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**MAKING THE “NATION” VISIBLE:
CENSUS POLICY IN YUGOSLAVIA IN 1970-71**

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Making the “Nation” Visible: Census Policy in Yugoslavia in 1970-71

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The state forced me, like everyone else, into myself, and made me compliant towards it, the state, and turned me into a state person, regulated and registered and trained and finished and perverted and dejected, like everyone else. When we see people, we only see state people, the state servants, as we quite rightly say, who serve the state all their lives and thus serve unnature all their lives. (Thomas Bernhard, *The Old Masters*, p. 27)

Introduction

While the political arena of the late 1960s was hallmarked mainly by intellectuals’ linguistic debates performed in the two centres Zagreb and Belgrade, however with strong political repercussions on Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the following two years 1970 and 1971 the thematic focus of the Communist party shifted to official census categories of nationness and ethnicity giving special attention to the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the definition of the category “Muslim” and redefinition of “Yugoslavism”.

Entering the new sphere of ethno-linguistic approaches in the lead time to the census of 1971 new key aspects of categorization patterns within the political debate gained political attention. The until 1971 already outworn class categories produced a vacuum space that called for another societal division. Thus, rhetoric of dichotomization along geographical-cum-economic criteria between developed and underdeveloped regions ceased, and the pre-census period opened the arena for nationalizing and ethnicizing the social categorization system. This, as will be shown got initiated by the communist party itself. With ethnophilia as a frame of rhetoric within the political field of action, the already given course of republican affirmation and decentralisation was now to be articulated and represented through political claims on behalf of the republic, “in the name of their nation”.

In the case of the not mono-nationally defined republic Bosnia and Herzegovina this meant again raising the question “Ćija je Bosna?” (whose is Bosnia). This time however, Salomon’s answer that was officially given already at the III. ZAVNOBIH meeting on 25/26 November 1943 in Mrkonjićgrad (see Purivatra 1968:491), was to be reconsidered in more serious terms due to the greater political emancipation of the republican political elite. Instrumentalizing national identity categories- this meant putting an emphasis on the definition of Bosnian Muslims as a constituent group of the republic, whose status remained a subject of disputes until the pre-census period.

Thus, despite the fact that the Central Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina already provided a new political evaluation of Muslim identity on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a nation at the XVII. and XX. session¹ in 1968 on the federal level this categorization proved to be more than debatable. The pre-census period was therefore marked by a series of changes, recombinations and reordering of categories which were to reshape the political imagining by the Communist party (op Anderson 1984: 166).

Theoretical Background of Thought

According to the selection of the material, which I am going to utilize for this chapter, I depart from the explanatory model inspired from Bourdieu’s work on the symbolic power of the state (in this case the Communist party) that as the dominant institution in society inculcates and eradicates (national) categories as patterns of identification (op. Bourdieu 1984). Bourdieu departs from the Weberian tradition of thought according to which it is the state (in our case the LCY), which makes a decisive contribution to the production and reproduction of the instruments of construction of social reality. Being in hold of the so-called species of capital (army, police, information, economy, etc) the state appears as the regulator of principles of classification in society (see Bourdieu 1994:13). The officially imposed forms of perception, however, are understood through the cognitive approach, in a constructivist modality making them interchangeable and re-definable. As Anderson in the concrete case of establishing census

¹ AJ/507 – A – CK SKJ, BiH IV (K. 6), fasc. 2 and 5 (this material is officially not registered yet, so it has no proper signature).

categories describes the demographic topography as continuously agglomerated, disaggregated, recombined, intermixed and reordered (see Anderson 1991: 164). So far most of the secondary literature deriving from Bosnia and Herzegovina has presented the 1971 census as event which made the organic old “Muslim nation” finally get recognized (see Hadzizahic, Purivatra, Imamovic et al.). However, with the proposed theoretical model, the structuring of categories is viewed more as a historically constituted forms and therefore arbitrary, which makes their social genesis possible to trace. In other words the 1971 census is to be interpreted more as an act of invention “*ex insituto*” than affirmation of an organically delineated entity, i. e. “nation”.

