosnia in 2012. These government institutions are the backbone of security; the base of their existence is to monitor, prevent, and plan the action in case of any terrorist attacks.

When it comes to the issue of terrorism, potential threats or suspicion are presented and dealt with equal interest and importance, as if it was a case of an actual attack. The reason is that sometimes only minutes are deciding whether something will be prevented and escalate from a terrorist threat to a real terrorist attack leading to very different consequences.

During 2012 as the part of their preventive activities, State Investigation and Protection Agency submitted five reports against seven people. Primary of these reports is a suspicion that these individuals have committed acts linked to terrorism. If we widen the view or approach it from a different perspective to overall criminal, there were 36 cases with some connection to terrorism and 71 cases related to firearms trafficking and explosive materials as its stated in the Report on Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2012.<sup>112</sup>

In a total of 658 cases on security-related issues were provided by Border Police of Bosnia and Herzegovina during 2012. Some of this information concerned safety of the state border- illegal crossing individuals who represented a particular terrorist threat. Their travel documents, individuals in their company, vehicles used are some of the information collected by the Border Police of Bosnia and Herzegovina to identify as fast as possible all those who can pose a threat to the security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the global security.

As far as the official cooperation is concerned, progress was made in 2012 compared to previous years. If we compare 2011 and 2012, we have to point out that agreement has been achieved in

---

<sup>112</sup> Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Informacija o stanju sigurnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2012. godini, available at: [https://www.cin.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/informacija\\_sigurnost.pdf](https://www.cin.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/informacija_sigurnost.pdf)

32.25% of cases in 2012 compared to the 2011 year. A total of 9,830 cases were processed during that period, while for 2011 the number was 7,268.

Also, Intelligence and Security Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the year of 2012 was primarily focused on identifying structures from which the terrorist threats to BiH's security were promoted. During 2012, official cooperation was realized in 9,830 cases, an increase of 32.25% compared to 2011, during which formal collaboration was realized in 7.268 cases. These crimes in 2012 were not considered as part of the assortment of international terrorism.

However, as stated in the Report, there was a predetermined number of persons residing in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and there were previously links between these persons and acts of international terrorism, but it is particularly emphasized that after the Arab spring those persons have left the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The announcement of the return of those persons to BiH or EU countries, due to the dissatisfaction with their regimes in the home countries, is one of the steps of prevention that needs to be given special attention in the future.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina during the year 2012, two persons were deprived of the citizenship of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the reasons for that were the illegal acquisition of citizenship, which resulted in the need for deportation to the country of origin, which was ongoing.

One of the main links when perceiving danger of national security is the rise of the followers of the Salafism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as these individuals went to the crisis areas in the world, and then their return to Bosnia and Herzegovina meant the return of potential terrorist threats. During that period, departure to Syria has been noticed, and an additional issue was the fact that returning people were expanding their perspectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina to find new people who would be ready to go to the crisis area. As previously stated, the conclusion of the report contained the trends of the taken measures and the indications of the next steps. Accordingly, in 2012 the Ministry of Security, with the assistance of the OSCE, started the realization of the project entitled "Suppression of extremism and radicalism that can lead to terrorism."<sup>113</sup> With the launch of this project, there was an attempt to take a step further to create constraints for the additional expansion of terrorist threats. During this period, the State Investigation and Protection Agency concentrated

---

<sup>113</sup> Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Informacija o stanju sigurnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2012. godini, available at: [https://www.cin.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/informacija\\_sigurnost.pdf](https://www.cin.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/informacija_sigurnost.pdf)

its efforts on the protection of possible terrorist attacks on embassies and other objects and personalities. Also, attention has been paid to the monitoring of agreements through social networks on the Internet for the execution of terrorist acts, as well as the activities aimed at preventing threats to be addressed to Bosnia and Herzegovina officials as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina judicial institutions.

## 13.2. 2014

The institutions mentioned above for 2012 also declared in 2014 that there were no terrorist attacks in Bosnia and Herzegovina within the Report on Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2014.<sup>114</sup> Comparing Bosnia and Herzegovina with the countries in the region leads to the conclusion that Bosnia and Herzegovina share a similar position. Not excluded from the risks that can undermine security and specific threats, yet it is in the stage when those threats have been identified and preventively suppressed.

During the year 2014, SIPA confronted 22 reports due to the existence of grounds for suspicion that, directly or through the filter of doubt committed acts related to terrorism. Progress was made in identification compared to previous years, as 22 of the 22 reports reported during 2014, 22 were familiar and one NN person.

Identification is a testament to the progress made, which stimulates increased security and threat prevention in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As reported in the 2014 Report, there has been an increased concern about Syria and Iraq, as they are as states included in the UN list of terrorist organizations, such as Al-Nusra and ISIL. By engaging in these organizations, these people are additionally empowered by radicalization and then return to Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the sake of collecting new members.

---

<sup>114</sup>Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Informacija o stanju sigurnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2014. godini, available at: [http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/Informacija\\_2014\\_sigurnost.pdf](http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/Informacija_2014_sigurnost.pdf)

That is why, during 2014, SIPA was involved in antiterrorist operations called Damascus and Damascus 1, resulting in a total of 29 persons being imprisoned and extraditing.

The Border Police in 2014 remains one of the main contributors to the prevention of terrorism and terrorist threats. During the year 2013, the Border Police forwarded a total of 871 information to the competent authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose relevance relates to potentially or threatening security in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the terrorist aspect.

Intelligence Security Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the year 2014, according to the allegations of the Report, did not have the data that recorded the stay of members of Al Qaeda in BiH.

However, the recruitment of members of ISILA and Al Nusra front was carried out in that year and the territory of BiH. Also, a radical Salafī from Gornja Maoča has been living in Syria as a member of Al Nusra Front since 2014, and this resulted in the fact that together with eight persons, on 24 September 2014, the name Nusret Imamovic was on a particular global terrorist list State Department.

