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Nationalism and Religious Extremism in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo since 1990

Dr. Robert J. Donia, President of the Council of the International Institute IFIMES and Professor at the University of Michigan, in his article "Nationalism and Religious Extremism in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo since 1990" explores the structural complexity of the relation between nationalism and religion.

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When nationalists superseded the ruling communists in the lands of the former Yugoslavia in 1990, religious believers were freed from the few remaining constraints to practice their faith. Many in the West hoped that the post-communist denizens of democracy would allow religious freedom while simultaneously building secular, democratic states free from the partisan influences of organized religion. Those hopes went unfulfilled. It soon became apparent that leaders of religious communities in Southeast Europe yearned for political influence in addition to their spiritual duties. Religious leaders have since proven to be among the most stalwart partisans of nationalism and in some cases have emerged as major threats to stability and barriers to reconciliation.

In this essay I will review the historical evolution and contemporary state of relations between nationalism and the religious communities of Muslims and Orthodox Christians in the post-socialist era, focusing on the former Yugoslav areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. I argue that faith has been an invaluable handmaiden to nationalists in acquiring and retaining political power, but that religious communities have consistently acted subordinately to nationalist political parties in both lands. Religious communities have been stalking horses for nationalism and have found little reason, other than direct challenges to their own jurisdiction, to curb extremism in their own ranks.

Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo

Since 1990, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo have shared a progression of historical developments: nationalist political mobilization, forcible spatial segregation along ethnic lines, ethnic cleansing and genocide, armed conflict, negotiated peace agreements, international supervisory regimes, rampant corruption, and the gradual but alarming introduction of Islamic fundamentalism. Although the violent breakup of Yugoslavia began with armed conflict in Slovenia and Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo have suffered the most in the wars accompanying Yugoslavia's demise. The peoples of both areas have experienced the complex interaction of faith and nation since the waning days of Yugoslavia's existence.

Both areas are home to populations of mixed national and religious identity, but their populations differ substantially. Serbs inhabit both areas, but in neither area are they the dominant group. As of 1991 (the last year of a full census in either area), Albanians made up 82% of Kosovo's population of 1,954,747, Serbs made up 10%, and a scattering of other groups accounted for the remaining 8%. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, unlike in Kosovo, no single nation commanded an absolute majority. Of 4,354,911 inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina, 17% were Croats (generally associated with Catholicism), 31% were Serbs (generally associated with Serbian Orthodoxy), 44% were Bosnian Muslims (generally associated with Islam), and the remaining 8% consisted of Yugoslavs and "Others." In 1993, to prevent being mistaken for simply a religious community, leaders of the Bosnian Muslims voted to change their group's name to "Bosniak," the term used hereafter in this essay. International organizations accepted the new designation over the next few years, bringing closure to the group's quest to achieve formal recognition as a secular nationality that had begun in Yugoslavia in the 1960s.

Religion and Popular Mobilization in Late Socialist Yugoslavia

In the 1980s, political entrepreneurs turned to mass mobilization to override systemic dysfunction and gridlock in post-Tito Yugoslavia. Albanian students in Kosovo organized strikes and demonstrations in 1981. Throughout the 1980s, syndicates sponsored a growing number of strikes and brought workers' grievances directly to the authorities by organizing demonstrations in republic capitals. Political entrepreneurs were not far behind the students and workers. Slobodan Milošević,

fresh from a victory over rivals in the League of Communists of Serbia, organized serial demonstrations known as the "anti-bureaucratic revolution" in 1988-1989 by focusing discontent on the alleged plight of Serbs in Kosovo.

Mobilization in this pre-democratic era was *opportunistic* and *instrumental*: Political entrepreneurs convened gatherings to focus inchoate popular discontent on specific causes and thereby gain the loyalty of previously mute constituencies. Milošević aroused Serbs with tales of Serb oppression at the hands of Albanians in Kosovo, but he bused demonstrators to two locations that had nothing to do with Kosovo: Podgorica and Novi Sad, the capitals of Montenegro and Vojvodina, respectively, each of which held one vote on the eight-member Yugoslav federal presidency. After passing constitutional amendments in March 1989 that revoked the autonomy of Kosovo and Vojvodina, Milošević imposed a police state on Kosovo. He flooded Kosovo with Serbian security forces and dismissed most Albanians employed in the social sector, replacing them with Serbs or Roma.