Following this theoretical logic, my analysis employs the cognitive turn in the study of phenomena like nationhood and stresses the fact that nationhood, ethnic groups do not exist independently from their classification, categorization and identification (see Brubaker 2004:45) but only through our perceptions and interpretations. As Brubaker correctly states “they are not things *in* the world, but perspectives *on* the world” (*ibid.*:45) and thereby endowing nationhood with epistemological rather than ontological realities.

The understanding of nationness mainly as a politically institutionalized category, which serves certain political ends has been elaborated already by Brubaker, Olzak, and Nagel (op Brubaker 1996, Olzak and Nagel). According to those authors the process of structuring structures is framed by rational choice of agency, which appears under certain political opportunistic circumstances. What I try to propose in my explanatory model here is the interpretation that agents adopted ethnic categories as part of a strategy of republican affirmation. The disputes led on the category “Muslim in national terms” and the conflicting assumptions of it illuminate clearly the symbolic representation of political power a category can entail.

This way of approaching and labelling the subject of analysis shifts the attention of analysis from “nation” as a substantial entity, with its temporal dimension (historical origins etc) and ontological reality, to an action oriented analyses of a case-wise, rational-action events of nation-making, nationalising and categorizing things in national terms.

Regarding the temporal aspect Brubaker has proposed giving nationhood a duration of an event instead of a developmentalist lounge *durée* process. Since I deal here with very punctual happenings, i. e. the census, this shift from temporal to strategic forms

has indeed informed also my writing. In other words nationhood is less a product of historical processes and structural changes but of actors' strategic and conscious agencies motivated by different political, economic, etc. circumstances (circumstantialist approach). However, by exploring the historical aspect on censuses as such, I try to show not that much the development of a "nation" but the shifting interpretations of census categories varying from negation to institutionalization, depending on the political and economic frame.

The leading threat here is the question on the principles and argumentation logics, which were employed by the agents in the policy making during the process of constructing a new ethnolinguistic grammar. Thus, setting new cognitive categories in the political field is often a product of struggles and competing visions.

By presenting the sessions of the commission for interethnic relations on the republican and federal level it is proposed in what follows to look at the dynamics of those political struggles and regulations that resulted in institutionalization as well as devaluation and redefinition of ethnic and national categories in 1971, which is shown on the example of "Muslim in national terms" and "Yugoslav". The shaping of their (ethnic) boundaries, the negotiations, and definitions which differed along different republican policy lines confirm the arbitrariness of the logic of counting (see Anderson 1991: 169). Building on Max Weber's decisive contribution by reintroducing agents and their specific interests, this analysis focuses specifically on the Central Committee members as producers of the categories, their specific interests that move them and the strategies they use in their struggle (see Bourdieu 1987: 119-136). One has to keep in mind, that the space of taking positions in the Central committee on federal and republican (Bosnian) level was not a democratic one. The debate on the new imagined map was taking just a couple of years after the ouster of Aleksandar Ranković, who after Tito, was the most potential politician. Thus, in a political field of uncertainty, personal and private struggle, discursive practices were often rapidly shifting.

However, although deriving information from the official state apparatus, the used political and academic sources additionally illuminate the extent of the party's consideration of the individual self-identification with the proposed categories.

Therefore, through the utilization of ethnographic works and perception studies which were initiated by the party itself it can be shown to what extent the institutionalization of national categories was a result of a more dialectical process between official propagation and popular identification patterns.

In other words, what I also try to show is how strong the party-society nexus in regard to the identity politics of that period was. Given the fact that the Communist party did initiate several ethnographic researches on the popular perception of its policy and the identification patterns of people in their everyday life practices would have implied the complexity of shaping and institutionalizing any social categorization system. Therefore, although not having done any ethnographic work, the used sources give also an insight into the extent, to which the imposers and definers of the new identification patterns were actually interested in the social practices and the popular perception and to what extent those were influencing the policy.