The conclusion of the Report was a reference to trends in the measures taken as well as indications of the next steps. It is underlined that State Investigation and Protection Agency, as well as other police structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are obliged to activate the Task Force to combat terrorism in full capacity, with the aim of not reducing security.

Therefore, the continuity of operative-tactical-technical and investigative actions aimed at illuminating criminal offenses labeled with potential or actual terrorist indications is one of the goals. It has been tracking the unauthorized possession and trade of arms, military equipment, etc. as well as disclosure of organizations is a new goal that needs to be achieved to enhance the security situation.

Identification and security information for people who are safe from the perspective of combating terrorism, and with the cooperation of the Border Police and other competent authorities, both nationally and internationally, are an additional aspect to focus.

Monitoring of open sources of information and networks where it is possible to provide information on suspicious content is also of crucial importance.

As the last point, it was emphasized that by mid-2014 the Law on Supplementation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Criminal Code for sanctioning the departure of foreign fighters and participating in foreign paramilitary and paramilitary organizations.

However, in the analysis below, we see that the steps that are taken still have the defects and it caused the change in the security situation from the perspectives of terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2015.

### **13.3. 2015**

The previous description of the security climate from the perspective of terrorism during 2012 and the year 2014, however, did not remain the same during 2015. The tide of terrorist attacks took place in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the year 2015.

The evolution of terrorist threats and attacks in 2015 has hindered until then the existing security balance and progress in the area of the prevention of the fight against terrorism.

In the Security Report - 2015<sup>115</sup>, it is stated that BiH shares the position of many countries in the context of possible threats of terrorism. Nevertheless, during the year 2015, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been subjected to intensified extremist threats, which left considerable traces.

According to SIPA data, Border Police of BiH, Directorate for Coordination of Police Bodies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Foreign Affairs Services, Intelligence and Security Agency of BiH, Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs, Republika Srpska Ministry of Interior and Brcko District Police in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015, the report states that during the year 2015, three terrorist attacks were carried out.

One of the attacks happened at the Zvornik Police Station, and another attack was carried out on members of the BiH Armed Forces in Rajlovac. The third attack was throwing an explosive gadget at the Zavidovic Police Station.

---

<sup>115</sup> Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Informacija o stanju sigurnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2015. godini, available at: <http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/Info2015godina2604.pdf>

The sequences of these attacks were human sacrifices. One policeman and two soldiers were killed, two policemen and one soldier were wounded, one attacker was killed, and another committed suicide. Negative reflections and the fall in ratings that followed these attacks in BiH led to a feeling of general insecurity in this area. MSBIH reports the relevant institutions on these attacks and parts of these reports are part of this General Report on Security in 2015 in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Based on the information contained in the Security Report, the terrorist attack on the police station in Zvornik was carried out on 27 April 2015, during which Nerdin Ibric used firearms and killed one and wounded two police officers.

Another terrorist attack was carried out on BiH Army soldiers in Rajlovac 18.11.2015. In the sports betting facility of Novi Grad Sarajevo. Two people in OS BiH uniforms were killed during this attack.

The suspected person for this terrorist attack has been located at the address of his home, and after the police officers approached the housing facility, loud detonation stemmed from the apartment, which led to an accelerated constant of the death of the suspected Omeragic Sahin.

The third and last terrorist attack in 2015 was carried out at Zavidovici at 23 / 24.11. 2015 at the Police Station. The executors have thrown an explosive device.

A total of 20 reports were filed by the State Investigation and Protection Agency in 2015, against 31 known persons and one NN person on the grounds of suspicion of having committed certain terrorist offenses or acts that may be linked to terrorist material.

If we compare 2014 and 2015, we can see that the number of identified faces has increased.

SIPA has carried out Damascus 3, Sleeper, Benelux, Attack on PS Zvornik and Srebrenica 2015 and 19 people were arrested. In the reports from previous years, the ideologies mentioned above created by the actions of Al Qaeda, ISIL, Al Nusra Front, etc., have continued to affect and endanger the security of BiH. Also, the Court of BiH issued two verdicts during the year 2015. One of these verdicts has been against four people who were charged for the illegal formation and adherence to foreign paramilitary or parapsychic formations, and the other verdict was related to

the name of Hussein Bošnica called Bilal, as he encouraged terrorist activity as well as seeking new members for terrorist activities and organization of a terrorist group.

Members of the Salafi community in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the year 2015, according to the Report, took the lead in the potential violation of security. It is stated that their activities have continued outside the framework of the official Bosnia and Herzegovina and that they have organized their lives in closed communities where everything is subordinated to the Sharia law. They are mostly assembled in the places of Gornja Maoča, Dubnica, Osve, Lješnica.

The Salafi authorities have organized various lectures and gatherings, to enhance radicalization to prepare for the foreign battlefield.

During 2015, 22 persons went on the warfare of Syria and Iraq, 20 of them were killed and no one person returned to BiH. Also, in the warfare as mentioned earlier, 49 people were killed, 46 of them returned to BiH, and around 11 people returned to the EU and the states of the region. Their activity on international warfare is related to operations and affiliation with ISIL or Al Nusri Front.

Bosnia and Herzegovina during the year 2015 remain a state in which has been no criminal acts that could be label as part of international terrorism.

From all of this, we can conclude that the year 2015 has left significant traces of security in BiH. That is why, in that year, the scope of the trends of the taken measures and indications of the next steps has been extended. The Report states that it is necessary to improve the legal and institutional framework for combating terrorism in BiH. It is required to implement the Strategy and its Action Plan for the Fight Against Terrorism 2015-2020, which will be further elaborated below.

Revision Act and amendments to the Act on Border Control as well as a witness protection program, are of crucial importance. Cooperation with the Council of Europe in the field of the fight against terrorism was further established, with the fact that during the year 2015, BiH chaired the Council of Europe Council of Ministers in May - November 2015. With this step, it is evident that law enforcement agencies in BiH, a country where the one-sided approach is almost impossible, is unilaterally opted for uncompromising confrontation and countering terrorism in this case. Also, the need for trust, data exchange, and multilateral relations within this issue have been finally achieved.