The Serbian Orthodox Church helped advance Milošević's agenda with its own mobilization campaigns that paralleled the anti-bureaucratic revolution. The church used these campaigns to accentuate its self-assigned role as the creator and custodian of all that was precious to Serbs. In 1989, church officials removed the earthly remains of Prince Lazar, Serbian hero of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, from the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchal Church in Belgrade and paraded his remains on a tour of Serbian Orthodox monasteries in Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Kosovo. The procession served to link the secular and religious cores of Serbianism – Belgrade and Serbian Orthodox monasteries in Kosovo – with peripheral Serb communities in Yugoslavia's "near abroad." In a second mobilization, in summer 1991 the remains of Serb victims of the Second World War were exhumed from caves in Herzegovina and reburied in Belgrade. Like Lazar's funeral procession, the reburials served to bring the Serb periphery back into contact with its spiritual and political centers. In both campaigns, the church reasserted its historical role as a reservoir of Serb symbols and proponent of the political unification of all Serbs.

Serbian Orthodox Church leaders in Serbia and Kosovo embraced Serbia's drive to reassert political and military authority in Kosovo. Based on Serbian Orthodox monasteries built in Kosovo in the Middle Ages, church officials argued that Kosovo

was the church's spiritual capital, and that a state church such as theirs could never allow its center to be in a foreign land. With these and other convergences of political and religious interests, the Serbian Orthodox Church acted in the 1990s as a critical but subordinate actor in Serb nationalism in Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Croatia.

The South Slavs: Religious Loyalties and National Identity

By the 1840s, nationalism among South Slavs had begun to develop irreversibly along religious fault lines. Among Christian communities, church and nation were closely linked. The Catholic Church and its high officials were major players in Croatian nationalism, and the Serbian Orthodox Church promoted Serb nationalist goals. Following the nineteenth century historical pattern, but under very different circumstances, political organizers in the 1990s looked to the church to help reanimate Serb culture and advance political claims. Radovan Karadžić, the first president of the Serb Democratic Party (SDS – *Srpska demokratska stranka*) in Bosnia-Herzegovina, complained that Serb culture had atrophied under communism, particularly "where the Serbian Orthodox Church was unable to carry out its activities," so it would "take some time for Serbs to become true Serbs in a] cultural and political sense, in areas where the Church was not permitted (to function)." Founders of the SDS called for "cooperation with the Serbian Orthodox Church and its equal inclusion in the life of the Serb people."

Like the Bosnian Serbs, Bosniak leaders in Bosnia-Herzegovina formed one dominant nationalist party in 1990 to compete in the multiparty elections held in November of that year. They identified their new organization, the Party of Democratic Action (SDA – *Stranka demokratske akcije*) as a "party of citizens and peoples of the Muslim cultural-historical circle." Much like the Bosnian Serbs of the SDS, they embraced democracy, denounced communism, and rejoiced at the "end of a (single) party monopoly and its result, a party state." SDA party leaders did not specifically mention the Islamic community in their party's program, but they called for "complete freedom of activity for all religions in Yugoslavia and full autonomy of their religious communities" and demanded "return of seized property of religious communities and their institution (vakufs and endowments)." They also requested the availability of "food in the army, hospitals and jails in accord with religious regulations for citizen-

believers.” The party supported “maintaining Yugoslavia as a free community of sovereign nations and republics within existing federal boundaries” and urged respect for the integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina and for the “national particularities of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims.” The program explicitly supported a democratic state and contained nothing to indicate sympathy for the staples of Islamic fundamentalism such as forming an Islamic state or implementing Islamic legal codes in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The election campaigns of 1990 brought together the secular and religious leaders of each major nationality in campaigns to lead their communities and oppose the reformed communist parties. Nationalists resurrected religious and national symbols that had been taboo under socialism, infused old symbols with new meanings, and invented some new ones. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, religious officials lent support to the nationalist parties. Hodžas and muftis rallied Muslims to vote for the SDA, headed by Alija Izetbegović. Most Franciscans in Herzegovina, and many Catholic priests, supported the HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union – *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica*). Orthodox priests supported Serb nationalist parties, and many ended up supporting Karadžić and the SDS.