In respect to the concept of the chapter, I start with the examination of the ideological framework which was provided as a legitimizing frame for the ethnophil political discourse. What follows is a historical overview on census categories during the communist regime and then the discussion of the 1971 census.

Ideological Confirmation of the Nation

One dominating feature of the socialist regimes in general was the strong presence of ideology, which compared to democratic societies, served as the regulator and justifier of political actions and propagations to the society (see Brunnbauer 2007:31). By acquiring a paternalistic role the party was supposed to control every societal phenomenon and to manage with all dimensions of society leaving nothing outside its purview (*ibid.*: 37).

Regarding the rising issues of national questions, the Central Committee dealt with it within two diagnostic frames. On the one hand the politically legitimate articulation of national interests was labelled as national affirmation and presented as a result of the democratic self-management. On the other hand the politically not suitable actions articulated in national terms were located within the sphere of nationalism and chauvinism, which were presented as the leftovers of the old etatist regime. Besides the

establishment of those labels, any further concretization of their meaning remained unclear, even to the members of the Central Committee.

At the session of the commission for interethnic relations of LCY on September 17, 1969 Miloš Žanko satisfactorily diagnoses and welcomes the overall presence of a discourse of national affirmation in the political discourse, at the same time however, lamenting the absence of an academically inspired ideological definition what a nation, its affirmation and nationalism is. In his speech he calls for a better development of an ideological frame according to which the party might deploy its officially adopted national policy being aware of the clear distinction between the two spheres of national claims².

Given the fact that national discourses were already monopolizing the public sphere its ideological domestication was politically initiated only afterwards more in a form of a reaction to already existing nationalizing phenomena. Therefore, what later appears as a politically well in advance coined ideological framework can be viewed as a reactionary transition to an ideological flexibility not to say arbitrariness (see Brunnbauer 2004: 32) conforming the already flourishing ethnophilia.

While, the first political actions in the new national discourse were presented rather in an ideological vacuum in a manner of an *ad hoc* policy, the pre-census period called all the more for a legitimization apparatus of the cultivation of national categories and hence better preparations.

The ex-cathedra explanation for the nationalization of social categories and political actions came precisely one year in advance to the census. At the conference in Krapinske Toplice taking place from 19-21 March 1970 under the title “The Class and Nation in Contemporary Socialism” politicians and intellectuals presented their interpretations on the ideological fundamentals and their explanatory capacity for the already employed rhetoric. Resulting in a two volumes publication an ideological discourse eventually got formulated. In a deductive manner, the concept departed from broad theoretical deliberations arriving at topical cases in the Yugoslav concept, which were dedicated to the Muslims, Albanians, and the Hungarian minority, exactly the national categories, which were to be discussed later in regard to the census.

² AJ/507 – A - CK SKJ, XXIII C, (K.4) fasc.1, pp. 9-14.

Interestingly, by excluding “Yugoslav” out of the scope of interest for concrete national cases, the newly proposed ideological concept already anticipated what was to be confirmed in a concrete way also in the forthcoming census: the alienation from Kardelj’s concept of Yugoslav nation. His proposal for a nation, which representation radius was to be understood over the whole federation was hereby abandoned and replaced by new categories representative for the radius on republican level.

The first highlighted statement underlined the stagnation of Marxist ideology after Lenin according to which a too utopistic and unrealistic view on reality was given by stating the disappearance of nation and religion and proposed a more updated analytical and definition apparatus (see *Klasno i nacionalno* 1970:67). Departing from the idea of persistence of nation, religion and class the opening session by Stipe Šušvar, Andrija Đujić, and Vatroslav Mimica assured the inseparableness of nationness and class (*ibid.*: 9). The proletariat, as the main actor in socialist societies, was to be understood first of all in national units (*ibid.*: 33) where class and national interests are connected with each other and realized in the democratic social management. Through the constructed amalgamation of class and national interests, and the redefinition of the once homeless proletariat now in national terms, the once predicted disappearance of nationness was located according to Avdo Humo only within the sphere of an eschatology (*ibid.*: 690), however far away from becoming real.