## 13.4. 2016

During the year 2016, the Report<sup>116</sup> states that according to the data of the competent institutions, there were no terrorist attacks. However, in 2016, new tasks in the security field in BiH appeared, aimed at improving the security situation after the erosion of security in 2015.

In 2016, the State Investigation and Protection Agency filed a total of 20 reports against 23 people. Those above mentioned and realized actions implemented by SIPA, in the year 2015, were also part of the Strategic Plans and Actions. Thus, within the Damascus case, a total of 5 operational actions were carried out in which 14 persons were arrested. If we compare with the 2015 year, we have a 26% reduction.

Amendments to the Criminal Code of BiH have effectively prevented BiH citizens from going to international warfare.

However, after the publication of the Instructions and Intentions of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina directed to the Salafi groups, did not lead to significant changes. This whole process has only provoked counter-reactions between leaders and followers of radical Salafism in the territory of BiH, who have explicitly refused to accept these instructions.

However, according to OSA data, we have come to the notice that ISIL members during 2016 were incapable of attracting new members, leading to significant reductions in that organization and forbidding their further activities leading to security breaches.

Filtration of new members has been suspended, which had a significant impact on BiH's security inflation concerning global stock security market.

During 2016, the social networks served as a platform for foreign fighters from Bosnia and Herzegovina who are currently with ISIL in the zone of conflict in Syria and Iraq, to hint at the attacks in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As stated in the Report, there is a concern that the aspiration of

---

<sup>116</sup> Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Informacija o stanju sigurnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2016. godini, available at: <http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/info2017.pdf>

the Islamic State in the Balkans would be a serious security risk for the possible infiltration of terrorists into migrant structures and the prevention of such action is of crucial importance.

The next steps that were being considered during 2016, intending to prevent security in Bosnia and Herzegovina were continuous cooperation on information exchange and operational teamwork of relevant institutions in the fight against terrorism.

Also, creating a registry of people who were active in the past or are still on international warfare is one of the goals. Besides, the improvement of the legal and institutional framework for combating terrorism, to strengthen statutory regulations by the adoption of the Law on Combating Terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina is mentioned as the next step necessary to ensure.

## **14. Observations of Strategy for Prevention and Combating Terrorism**

During the 2015, the Bosnia and Herzegovina's Strategy for Prevention and Combating Terrorism<sup>117</sup> was created for the next five years. This Strategy was adopted at the 14<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Ministers in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 08.07.2015.

A total of 28 pages, featuring Strategy Building, Vision and Mission, the main goal of the strategy in four areas: Prevention, Rejection, Investigation and Criminal Prosecution and Response to Terrorist Attacks has been published. Besides, we have an insight into the Strategic Program - Guidelines for Implementing Priority Goals, and Reconciling Strategy with Other Relevant National Strategic, Euro-Atlantic, and Global Documents. Monitoring of the implementation of the strategy represents the next step, and it is complemented by the international partners in the implementation of the procedure. And as the last point, the Guidelines for the creation of a single action plan, Action Plans of Entity and Brčko District BiH, are presented. At the very beginning

---

<sup>117</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina Council of Ministers, Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for Preventing and Combating Terrorism 2015 – 2020, Available At: [http://Msb.Gov.Ba/Pdf/Strategija\\_Za\\_Borbu\\_Protiv\\_Terorizma\\_Eng.Pdf](http://Msb.Gov.Ba/Pdf/Strategija_Za_Borbu_Protiv_Terorizma_Eng.Pdf)

of this Strategy, we have an insight into the link that occurs in the case of the fight against terrorism, and specifically emphasizes the obligation that the competent institutions have towards their citizens on the one hand. On the other side, there is a fulfillment of the commitments Bosnia and Herzegovina assumed by signing the Stabilization Agreement and joining the EU. From this example, we can explicitly see that the fight against terrorism introduces co-operation between states as the norm to be fulfilled to create a stable security net.

In the description of the Strategy, we find a paragraph stating that: "This document is a clear expression of the readiness of Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue activities since 2001 when BiH became a member of the Antiterrorist Coalition. In this context, the Strategy follows and advances the principles established in 2006."<sup>118</sup>

From this, we can see that BiH is a member of the Antiterrorist Coalition and has to follow the principles that derive from the 2006 Security Policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are still many institutions with which BiH cooperates, and fulfilling various types of norms, creates conditions for vital security of its territory and the region. Also, it is stated that: "This document sets principles, vision and mission, and sets goals in agreement with the documents of the United Nations, NATO and the European Union. Similarly, the future strategic program for achieving it is based on principles prevention and combating of terrorism established by: the Global UN Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the European Union's Strategies for Combating Terrorism and the suppression of terrorism and recruitment for terrorism and other relevant international instruments, considering the latest such as: Conclusions and Recommendations on Suppressing Violent Extremism, (February 2015), Common Declaration from Belgrade (April 2015), Joint Declaration from St. Polten (May 2015), and a series of other documents."<sup>119</sup> All of this serves us for the confirmation of opinion, based on the premise that such strategies must contain the entire range of prerequisites that must be created. It has been shown that convergence between the institutions and rules of BiH and other relevant institutions in the world is the only precondition for combating and continually preventing terrorism.

---

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

## **15. United States Country Reports on Terrorism for 2016.**

During July 2017, the United States Department of State Publication Bureau of Counterterrorism Released Country Reports on Terrorism for 2016<sup>120</sup> Year. This type of report serves as a subliminal report on the status of security concerning the challenges of combating terrorism in different countries. Comparing the security situation and the terrorist challenges in different countries give us the best insight into specific achievements in the area of security or security vulnerabilities faced by various states in the given year. At the beginning of the report, it is emphasized that although there has been declination regarding terrorist threats during 2016, there is a duty of continuous prevention and the creation of strategies to achieve this. Terrorist groups do not give up their aspirations, both theoretical and practical expansion of their intentions, and therefore, the US still resonates as their obligation to accentuate terrorism as a threat that should not be neglected.