Albanians: Religious Divisions and National Unity

The Albanians of Kosovo emerged from communism with a profile different from the Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks. Unlike the South Slavs, whose national divisions developed along religious fault lines in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Albanians in the late nineteenth century articulated themselves as a single, unified nation of those who spoke the Albanian language whatever their religious affiliation. Albanians necessarily embraced religious diversity as part of their drive to define their national identity. They respected but superseded the differences that separated Muslims, Catholics, and Orthodox. Whereas Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks drew heavily upon religion and religious traditions to strengthen their respective national identities, Albanians stood the risk of being divided by recourse to religion. Additionally, Albanians became increasingly secularized in the twentieth century, particularly in urban areas and particularly during the decades of communist rule. One might therefore expect that Albanian nationalists would be disinclined to ally with religious communities.

However, Albanians in Kosovo are almost all Muslims by faith or religious heritage: only a few thousand are Catholic by religion, and there are no Orthodox Albanians to speak of in Kosovo. Therefore, despite Albanians' religious pluralism and secularism, the Islamic community within Kosovo is mostly an Albanian institution, and it stalwartly supports Albanian nationalist values. Its leaders attach great importance to building and rebuilding mosques, and they see themselves as protectors of those few Albanians living in enclaves in the Serb-majority northern area of Mitrovica. For all the secularism among urban Albanians in Kosovo, the Islamic community is still a significant pillar of Albanian nationalism.

In their choice of national heroes, Albanians have demonstrated that religious belief is welcome in Albanian patriots. Albanians highlight two figures as avatars of their national values: Skandarbeg, the 16th century hero of Albanian resistance to Ottoman invaders, and Mother Teresa, a Nobel Prize-winning 20th century Albanian born in Skopje, Macedonia. These two figures together validate religious diversity within Albanian culture while highlighting qualities considered essential to Albanian national identity. Skandarbeg's personal history demonstrates the pre-eminence of Albanian identity over religious affiliation. Born a Catholic, he converted to Islam and become a general in the Ottoman Army, but he defected to lead an Albanian uprising against the Ottomans and returned to the Christian faith. He is consistently portrayed as a dominant male and a fierce warrior, while Mother Theresa appears as humble, obedient, and compassionate. Representations of Skanderbeg are typically monumental, while Mother Teresa is usually portrayed in life-size statues, diminutive in comparison to the fierce, imposing images of Skandarbeg.

Like the three major nations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albanians in Kosovo rallied around a single charismatic leader and a single dominant political party as free elections approached, but religion was less influential among Kosovar Albanians. Ibrahim Rugova, a highly-regarded scholar, literary critic, and president of the League of Writers of Kosovo, became president of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK - *Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës*) when it was formed in December 1989 and dominated the party until his death in 2006. When Milošević's security forces turned Albania into a Serb-controlled police state, the pacifistically-inclined Rugova led Kosovar Albanians in creating a parallel or "shadow" state that educated Albanian youth and provided basic medical and administrative services to the majority Albanian

population. At a time when other nationalists in the former Yugoslavia were acquiring arms in preparation for war, the Albanian parallel state was the most humane and least confrontational response to nationalist rivalry in the region. The parallel Albanian state functioned with greater or lesser effect for nine years, but it failed to produce results among foreign diplomats and policy-makers in ways achieved by armed nationalists elsewhere in the region. With little international attention on the plight of Kosovar Albanians under Milošević's rule, Rugova and the LDK found themselves challenged in the latter half of the 1990s by Kosovar Albanians who favored resisting Serb security forces by violent means.