Through the composed synthesis of class and nation the new ideology was to provide a discourse, which was not to be necessarily understood as the absolute truth but as a provider of conformity for the nationalizing performances.

Having this new ideological framework no obstacles, at least on the abstract level, should be given for the following census, which, according to the LCY and being measured by the amount of national categories, was to be presented one of the most democratic ones in the Yugoslav history.

Category “Musliman” in Previous Census

Given a historical perspective on the census in socialist Yugoslavia and its categorization patterns, great diversity can be shown, which reflects also the party’s

policy of administrative and political division within the federation and its republics. The census of 1971 antedated three other censuses in 1948, 1953 and 1961.

According to Höpken's periodization in which he distinguishes four different periods³ in Yugoslav policy differing between integration, marginalization, and ignorance of the Muslim demographic masses, the first two censuses are located within the era of unitarism. Consequently, the categories offered at that time the LCY still regarded the Muslims as a group without a populist component of nationness (see Kappeler et al 1989: 193).

This political attitude was especially mirrored in the census of 1948 which provided two options for declaration "Muslim/Croatian" and "Muslim/Serbian". Interestingly enough, in this first census a Muslim distinctiveness was acknowledged according to the religion. However the following direct link to Croatian/Serbian national categories revealed the deprivation of any political claims assuring the unpolitical view on the cultural/religious group. Given the break with Stalin in 1948, and the attempt to retain its autocephalic position within the international political sphere this compelled the party to focus more on foreign policy in which the federation of Yugoslavia was the only accredited level. As a result of this no toleration was given for any advanced diversification on the symbolical and categorical level.

By contrast, in 1953 the religious aspect was no more regarded as a meaningful category to be highlighted in the census. Corresponding to the spirit of the new constitution of 1953 and self-management as the new political credo of Yugoslavia it was the "Yugoslav" category that received greatest political admiration (see Shoup 1968: 206). Consequently, following at that time Kardelj's tenet of "Socialist Yugoslavism" with the promise to integrate Yugoslavia into the world market, Yugoslav unity rather than societal national diversity was to be achieved (see Džaja 2004: 132-141). As a result of it any republican status was to be diminished. As a result of this political cluster thinking any political bounding around the Muslim masses emphasizing their religious distinctiveness was to disappear.

³ Höpken draws the historical line from the foundation of the KPJ until the 1960s and distinguishes between the era of ignorance (1919-1930s); era of political undulation (1930-1945); era of unitarism (1945-1960s); and era of recognition (1960s onwards).

The best reflection of this cognitive pattern is the already well known article written by the Serbian communist from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moša Pijade, prior to the census in 1953. The author in regard to the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina stated that “[...] it is obvious [...] that the expression “Musliman” stands for religious affiliation and has no connection to the national question. [...] During the census in of 1948 many were confused because of the appendix about religious affiliation, since nation is one thing and religion another. Especially the ones who have closed with the question of religion were irritated by the addition of religious category” (see Pijade 1953:2) Regarding the question who the Muslims are and which category of the census they could identify with, Pijade continues “[...] Nobody doubts that the Muslims in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Sandžak have south-Slavic origin being part of the Yugoslav ethnic community. Therefore, those who have decided in favour of the Croatian or Serbian nation will declare themselves as Croats or Serbs. Those who still are nationally indifferent will declare themselves as “Yugoslav, nationally undetermined” and not just “nationally undetermined” which is reserved for other people without any national identification” (*ibid.*: 2).

Several points emanate from this political interpretative grid. First, all Yugoslav Muslims are bound under the same entity due to the religious affiliation leaving out in the first instance territory as a defining marker. However, what follows directly, as second, and in contradictive terms to the previous statement is the ascription of ethnic characteristics to Muslims but only from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sandžak. Hence a territorial demarcation is subtly present, however, without political consequences at that time. Third, although Yugoslavism got endowed with ethnic character it remained undefined in content. Nevertheless, politically it stood for a central role of the federation and was to defend strongly Yugoslavia’s unity and sovereignty. Fourth, by offering the Yugoslav nomenclature to those Muslims who refuse Croatian and Serbian categories and as a consequence of this are defined by as nationally undetermined, a complementary connection between Muslim and Yugoslav got attached, which later on resulted in a antagonist relationship. Yet through the category “Yugoslav” Muslims were provided with a substitute as a space for escaping the still expected internalization of the Croatian/Serbian national categories.