Given that social networks are still "a good" platform for terrorist purposes, in this report we can find information about the balance of terrorist threats that had their flow through social networks during 2016 and comparison with previous years. "Due in part to these efforts, ISIS content on the internet declined 75 percent from August 2015 to August 2016, while ISIS-related traffic on Twitter declined 45 percent from mid-2014 to mid-2016. This coincided with a steep reduction in the monthly rate of official visual media releases by ISIS, from 761 in August 2015 to 194 in August 2016, according to a study published by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, ISIS had 19 active media outlets at the beginning of 2017, down from at least 40 in 2015, according to another study published by the Council on Foreign Relations."<sup>121</sup>

In addition to the mentioned reductions related to content on social networks, however, insight into the practice of terrorism leaves some cause for concern.

---

<sup>120</sup> United States Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism 2016 - Bosnia and Herzegovina, 19 July 2017, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5981e4503.html>

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

The Report states that, even with losing leading positions, Al - Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula during 2016, represents a significant threat to Yemen, as well as to the entire region.

Also, knowing the interests and resources used by terrorist organizations, we find in this Report that the United States is highly committed to suspending or reducing the CBRN.

"Given the well-understood ISIS interest and intent in CBRN capabilities, the United States has been working proactively to disrupt and deny ISIS's (and other non-state actors') chemical weapons capability, as well as to deny ISIS and other non-state actors access to CBRN-useable materials and expertise through interdictions and strengthening the ability of regional governments to detect, disrupt, and respond effectively to suspected CBRN activity."<sup>122</sup>

In addition to the comprehensive report on the state of the majority of states, we can find a Report on the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I found it very useful to introduce this report because, in addition to the above-mentioned Security Standards Report in BiH, which is inspired by the Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Security, it is essential that I introduce a second approach. For this reason, the perspective of a state's security inspired by the United States can confirm what has already been mentioned in the reports from Bosnia and Herzegovina or overcome these claims, from a broader perspective.

The 2016 Report states that Bosnia and Herzegovina "remained a cooperative counterterrorism partner and continued to make progress increasing its counterterrorism capacity."<sup>123</sup> After this, we have a more detailed insight into the security situation in BiH. The laws of BiH and the competent authorities are, according to the description that we find out from the Report, active in its work, but still, Bosnia and Herzegovina remains a dynamic source of national extremist groups and extreme Islamic ideologies, leaving the space for developing terrorist threats.

As I mentioned in the BiH Security Reports, this Report also shares information on the departure of Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens on foreign warfare. In addition to the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the Report points out

---

<sup>122</sup> United States Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism 2016 - Bosnia and Herzegovina, 19 July 2017, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5981e4503.html>

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

dissatisfaction due to the trespassed relationship between the legal agencies and the State Prosecute's Office.

Consequences of this co-operative divergence are the lack of uniform and stable capacities necessary for the investigation and prosecution of terrorist threats and the imposition of adequate penalties for the entities that do so.

As part of the Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina, we will also consider the work and co-operation of Border Policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is stated that they use a computerized database and software system to support immigration and passenger information collection. Thanks to this system, a link is created between 4 airport locations I to Banja Luka, Mostar, Sarajevo and Tuzla via the State Police Information Network. It also points out that the Directorate for Police Body Coordination (DCPB), the State Investigative and Protection Agency (SIPA), the Federation Ministry and Interior and the BiH Ministry of Security may apply for SPIN - which provides the BD and FAS to use other databases, including INTERPOL, and thus to facilitate verification and identification. After the modification of the system that became operational with European Union support in 2013, the scanning of passengers has become much more effective because any suspicious information that could compromise security will come up as a "hit."

Nevertheless, the Report states that there are significant margins in border security and that uses a selective scan, which indicates irregularities and the production of additional risks.

Although during the year 2015, BiH has not proved an improvement when it comes to money laundering and terrorist financing, in 2016, the FATF recognizes progress in this area. Also, the pressure to fulfill these binding standards was created by the EU, which in November 2016 issued a report stating that measures in the action plan should be completed without delay and omission.

The central religious communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to work with the Interreligious Council to promote tolerance and to unite the struggle against extremism and terrorism. As part of the Report, there is also a speech from the Reis Kavazovic, who spoke of the misinterpretations of Islam, which have persistently created generalizations and led to extreme violence. Reis Kavazovic negotiated with the Salafist communities. Progress has been made in this area.

At the end of the Report, it was emphasized that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a member of the OSCE and that it is once again ensured that Bosnia and Herzegovina should and will advance its counterterrorism strategy. Besides, the membership of the Council of Europe and the Regional Cooperation Council and the NATO-oriented country should be facilitated and improved to face upcoming challenges.

## **16. Bosnia and Herzegovina Travel Advisory: Exercise Increased Caution**

In January 2018, the U.S. Department of State - Bureau of Consular Affairs presented the level of security related to travel/visit to BiH. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been assigned to the second level in the context of security. In total, there are four levels, which include:

1. Exercise normal precautions
2. Exercise increased caution
3. Reconsider travel
4. Do not travel

As a reason for increased caution, it mentioned terrorism and land mines. "Terrorist groups continue plotting possible attacks in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Terrorists can attack with little or no warning, targeting tourist locations, transport hubs, shopping malls, local government facilities, hotels, clubs, restaurants, places of worship, parks, major sporting and cultural events, educational institutions, airports, and other public areas. Minefields and land mines are present throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina. While suspected hazardous areas are normally clearly marked, several people are killed or injured each year."<sup>124</sup> Considering the past events and labeling of Bosnia and

---

<sup>124</sup> Travel.State. Gov U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE — BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS, Bosnia and Herzegovina Travel Advisory, available at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/bosinia-and-herzegovina-travel-advisory.html>

Herzegovina as a potential terrorist safe heaven state, it was in some way expected to get this level after the revision of the trip to this country. However, by the method of personal observation in that period, it is essential to state that Bosnian and Herzegovian citizens expressed dissatisfaction with this categorization. However, apart from Bosnia and Herzegovina, many more advanced countries have been granted the same level, precisely because of security measures.