Religion and National Mobilization in War

War came to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992 and to Kosovo in 1999. The causes and nature of those wars is beyond the scope of this paper, but it should be noted that in both wars, the Serbian government based in Belgrade, either directly or indirectly, supported violent campaigns to kill and expel non-Serbs. Religious communities were vital contributors to the war efforts of their respective national movements. Even before war began, each nationalist party in Bosnia-Herzegovina was compelled to seek outside support in manpower and materiel in the life-and-death struggle for territory. From summer 1991 to winter 1995, the parties mobilized people and materiel for the primary purpose of fighting more effectively. Serbia provided as much as 90% of the financial resources for the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS – *Vojska Republike Srpske*); Croatia provided the Croatian Defense Council (HVO - *Hrvatske vijeće obrane*) with command and staff expertise, particularly in the 1995 campaigns that drove Serb forces from Croatia.

The Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina (ARBiH - *Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine*), capitalizing on the huge number of Bosniak refugees and displaced persons driven from their homes by Serb and Croat armed forces, was the most successful recruiter among the military forces. Nevertheless, the ARBiH accepted several thousand foreign Muslim fighters in its ranks. Most were Arabic speakers from countries in the Middle East and North Africa, and many had honed their fighting skills in the Afghan resistance to Soviet occupation in the 1980s. The "mujahedin," as they became known, were only nominally under control of the ARBiH for much of the war, and their atrocities against civilians led to charges of war

crimes against their commanders. Most never blended into Bosnian society, but several hundred mujahedin married Bosniak women and acquired Bosnian passports. In violation of the Dayton Agreement, several hundred remained in Bosnia after the war, living mainly in villages from which Bosnian Serbs had fled or been expelled.

Bosnians of all nations attach great significance to houses of worship as symbolic manifestations of their national identity and claims to residence. In wartime, armed nationalists attacked mosques and churches with the intent of destroying the national symbols of other national groups. Bosnian Serb nationalists, in pursuing their plan to establish an ethnically pure state and wipe out traces of other groups, destroyed most mosques in areas they controlled, leaving the territory of the Republika Srpska largely devoid of Islamic religious structures. Croatian forces destroyed many mosques and some Serbian Orthodox institutions, most notably the defenseless Žitomislići Serbian Orthodox Monastery. Only Bosniaks undertook no systematic campaign to destroy others' houses of worship. The Serbian Orthodox Church in Srebrenica, a town that became a haven for thousands of Bosniak refugees and was besieged by Serb forces through much of the war, remained intact and undamaged, while the historic White Mosque only a hundred meters away was annihilated once Serb nationalists conquered the city. The New Serbian Orthodox Church in Sarajevo was damaged, not by Bosniaks who had access to it for four years, but by Serb nationalist snipers who shot out most of the windows in its cupola. It would later be restored with the financial assistance of the government of Greece.

The Bosnian war relegated to oblivion the less violent struggle in Kosovo between Serbian security forces and the LDK-sponsored underground state. When the international community failed to address Kosovar Albanian grievances at peace talks in Dayton in Fall 1995, Albanians in Kosovo began to doubt the efficacy of non-violent resistance as a strategy to draw international attention to their grievances. The implosion of the Albanian government in 1997 (owing to the collapse of a pyramid scheme) left that country's armories unguarded, and hundreds of thousands of weapons came available to Kosovar Albanians. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA; Albanian UÇK – *Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës*) was founded in 1993 but remained an embryonic assemblage of warriors until 1997, when its members launched sporadic attacks on Serbian policemen and police stations with the benefit of donations from abroad and arms from the arsenals of Albania. Serbian security forces reacted harshly

to KLA attacks by retaliating against Albanian civilians, wiping out an entire clan in 1998 and entire villages in early 1999.