What Pijade as a politician denied, i. e. ethnic authenticity of Bosnian Muslims, got at the same time affirmed by the Bosnian intellectual Špiro Kulišić advocating more or less an antipodal definition of the category “Musliman”. In his paper on the ethnic (!) origins of Bosnian Muslims, the author outlines an ethnogenesis applicable exclusively to the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus opposing Pijade’s delineation of the notion of “Muslim-ness” giving it a homogenizing and all-including costume of the ethnicity-denied Yugoslav Muslims demographic mass (see Kulišić 1963).

The idea of ethnic authenticity of Bosnian Muslims Kulišić narrates by following a trajectory into the past Ottoman period, where he identifies the formative moment of ethnicity of Bosnian Muslims. Making his draft consistent with the class dichotomization that shaped the socialist ideology of that time, he imputes the foreign Muslim/Turkish component to the thin feudal social strata ascribing at the same time to the islamized peasant society the preponderant role of domesticating the Muslim element and integrating it in the Slavic language, tradition and way of life (*ibid.*: 152). Claiming the dominance of Slavic component among the Bosnian Muslims, the narrative’s logic made the thin foreign social strata from the East very soon submerge after mixing up with the majoritarian domestic society (*ibid.*: 154).

This article, which provided with basis the forthcoming narrations coined therefore a narrower costume for the category Musliman by adding to the confessional entity also the territorial aspect as an identity marker.

This given variation of the interpretive scope on the (Bosnian) Muslims embodied also the plurality of interpretation on the federation’s nature and the function of republics. While the identity conception presented by Kulišić defined the political purpose of affirmation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Pijade’s concept spread on the level of federation trying to grant its uniformity.

In an offered political frame at that time, however, no resonance was approved for any political demands on behalf of Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Consequently, a proliferation of Muslim ethnic identity policy as proposed by intellectuals was highly restricted. Neither did the Bosnian political leaders try to articulate any further attempts in politicizing or mobilizing the Muslims in national terms (see Kappeler et al. 1989:

195). Any grass-rooted initiatives in that direction are so far unknown, as well (see Anđelić 2003: 39)⁴.

Only eight years later, the structural political frame was to give resonance for Kulisić's model of narration on Bosnian Muslims.

First Reading of the “Nation’s” Authenticity. Census in 1961

It was in 1961, when for the first time the party members started to take into consideration the evidence that the Muslim masses in both censuses preferred the nationally undetermined categories over the offered national Croatian or Serbian categories. Hence, in 1948 only 170 000 Muslims adopted the Croatian/Serbian national option in contrast to 778 000 who chose to remain nationally undetermined⁵ and in the same manner in 1953 the majority of Bosnian Muslims, 891 000 preferred the “Yugoslav, nationally undetermined” over any other national category⁶. However, only in 1960 at the session of the Commission for ideological issues held on 15 September 1960, this fact was given empirical credibility and were “read” as indicators that first, Muslims have not been assimilated into Croatians or Serbians and, second, the choice of census category made by Muslims differed territorially thus emphasizing the ethnic component for the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

What Gellner has theoretically grasped as entropy-resistant groups, was now in the case of Muslims given a political forum (see Gellner 1983: 64-65). Having persisted in its cultural performative moment of confessional difference and in “[...] *not* to become [Serbian/Croatian], even with the passage of time since the initial establishment of an industrial society” (*ibid.*: 65), the Muslim population, was now also politically considered as having ethnic “substance” and being a constituent part within the new societal division in the political administration in the forthcoming census.

Thus, the newly introduced political incorporation of the Muslim people by the category “Muslim in ethnic terms” was defined solely in ethno-cultural terms, without assigning to it the territorial component. As it appears in the republican documents, the

⁴ Neven Anđelić remarks that Bosnia and Herzegovina was the republic with the least grass-rooted excesses, from which he deduces a very strong control given by the Bosnian Communists.