When we opened this Report for 2019, we selected the part related to the Terrorism Threat, which stated that the risk of terrorism originated from Islamic fighters who settled Bosnia and Herzegovina after the 1992-1995 war and that currently about 700 of them survived on the territory of BiH. The destinations at which the highest level of concentration of risk of terrorism is the highest in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, and Mostar. "Throughout 2018, the State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) for Bosnia and Herzegovina conducted several raids, arresting people suspected of joining or supporting foreign fighters. Over the last few years, many Bosnians who have traveled to Syria and Iraq have returned home, possibly increasing the terror threat." Emphasizing the activities of BiH's internal organs aimed at curbing terrorism, the potential for the future prosperity of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been created in a certain way.

If we would not have insights into the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, regarding Salafi movement, foreign fighters, Islamic Community, perceptions connected to Bosnia and Herzegovina as a terrorist threat, we could simply accept this statistics and explanations behind it. Beside it, we would be partially contributing in perceiving Bosnia and Herzegovina as a terrorist threat and in that way, we would assume that whole Salafi movement is a threat, and that Bosnia and Herzegovina is withal the base for the expansion of terrorism. But during this research, we have concluded why this perception exists and we have examined the validity of the same and the factors contributing to its creation.

## 17. Conclusion

Through the analysis of materials, content and context, we can conclude that the complexity of the Bosnian society, as well as the general area of the Balkans, concerning the issues of terrorism, complicates the selection of relevant information. Most importantly, some conclusions can be reached about the questions proposed by this paper. Bosnia and Herzegovina's label as a terrorist threat is unjustified. Because of a single minority movement, in this case, the Salafi Movement, Bosnia and Herzegovina have been classified as a terrorist threat to Europe and globally.

Within the Salafi Movement there are individuals who during the course of their existence had performed terrorist activities or participated in the recruitment of people from Bosnia and Herzegovina to join foreign war factions guided by terrorist motives. However, it is irrational to charge the whole community with violent extremism or terrorism. A discussion of the intentions of the Salafi community can be pursued in further research, as an analysis of their relationship and goals regarding the Islamic community or the recruitment of citizens from Bosnia and Herzegovina into their community. Changes after the September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, had a global echo, reaching Bosnia and Herzegovina and beyond and changing the way that the intentions of the Salafist Movement are perceived. In recent history, negative perception of this community has been influenced by the portrayals in American media, affecting viewers' ideologies. The media and viewers have also been affected in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, ultimately, this paper aims to examine the relations between the Salafi community and the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the processes of recruitment into their circles, and the recruitment processes from their circles to warriors outside Bosnia and Herzegovina.

*1. The perception of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a terrorist threat because of the existence of the Salafi Movement is not justified.*

*2. The Salafi Movement, although counting members who are prone to violent extremism according to their own principles or activities, does not generally reflect attitudes or activities that promote violent extremism.*

## List of References

### Books

- Boylan, Michael, Terrorism and Collective Responsibility. In Blackwell Public Philosophy (pp. 60-82). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing 2009.
- Gerges, Fawaz A., The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda, Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2011.
- Herman, Susan, Taking liberties the war on terror and the erosion of American democracy. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, USA. 2011.
- McCauley, Clark. The Psychology of Terrorism. Brooklyn, NY: Social Science Research Council. 2011.
- Burleigh Taylor Wilkins, Terrorism and Collective Responsibility (Points of Conflict). Hoboken: Taylor and Francis. 2003.
- Vlado Azinovic, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Terrorism 1996-2011: Defining the Threat, Devising Counterterrorism Strategy, available at:  
[https://it4sec.org/system/files/ctwg\\_13\\_bosnia\\_and\\_herzegovina.pdf](https://it4sec.org/system/files/ctwg_13_bosnia_and_herzegovina.pdf)
- Sead Turčalo & Nejra Veljan, Perspektive zajednice o prevenciji nasilnog ekstremizma u Bosni i Hercegovini, 2016.
- Vlado Azinović, Between Salvation and Terror: Radicalization and the Foreign Fighter Phenomenon in the Western Balkans, Sarajevo, 2017.

- Edina Bećirević, *Salafism vs. Moderate Islam, A Rhetorical Fight for the Hearts and Minds of Bosnian Muslims*, Atlantic Initiative, Sarajevo 2016.
- International Crisis Group, *Indonesia Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix*, 2004.
- McCauley, Clark and Moskaleiko, Sophia. *Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism*. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2008.
- Ian Shapiro. *Containment: Rebuilding a Strategy against Global Terror*. 2007.
- Srđan Puhalo, *Selefije u Bosni i Hercegovini, ko su oni, kako ih drugi vide i kako se izvještava o njima*, Pro Educa, Banja Luka 2016.
- John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches 4th Edition*, SAGE Publications, Inc; 4th edition, 2014.
- Vlado Azinović, *Al-kai'da u Bosni i Hercegovini "Mit ili stvarna opasnost"*, Radio Slobodna Evropa, 2007.
- Innes, M. (2005). *Terrorist Sanctuaries and Bosnia-Herzegovina: Challenging Conventional Assumptions*. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. 2005.