Neither the LDK nor the KLA's political wing, the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK – *Partia Demokratike e Kosovës*) had any use for Islamic fundamentalism, as some ideologues posing as "experts" have irresponsibly alleged. On the contrary, the increasingly violent confrontation between Milošević's thugs and the KLA was a hauntingly familiar early warning to western policy-makers of a possible Milošević-inspired ethnic cleansing campaign against non-Serbs. US and European diplomats demanded that Milošević withdraw his forces from Kosovo and allow international peacekeepers to supervise the province. When he refused, NATO undertook aerial assaults that struck targets in Kosovo and elsewhere in the Republic of Serbia. Milošević retaliated with a vengeance, unleashing Serbian security forces to drive over half the Albanian population from Kosovo in a matter of weeks. At the same time, the KLA made gains in their fighting against Serbian security forces. After 78 days of NATO bombing attacks and Serbian ethnic cleansing, Milošević capitulated and concluded a peace agreement. Security Council Resolution 1244, passed on June 10, 1999, cleared the way for Kosovo to be administered by UNMIK (United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo) while maintaining the legal fiction that Kosovo was a province of Serbia.

Neither the Bosnian nor the Kosovo conflict was a religious war, but religious symbols were seen by many actors as targets worthy of destruction. Serbian security forces in Kosovo destroyed hundreds of mosques during the 78 day war, and after a cease-fire was declared and Serbian security forces withdrew, armed Albanians destroyed large numbers of Serbian Orthodox churches and institutions. The campaigns of destruction brought the Islamic and Serbian Orthodox religious communities into closer alignment (if that was possible) with their respective national movements.

Symbolic Sublimation: Continuation of Conflict by Other Means

The nationalist parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo emerged from war more powerful than ever. They sought to continue fueling interethnic tensions and inducing fear in their own followers, but were forbidden by peace agreements and international peacekeepers from waging war. Instead, they and their religious communities diverted

their efforts into symbolic interethnic rivalry, a process I call "symbolic sublimation." Religious leaders revived old holidays and declared new ones on occasions of key battles and landmark dates in the state-forming narrative. They raised money to reconstruct destroyed churches and mosques, and religious communities engaged in what my colleague Andras Riedlmayer refers to as the "space race." Altitude – having the tallest manmade structure within view – equates to symbolic supremacy in this race, which thrives on contending symbols within visual proximity of one another. In Kosovo, some memorialism is secular, centered on monuments to victims of Serb oppression and those who served in the KLA, but as in Bosnia-Herzegovina, many houses of worship have been restored or built anew by the Islamic community or the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Driven by imperatives of symbolic sublimation, Bosniak nationalist leaders deepened their dependence on external aid in the post-war years. Islamic countries took turns financing the building and rebuilding of hundreds of mosques, first in the Muslim-majority areas of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and then (after the dawn of the new century) in areas where Serbs and Croats had expelled Bosniaks in the war of 1992-1995. Most mosques have been constructed or reconstructed in a modern style imported from the Middle East, with sleek lines, synthetic building materials, and towering minarets. The new mosques and cultural centers stand in stark visual contrast to the wood-and-stone simplicity of traditional Ottoman-inspired mosques. Many Bosnians resent the mosques' obvious architectural message of subordination to foreign Islamic interests. But most Bosniaks also see mosques as visual embodiments of their community's claim to inhabit the land, and rebuilt mosques have contributed to a sense among Bosniak refugees and displaced persons that it was safe to return to their former homes. Refugees and displaced persons have returned in substantial numbers to many areas in the Republika Srpska from which they were expelled, but rarely without reconstructing a destroyed mosque or constructing one anew.

Islamic Fundamentalism

With Bosniaks relying on funds from other Islamic states to rebuild mosques and schools, the authorities of some of those states have exploited Bosniaks' dependence to promote the spread of Islamic fundamentalism, principally through sponsoring the movement known in the periodical press as Wahhabism. Only a small percentage of

Wahhabis are committed to using violence, but they include many converts who sympathize with the use of violence by others. Even with the aid of powerful state sponsors, Wahhabis have failed to win more than a few thousand converts in Southeast Europe. Most informed observers agree that they number somewhere in the low thousands in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in the hundreds in Kosovo, so we may dismiss the wildly speculative allegations that almost all Muslims in the region have turned to fundamentalist beliefs. In both Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, Wahhabis are socially ostracized and politically marginalized. The vast majority of Bosniaks and Kosovar Muslim Albanians are dismayed by the very sight of Wahhabis, recognizable by their shaved heads, untrimmed beards, and short pants.