⁵ AJ/ 507 – A - CK SKJ, VIII, II2-b-132, 1960.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Bosnian Central Committee was actually proposing for the ethnic-cum-territorial categorization patterns, in order to restrict the representativeness only to the demographic masses in Bosnia.⁷

In the same spirit also the historian Enver Redžić provided the public sphere with an article tuned in *lounge durée* key of an ethnically segregated Bosnian Muslim group (see Redžić 1963: 102-124). Giving more attention to the actual discussion of census categories, Redžić formed the narration about the Bosnian Muslims as a history of their previous “national declaration”. The inverted commas in the original title, however, stood symbolically for the rejection of the Muslim official identification with Croatian/Serbian category as an “objective reality”. Thus, on the question who the Bosnian Muslims are, the answer was given in an *anti*-form by the negative definition of who they were not, i. e. not Croats and not Serbs.

In respect to the concept the initial thought in the article is dedicated to the previous academic negation of the authenticity of Bosnian Muslims, which for he called to account previous regimes, labelled as *bourgoise*. Accordingly, an “objective” approach to his subject Redžić identified and located only within the legitimization of Bosnian Muslim authenticity. According to Redžić this was only able after the introduction of the communist regime. Consequently, the periodisation of political regimes got therefore indivisible from the distinction between “good” and “bad” science.

The fact that Kulisić’s article on Bosnian Muslims faced only political disregard at the time of being written (1953) did not border much Redžić who even emphasized the advantageous condition for this “objective” writing only after the establishment of the Communist regime. Instead, by ascribing to it a pioneering value for suitably portraying the subjected group the author draws his inspiration from this basis and adopts some of its elements.

The discrepancy between the claims regarding the territorial scope of the category “Muslim” was a still remaining issue.

As it turns out in the political documents of 1960, the Bosnian political leadership was already then advocating a republican level as a territorial capacity of the category.⁸

⁷ AJ/ 507 – A - CK SKJ VIII, II2-b-132, 1960.

⁸ AJ/ 507 – A - CK SKJ, VIII, II2-b-132, 1960.

However, given the still strong political legitimacy of the federation, its policy makers still extruded the federal scope. The political claims on behalf of the republic remained silenced. In 1971 this issue became even more salient in the political disputation.

In regard to the construction techniques of the category “Muslims” we can conclude that while the members of the communist party eagerly discussed the radius of the Muslim category’s body as well as its nomenclature, the revelation of the ethnic content of the subjects to which this new category was addressed remained out of their interest’s scope. In other words, the domain of the communist party was to institutionalize a category of identification, the intellectuals’ task was to fill it with cultural content.

Did this *novum* influence the popular self-declaration within the offered mandatory categories? Not that much! The results of the new categorization schema were unpredictably surprising. The number of declared Muslims remained quite low, while in Bosnia and Herzegovina the number of declared Yugoslavs, which was considered as an evasion for Muslims, still remained remarkably high, i. e. 87 % of the 317 000 Yugoslavs were living in Bosnia and Herzegovina (see Purivatra/Suljević 1971: 27). The new option of identification thus, remained in 1961 still not utilized by the population. According to Höpken, low application of the newly introduced category was given by the fact that most of the Muslims, which still declared themselves as Yugoslavs lived in predominantly Serbian or Croatian areas (see Kappeler et al. 1989: 197).

To us, additionally, one explanation can be seen also in the lack of ethnic social mobilization (op. Olzak 1993) for the new category in the public sphere (what follows more intensively in 1971). With one article published in a professional journal, which narrated the authenticity of Bosnian Muslims, the public sphere in the pre-census era in 1961 remained still uninhabited in this regard. The dynamics of activation of the new category was near to absolutely absent. By the same token, no consideration of popular perception on the party’s new implementation of the category was given according to the sessions of that time nor was any mobilization discussed. Thus, the party-society nexus mattered only of a thin strand.