## Reports

- Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Informacija o stanju sigurnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2012. godini, available at: [https://www.cin.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/informacija\\_sigurnost.pdf](https://www.cin.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/informacija_sigurnost.pdf)
- Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Informacija o stanju sigurnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2014. godini, available at: [http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/Informacija\\_2014\\_sigurnost.pdf](http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/Informacija_2014_sigurnost.pdf)
- Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Informacija o stanju sigurnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2015. godini, available at: <http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/Info2015godina2604.pdf>
- Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Informacija o stanju sigurnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2016. godini, available at: <http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/info2017.pdf>
- Country Reports on Terrorism for 2016 – Bosnia and Herzegovina  
United States Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism 2016 - Bosnia and Herzegovina, 19 July 2017, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5981e4503.html>
- Bosnia and Herzegovina Council of Ministers, Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for Preventing and Combating Terrorism 2015 – 2020, Available At: [http://Msb.Gov.Ba/Pdf/Strategija\\_Za\\_Borbu\\_Protiv\\_Terorizma\\_Eng.Pdf](http://Msb.Gov.Ba/Pdf/Strategija_Za_Borbu_Protiv_Terorizma_Eng.Pdf)
- Travel.State. Gov U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE — BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS, Bosnia and Herzegovina Travel Advisory, available at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/bosinia-and-herzegovina-travel-advisory.html>

- Bin Laden and the Balkans: The Politics of Anti-Terrorism ICG Balkans Report N° 119, 9 November 2001.  
[https://www1.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/world/europe/south\\_east\\_europe/macedonia/MacedoniaBinLadenandtheBalkans.pdf](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/world/europe/south_east_europe/macedonia/MacedoniaBinLadenandtheBalkans.pdf)
- Bardos, G.N., 2002. Balkan Blowback? Osama bin Laden and Southeastern Europe. *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 2002.
- Gibas-Krzak, D. Contemporary Terrorism in the Balkans: A Real Threat to Security in Europe. *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 2013.
- The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. Available at: <https://www.9-11commission.gov/report/>
- Islamska zajednica u Bosni i Hercegovini, Rijaset predstavio izvještaj o razgovorima sa nelegalnim džematima, April 23th 2016, Available at: <http://www.islamskazajednica.ba/vijesti/aktuelno/23732-rijaset-predstavio-izvjestaj-o-razgovorima-sa-paradzematima>

## Articles

- Svi džemati koji nastanu mimo procedure Ustava IZ-e su nelegalni, January 15, 2016, available at: <http://www.islamskazajednica.ba/vijesti/aktuelno/23408-paradzemat-je-nesto-sto-je-nastalo-bez-odobrenja-islamske-zajednice>
- Aleš Gaube, Intervju: Još uvijek smo u koncentracionom logoru, 2011, available at: <http://www.islamskazajednica.ba/vijesti/vijesti-arhiva/12152-intervju-jo-uvijek-smo-u-koncentracionom-logoru>
- Mr. Hamdija Ćustović, Bošnjaci protiv ekstremizma, 2011, available at: <http://www.islamskazajednica.ba/vijesti/vijesti-arhiva/12129-bonjaci-protiv-ekstremizma>
- Predrag Petrović, Islamic radicalism in the Balkans, 2016, available at: [https://wb-iisg.com/wp-content/uploads/bp-attachments/4732/Alert\\_24\\_Balkan\\_radicalism.pdf](https://wb-iisg.com/wp-content/uploads/bp-attachments/4732/Alert_24_Balkan_radicalism.pdf)
- Selefije u Bosni i Hercegovini, Dokumentarni serijal, <https://projects.voanews.com/salafism-in-bosnia/>
- Charles C. Haynes , First Amendment Center and Interfaith Alliance. What is the Truth About American Muslims? Questions and Answers. Washington, DC: Religious Freedom Education Project. 2012.

- Kristin Deasy, “In Bosnia, U.S. Embassy Shooting Resurrects Old Fears”, Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, October 29, 2011  
[https://www.rferl.org/a/detentions\\_in\\_serbia\\_after\\_us\\_embassy\\_attack/24374981.html](https://www.rferl.org/a/detentions_in_serbia_after_us_embassy_attack/24374981.html)  
(accessed Apr. 2. 2019).
- Marko Babić, Salafism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2017, available at:  
[https://www.iemed.org/observatori/arees-danalisi/arxius-adjunts/anuari/med.2017/IEMed\\_MedYearbook2017\\_salafism\\_bosnia\\_balkans\\_Babic.pdf](https://www.iemed.org/observatori/arees-danalisi/arxius-adjunts/anuari/med.2017/IEMed_MedYearbook2017_salafism_bosnia_balkans_Babic.pdf)
- Moosa, Ebrahim. Muslim Apology? Nicolas Kristof's Column. (September 19, 2010). Available at: <https://ebrahimmoosa.com/2010/09/19/muslim-apology-nicholas-kristof-s-column/>. Accessed at May 10 2019.
- The Associated Press, “Gunman fires on US embassy in Bosnia” The Guardian, October 28, 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/oct/28/us-embassy-bosnia-gunman>  
(accessed Mar. 15.2019).
- The New York Times. No Conviction For Student In Terror Case. Association Press. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/11/us/no-conviction-for-student-in-terror-case.html>

## Websites

- Fifth Amendment, available at: <https://www.congress.gov/content/conan/pdf/GPO-CONAN-2017-10-6.pdf>
- First Amendment, US Constitution. Available at: <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/amendments/amendment-i>
- The White House. President George W. Bush. Selected Speeches of President George W. Bush 2001 – 2008. Retrieved 15 May 2019, from: [https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/bushrecord/documents/Selected\\_Speeches\\_George\\_W\\_Bush.pdf](https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/bushrecord/documents/Selected_Speeches_George_W_Bush.pdf)
- The White House. USA PATRIOT ACT. Available at: <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/patriotact/>
- US Government Information. One Hundred Seventh Congress of the United States of America. 3 January 2001. Retrieved 15 May 2019, from <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-107hr3162enr/pdf/BILLS-107hr3162enr.pdf>
- Bosnia and Herzegovina Travel Advisory: Exercise Increased Caution, Available at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/bosinia-and-herzegovina-travel-advisory.html>

## List of Appendices

### Appendices No. 1: Interview with Hector Maldonado

*1. During Your stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1996, did you learn or suspected of the existence of any groups led with terrorist intents?*