The Wahhabist movement is essentially an aggressive recruitment campaign led from Islamic centers in Vienna and several Middle Eastern Arab countries. Wahhabis have won control of several schools and mosques in a number of towns in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is tempting to see new and rebuilt Middle Eastern style mosques as manifestations of Wahhabism, but Wahhabis have intruded into only a few such mosques, leaving the correlation between modern mosque architecture and Wahhabist influence subject to doubt. Many Bosniaks, fearful that Wahhabism will weaken and discredit their traditions, have increasingly challenged the Wahhabi presence in their land. Most Albanian nationalists in Kosovo likewise abhor Wahhabism as alien to their national character and fear that it will crush their hopes for integration into Europe.

After years of acquiescence to fundamentalists' inroads into mosques, schools, and cultural centers, the Islamic community of Bosnia-Herzegovina began in early 2007 to confront Wahhabis directly. In January 2007, Wahhabis in the northeast Bosnian town of Kalesija attempted to take over a local mosque but were driven out by local Bosniak believers. Leading the Wahhabis was a native of Kalesija, Jusuf Barčić, who had left Bosnia-Herzegovina during the war, studied in Saudi Arabia, and returned in 1996 dedicated to spreading Wahhabism.

In February 2007 Barčić sought to enter Sarajevo's monumental Gazi Husrevbeg mosque, built in the seventeenth century and valued by all Bosniaks as a central institution of their faith. Traditionalists physically contested Barčić's entry, and the Sarajevo Cantonal police were called to separate the contending factions. Sadrudin

Iserić, imam of the Gazi Husrevbeg mosque, voiced widely-held Bosniak views in announcing that Wahhabis would no longer be allowed to use the mosque for lectures: "The people are frightened, and already there are those who stay away from prayers on Thursday to avoid meeting them. All that we have accomplished for 600 years they now want to destroy."

On Thursday, February 22, 2007, the Wahhabis again attempted to gather in the Gazi Husrevbeg mosque but were confined to the courtyard, where they held a service and lecture observed by more reporters (about 50) than followers (around 20). Barčić railed against the Muslim establishment, criticized the Islamic community for departing from the true teachings of Islam, demanded the implementation of sheriat law in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and implicitly threatened to form a parallel Islamic community dedicated to Wahhabist beliefs.

Barčić was a reckless driver with a lengthy history of traffic violations. According to some journalists' reports, his driving record derived from his rejection of all civil authority, including traffic regulations, and he routinely ran red lights. On March 30 he lost control of the Mazda he was driving and ran headlong into a light post just outside the eastern Bosnian town of Tuzla. He died a few hours later of head injuries sustained in the crash. An estimated 3,000 Wahhabis came from near and far to attend his funeral in Tuzla and turned the occasion into a rally for their cause. Some mourners skirmished with police, who were unprepared to handle such a large crowd. Barčić's truncated career as a Wahhabist gadfly thus evoked a greater response on his death than during his life and served mainly to bring Wahhabism sharply into public focus. The Islamic community reacted belatedly to Wahhabism, more in response to threats to its own power than to Bosniaks' near-universal revulsion to Muslim fundamentalism.

On April 17, less than three weeks after Barčić's funeral, police in the Republic of Serbia raided a small camp of Wahhabis in the Sandžak region, home to tens of thousands of Serbia's Bosniak minority. The police arrested three men but failed to locate a fourth member of the group. Three days later, Serbian security forces surrounded a small house occupied by four Wahhabis, including the fugitive from their previous raid. The house's occupants opened fire on the police, who killed the group's leader Prentić, injured another, and saw one of their own slightly wounded.

Only three weeks before the killing, the Kosovo Police Service had issued a warrant for Ismail Prentić, brother of the slain Wahhabi leader, for smuggling weapons across the administrative boundary between Kosovo and the Republic of Serbia. The episode thus highlighted the Wahhabist movement's cross-boundary linkages. Sandžak Mufti Muamer Zukorlić estimated that there were 150 Wahhabis in the Sandžak, of whom "fifteen to thirty are problematic," that is, violence-prone. He noted that the Sandžak Wahhabis looked to Bosnian Wahhabis as their leaders and organizers.