The masses remained inarticulate in regard to the politicized category of their identity through which they marked their cultural distinctiveness. The performative

moment of culture was at that time within the population still a trans-political differentiation. In this more or less politically “dormant” situation, the politically constructed category still did not bear a political society among the Muslims. Ten years later, the party’s approach to the remaining issue altered in essence, as it will be shown with a great impact on the census results.

Political Situation in 1971

As an illustration of the mutual influence of context and strategy, between 1961 and 1971 Yugoslavia underwent essential socio-political and economic changes, which offered the Bosnian leadership an opportunity to crystallize an identity policy already initiated. In view of the complex ideological and political contestations confronting party cadres, the secondary literature usually associates this period with the final combat between two political positions, often referred to as centralists and liberals (Burg 1983: 83). The conflict revealed highly divergent political, ideological and economic orientations in regard to the future of Yugoslavia. According to the centralists approach, all references to republican distinctiveness should be dropped. At the other end of the pole, were those who were in favour of the increasing authority of the republics and the dominant nations of the federal units (Connor 1984: 224).

Some important modifications in the degree and type of decision making entered into by the republics and autonomous provinces did occur already in the second half of the 1960s especially after the eighth Congress in 1964 (see introduction). The late 1960s and 1970 however constituted a period of trial and error with several forms of decentralized administration (Connor 1984: 224). Especially important in this context were the amendments to the constitution in 1963, which were adopted in 1971. Now the

republics [were] defined as States based on the sovereignty of the people and on the authority of and self-management by the working class and all working people, and as socialist, self-managing democratic communities of working people and citizens, and of equal nations and nationalities. (Connor 1984: 224)

This change in political thinking from a centralized to a decentralized policy was to be confirmed also in the census. Thus, 1971 was an important year marked by two

crucial issues, the discussion on the amendments to the federal constitution and the census. What some of the LCY politicians were to assert i. e. the most important aspect of the constitutional amendments was the transfer of power from the centre to the republics, whereas the census according to the elite should have confirmed official categorization based on republican rather than federal level. In both cases there was a need for social activation and political mobilization in order to ensure popular support (Connor 1984: 224-225).

During the 26th session of the Central Committee in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 9-10 March 1971, Hamdija Pozderac stressed the political aspect of the census and its potential implication on policy through the following statement:

In the forthcoming census some necessary data will be collected, which will enable the programming of some subjective forces for the planning of social development. By comparing this data with the results of the previous census it will be possible to get an insight into certain social processes. This insight will then enable us to have a deeper understanding of the ideas and practices of self-management in all its societal nuances.⁹

The census provided the decision-makers in Bosnia with an opportunity to display political agency, through the affirmation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a republic and the constitution of a Muslim nation, which was proposed at the twentieth session of CK SK BiH in May 1968.¹⁰

These crucial issues were embodied in the two most often discussed categories of the census: Yugoslav and Muslim.

The 1971 Census

The ninth Congress of LCY, which took place in 1969, did not only continue the policy of radical decentralization, but also seemed to express an increased awareness of the importance of popular attitudes as an element of policy making. With the establishment of several commissions that were to deal with different social segments,

⁹ ABH - Komisija za međunacionalne odnose u BiH, 1970. i 1971 godina, p. 4. (material still not registered in the archive, no signature present).

¹⁰ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, BiH IV, K. 6, fasc. 2. and AJ – 507, CKSKJ, BiH IV, K. 6, fasc. 5.

the party expanded its efforts to obtain a picture of everyday practices and informal contexts of popular action. To this effect the party increasingly supported empirical investigations of social patterns, inter-ethnic relations, religion, as well as the functioning of the system of self-management.¹¹ The Commission for inter-ethnic relations at the federal level was given the task to deal with the census issue. Because of its composition – it included representatives from all republics and autonomous provinces – it provided a space for diverging standpoints, internal tensions and attempted compromises. The main point of discord centered on the definition of “Muslim”.