1996 seemed to be a year of mixed acts of violence against innocent civilians. Although, the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina had ended; but tensions were still present throughout the entire mountainous country. Although the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina was Civil War with the same general hatred that fuels terrorism, nevertheless, I guess you can also describe the war in BIH as acts of terror against civilian populations. However, I mostly recall terrorism acts in Israel such the string of attacks in Feb and March of that year where four suicide bombers acted within days in a series of suicide bombings that resulted in 60 dead and 284 wounded. By the mid to late 1990's it seemed that the world had grown accustom to terrorism in Israel. It seems like every day there was an attack. It was just something that Israeli's learned to live with. But it seems like terrorism was spilling over the boarders in other places all over the world. Perhaps it was that I was out of the United States and in Southern Europe that made me more aware that terrorism had spiked a bit. These acts included not only Islamic action against civilians in Israel but also Terrorism from entities such as the Irish Republican Army to Chechen rebels attacking Russian Soldiers and innocent civilians or FARC guerrillas in Columbia, South America attacking Military and Government forces. During the entire time that I spent in the Balkans, I focused on my job at the time to quell tensions and maintain the peace. I really did not study in-depth the underlining issues nor did either I try to study the true cause and effects of Bosnian political or social issues. I was merely a Peacekeeper, enforcing an International peace accord. To be honest, I never really acknowledged the Violence in Bosnia as a potential catalyst for future terrorism actions on Western Europe or for the US. Perhaps the signs were there. Perhaps groups were starting to form. What I did notice was the hatred among the different ethnic groups in Bosnia that only fuels random acts of violence indiscriminately affecting the weak and innocent.

*2. Did you feel safe during your deployment in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2015? Have you noticed any differences compared to 1996, concerning potential or actual terrorist threats?*

I spent the better part of a year from the fall 2014 to summer 2015 as a NATO Advisor in Bosnia and Herzegovina. My job then was to work with all NATO members and partners on training and interoperability of BIH as she works towards NATO and EU integration. Dealing with One Army, vs three back in 1996 was a sure plus; it was also very productive to work with only one Ministry of Defense for the common good of all BIH. Albeit, there were many challenges, the goal was one Nation under the BIH flag.

My role in this time was to work with the Armed Forces of BIH to support and enhance their capabilities. We worked alongside a small NATO and EUFOR contingent in Sarajevo to advance BIH's readiness and to move her closer to NATO membership. I travelled the entire Country, visiting Army and Air Force bases coordinating and developing training objectives and goals in order to meet NATO's requirements for full integration. My Mission here was much different than it was in 1996. However, the common denominator was the same, peace and prosperity for the entire population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The one thing that I did notice in my time in BIH the second time around was the growing investments of countries like Austria, Serbia, Croatia and Russia investing heavily in Bosnia. Additionally, conservative Islamic Nations such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia has taken notice and with very high interest in Bosnia. Both Nations are investing hundreds of millions in Business and infrastructure in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey, also a strategic regional player has invested Billions of Euros over the years in road, energy and infrastructure development, along with mosque renovations which would tie closer the social and religious connection between Turkey and Bosnian Muslims.

Investments from Saudi Arabia has also funneled its way to Mosque renovations and without verification, I have witnessed messages and news of strict Muslim investments in what should be classified as Radical Islamic teaching influence from Saudi Arabia in Balkan Mosque. While serving in Bosnia in 2015, I also laid witness to secluded communities of extreme conservative Islamic teachings of the Wahhabi flavor. In some communities, gated and secluded from the rest of the Bosnian society, one can only ponder what is in the works.

I felt very safe in my year in Bosnia. I travelled the entire country in an unescorted regular civilian vehicle day in and day out without any incident. I ventured into the public social scene and conversed among the local people as I would in the U.S. During the Christmas season in Sarajevo and throughout the entire Bosnian major cities, I felt a very warm and friendly reminder of my Catholic roots. I visited Medjugorje for Christmas which gave me a very comfort feeling and tranquility.

*3. If you consider the work of the various US presidential administrations, covering the period from the start of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina until today, have you noticed a prominence of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a country that has a relevant terrorist base or that might become one?*

It's very difficult to place definite speculation as to what Presidential administrations place on a specific country. One can look at diplomatic efforts and personal visits to areas of interest to even gauge a Presidents interest in nations. When President Clinton finally decided to Launch attacks and commit US Troops as Peacekeeping effort to end the war and enforce Peace in Bosnia, The world thought it was a most noble effort. However, he was forced by Political necessity and to maintain positive US posture and influence in the International realm. Clinton's person and out spoken disagreements with American intrusion in other countries problems kept him from acting on the war in the Balkans. Finally, when he did act, many said it was too late. Earlier strikes would have ended the war sooner and saved tens of thousands innocent lives but this would have meant committing US Troops to possible war, which Clinton was totally against. However, political survival and a secure second term forced his hand and the world will only remember that he entered late but at least he stopped the War. This was not to stop Terror, nor was to end the war but it was politics pure and simple. George W. Bush view of US involvement in Bosnia was that US Troops should not be serving as indefinite peacekeepers. Bush campaigned on pulling troops out of Bosnia so that we can focus on the Military's primary mission; to train, prepare and be ready to fight and win wars. Eventually, troop levels in Bosnia were reduced but that was due to growing security and cooperation within the region. Barack Obama's general view is that diplomacy and conversation is the way to settle disagreements. Force is only to be used as last resort as measured by his own standard not political influence or pressure.

*4. Do you think that Bosnia and Herzegovina might become in the future a new Iraq or Afghanistan?*

Terrorism can blossom anywhere, if conditions allow it to. There are few aspects about Bosnia and Herzegovina that could potentially enable sleeper cells and terror groups to take hold and breed. For one, Bosnia is largely a Muslim country. The use of Mosque worship messages and sermons is a sure way to have total secrecy and an opportunity to spread messages about past wrong doings onto Muslims by the infidels. Radical influence from Wahhabi imams and or other radical groups seeking to brainwash willing minds about their view of the world will surely spike an increase recruitment of potentially already angry youth. Adding fuel of hatred and distortion of facts will enable terror groups to add to their rosters.