The response to the attacks demonstrated the Islamic community's contempt for violence-prone Wahhabis. Tellingly, no Bosniak leader publicly defended the Wahhabis after the Serbian police attack, although several used the incident to blame Albanian radicalization on maltreatment by Serbian security forces. Imam Zukorlić alleged that Serbian security forces had instigated the Wahhabi challenges to the established Islamic community of Serbia, and Social Democratic leader Rasim Ljajić highlighted the "irrationality and futility of their alleged mission." Although they did not endorse the Serbian police raid, neither secular Bosniaks nor leaders of the Islamic community identified with those attacked, arrested, or killed in the raids.

Wahhabis have also made advances in Kosovo, but as in Bosnia-Herzegovina, they are socially ostracized, despised by most Kosovars and the governing political parties, and operate outside the indigenous Islamic community. In December 2006 I visited Kosovo and interviewed local political and religious leaders. In one interview, I asked a group of Albanian veterans of the 1999 war if they had Islamic fundamentalists in their midst. No, they emphatically replied. They told me of two houses in the town of Gjilan where foreign Islamic radicals and their local converts lived. These radicals could be identified by their long beards and short pants. They attracted converts mainly by offering courses in foreign languages, particularly English, to Kosovar Albanians. Two of the interviewees told me of male acquaintances who had taken English lessons, delved into religious instruction, begun sporting beards, and eventually disappeared altogether, presumably to join Islamic radicals fighting in Afghanistan or Iraq. My interviewees viewed this as a tragedy; they expressed fears that such recruitment would spread. They emphasized that Albanian nationalists detest Islamic radicalism and fear its potential to send Albanians off to foreign wars as well as to threaten tranquility at home.

Serbian Orthodoxy

In the era of symbolic sublimation, the Serbian Orthodox Church has continued to be a central actor in advancing Serb nationalism. As Serbs in the Republic of Serbia have become consumed with the issue of Kosovo's future, high church officials have continued to highlight their case for keeping Kosovo's patrimonial sites under the jurisdiction of the Serbian state. Vladika Vasilije Kačavenda of the Zvornik-Tuzla Episcopate in Bosnia-Herzegovina left his headquarters in Tuzla in 1992 for the Bosnian Serb-controlled town of Bijeljina and built a palatial residence on Bosniak-owned land.

Since moving to Bijeljina, Kačavenda has made a career of building churches in his Episcopate on Bosniak-owned land and has succeeded in getting legislation introduced in the Republika Srpska legalizing such appropriations. He has publicly denounced a prominent Serb dissident living in Bijeljina who spoke out against Serb nationalist extremists, and used the occasion of a funeral to threaten the man publicly with retaliation. Kačavenda is among the most radical Serbian Orthodox clerics in having used his clerical office to incite nationalist confrontations, but he is not alone. The Serbian Orthodox Church, as it has for decades, continues to be a major force for incendiary Serb nationalism in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Kosovo.

Conclusion

Ethno-national competition, conducted or controlled by the leading nationalist parties and their allied religious communities, remains the principal trait of democratic-era politics in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Serbian Orthodox and Islamic religious communities have been major contributors to the rhetoric, mobilization campaigns, and electoral successes of nationalists in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo, but they have consistently supported rather than challenged the dominant role of secular nationalist political parties. Bosnia's Islamic religious community and secular Bosniak politicians tolerated mujahedin during wartime and after the war turned a blind eye to the gradual growth of Islamic fundamentalism on the fringes of Bosnian and Kosovar society. But in guarding their monopolistic positions, Islamic religious communities in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina have begun to confront fundamentalism head-on and challenge further

inroads. Given the absence of internal deterrents to extreme nationalism and the weakness of external constraints, the Serbian Orthodox Church poses as great a threat to long-term political stability and reconciliation in the two regions as do marginalized Islamic fundamentalists.