Second, BIH is nestled in the heart of southern Europe. She is just a leap from Germany, France and England. Access to any part of Europe is easy from Bosnia. Additionally, the successful recruitment of Slavic Muslims would make it easier to hide potential would be terrorist into the heart of western Europe. Travel to Europe, England and even to the united states would be very easy. Furthermore, what might attract masterminds of manipulation is the tens of thousands of Muslims that are already in the US and other parts of Europe from the war torn Balkan states. It would only make sense for those radical influencers attempting to use Bosnia as a spring board for attacks in the US and in Europe to attempt to reach out and penetrate the already settled citizens that are in the US, and all over Europe.

We hear about random attacks from foreign born, Naturalized Citizens and even European or American born youth to turn on the country that accepted them and naturalized them. There is at least one story or two a month in which a Naturalized or local born young man of Arab decent that commits some sort of terror attack on innocent civilians at a music concert or night club. Just about all terror groups out there encourage and try to capitalize of this opportunity, to influence those already in place. I am confident that there are already several sleeper cells in Bosnia. Perhaps there are even some sympathizers already in Europe and in the US that have strong feeling of hate, mistrust and contempt for the Nation that is currently housing them as we speak.

Lastly, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a free state. Movement to and fro is quite easy and secure for terrorist. Border crossings and even air vessel transportation can easily be penetrated with counterfeited or falsified documents. Radicals can easily blend in, live in remote areas of the country to plan, plot and even train the newest Soldiers on their quest for Jihad.

In my travels throughout Bosnia, I came across some potential areas where I believe would be easy to hide and operate. I had read articles and stories about Radicals operating within Bosnia already.

Terrorism as I said can spring and grow anywhere, but only if the residents of that place allow them to take root. The best action one can take to protect against Radical Terrorism is be on the offensive and root it out before it can take deep hold of the soil. Citizens of all nations should be aware of their surroundings, neighbors and most importantly report any and all suspicious activity to the local authorities.

## **Appendices No. 2: Interview with Jonathan Lubecky**

First and foremost, all opinions are mine and mine alone and have nothing to do with MAPS. I served in the US Marine Corp from 1995-1999 and the US Army 2003-2009. Some of the questions answers would be different today than when I deployed (training and mental preparation being two)

*1. Targeting the potential threat – Did you had any kind of pre combat preparation?*

Yes, exstensive. I went to Marine Corps Boot Camp, Army Training, and specialized training prior to being deployed overseas. Although this training did not contain mental health training.

*2. Point of reward (mental) – How does the army affects soldiers mentally during the process of briefing before the mission/combat?*

Most if it focuses on dehumanizing the enemy, as for resilience training, or anti-PTSD, there was none.

*3. Did you changed your opinion about the US army and their goals before/after mission?*

No, but my view of the politicians who sent us to war certainly did. This is something that is often forgotten, the US government sent me to war, not the military.

*4. What is your present opinion about fighting terrorism: Do you think that external warfare activity can bring better results than actions taken within the same country?*

That is a highly complex and multifaceted question. I think both are needed. Most terrorist attacks in the US post-9/11 have been committed by people who fled violance seeking a better life here and where then radicalized due to US bigotry towards muslims. Which is something we must fix, but I also realize that to counter terrorism at times we must go outside our borders. Am example would be if we discovered a chemical weapons factory supplying terrorists and anyone with enough money chemical weapons, i see no issue removing that threat.

*5. What do you think is the best procedure when it comes to countries i.e. Bosnia and Herzegovina when it comes to first stage of diagnosing terrorism?*

I have been working on a thesis. People become terrorists because they see no other avenue for change or even being heard than through violance. Which is why having open avenues for protest or some method or airing greivances publicly is a critical first step in countering terrorism in its infancy.

*6. Combating terrorism – „war without end” as many scholars name it – Do you think it has different mental effect on soldiers, or you personally in this case. After finishing your mission, did you still know that mission itself is not finished yet? There’s still a question - if that threat will ever be controlled completely?*

On the mental side, it is hard to move past a traumatic episode in your life when what caused the trauma is still going on. Terrorism has always existed. It always will. The critical component is to remove the incentive to terrorism. If people can protest without being killed and have their voices heard with agency, there is no incentive for violence. The world can then focus on the few remaining lunatics who sow chaos and mayhem for fun and remove their ability to make war. (like taking out a bomb maker and his factory). However this must be done in a careful and strategic manner, so as not to harm innocents as much as possible.

*7. In your opinion, does military actions on front can taunt hidden terrorists groups in your homeland or EU countries?*

It absolutely can. In the US look at the Anti-War movement during Vietnam that was homegrown terrorism. We have also had radicalization of muslims in this country because it is perceived that we are at war with Islam, rather than muslims who use their religion to radicalize others to violence.

*8. Did you feel that respect you showed towards your homeland was on the similar/same level as respect/lack of respect that you got after coming back from the front?*

Kind of confused by this question, if my answer doesn't make sense, we can discuss further. For the most part yes. I have always known my government does wrong, even when it thinks it is right. I have always accepted the faults of the US, for me it is more about the US population, than our government and making the US live up to its ideals of freedom and equality.

*9. What is a gap in the point of awareness when it comes to realizing what real terrorism is from the perspective of „ordinary” citizen and a soldier?*

I would say large. Part of this stems from the fact that Terrorism as opposed to transnational crime syndicates, governments, and common criminals is determined not by the action, but the goal and intent. An act of terrorism can occur that doesn't kill anyone. A mass murder can be a crime and not terrorism. It is a complex topic. Terrorism is defined as an act with the intent of effecting or changing social, political, or ideological that of others. So, spray painting a swastika on a synagogue is terrorism, however the mass shooting in Las Vegas was not.

*10. What do you think about the statement that border policy can affect the status of security or prevention in certain states?*

It can, the problem stems from when you have people fleeing certain death, a border won't stop them. This is why border security and vetting is critical, but limiting those legitimately fleeing for their or their families safety with no possibility of entry is detrimental.