Two main sessions of the Commission for inter-ethnic relations were dedicated extensively to the census and its implications, focusing mainly on the categories, their scope of demographic inclusion as well as their official content. While the first session took place in Belgrade on 16 January 1970¹², the second meeting, given the importance of the Bosnian case, was held with the Bosnian political leaders in Sarajevo on 18 February 1970.¹³

What appeared during the sessions could analytically be designed as two fields of contest. One, running along the horizontal axis of the republican political leaderships, was related to the category “Muslim”. Depending on the republican origin of political leaders, the concept was associated with different, often opposing frames of the category’s scope. The second field of tension, along a vertical axis, concerned, on the one hand, the self-declaration as Yugoslav. Compared to previous censuses, in 1971 the elite showed for the first time an interest in the social domain of identification. In order to grasp the importance of contextual factors, a test census was organized one year before the official census. The main purpose, at least on the federal level, was to compare attitudes towards Yugoslav identity in relation to other identities. Interestingly, parallel to the party’s initiative, the political weekly magazine NIN in 1969 started an inquiry on reflections and (re)evaluations of Yugoslav identity. Both approaches towards the

¹¹ At the session of the commission held on 19 and 20 May 1971, several sociological investigations on interethnic relationship within the JNA, in Slovenia, and through the NIN-initiated opinion poll on Yugoslav identity were presented and discussed. This shows not only an enlarged interest in private and non-politicized realities, but also the party’s consideration of existing patterns, which were to be utilized for political mobilization. See, AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 2, fasc.2.

¹² AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc.12.

¹³ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 1, fasc.4.

“bottom” showed similar outcomes,¹⁴ in other words a comparatively widespread sympathy towards Yugoslav identity. This proved to be especially irritating for the Bosnian political elite. In his speech at the first session in January, Ibrahim Latifić, a Muslim representative from Bosnia and Herzegovina, took the results with alarming concern and called for a more decisive policy of national propagation:

Especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina there are a certain number of elder men and messengers who did not declare themselves in national terms. They relied on the constitution, according to which each citizen of Yugoslavia is not obliged to declare himself/herself in national terms. We want to pay attention to this circumstance. According to me this can be very dangerous given the fact that the constitution is not going to be changed in those terms. But this can be also propaganda, as we read in the newspapers that people who asked if they have to nationally declare themselves, were told they would not have to. If such an attitude penetrates the broad popular masses then we run the risk that many will remain nationally indifferent.¹⁵

According to Latifić, the LCY faced two dangers from the test census results; the inarticulate position of the masses towards the census categories and second, the still strong identification with the Yugoslav category. According to him, this was problematic in a situation when the party tried to promote a Muslim national identity, given the fact that in 1961 despite the acceptance of the Muslim ethnic category the Yugoslav category was still used in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For the elite, the new concept of policy making this fact implied a danger and the situation called for political action. First, the historical and political context resulted in the Muslim and Yugoslav categories being placed in an antagonistic relationship. Consequently, for the Bosnian elite the affirmation of the category “Muslim” presupposed simultaneous devaluation of the “Yugoslav” category. Latifić expressed the view of the Bosnian political elite:

¹⁴ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 2, fasc.2.

¹⁵ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc. 12, p. 3.

In our opinion, if the Muslims can declare themselves through the category “Muslims in a national sense”, then the category of 1961 “Yugoslav, nationally undetermined” as such is not necessary.¹⁶

In other words, what once was praised as the signifier of unity of all Yugoslav nations and the federation, now seemed to symbolize a politically incongruent concept within the intensified republican affirmation and the recognition of Bosnian Muslims as a nation. What was to be politically institutionalized had to be socially utilized. The necessity of a strong popular utilization of the particular national categories instead of the Yugoslav category represented the second task. Thus, an intense social mobilization with a strong political promotion of national cultures was another field of political agency, crucial and most present in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

What theoretically Olzak and Nagel have explained as the instability of ethnic/national boundaries due to political re-configuration was a central issue in the party’s consideration of the Muslim category. In addition to the question of the territorial comprehensiveness of the Muslim category, in 1971 the issue of its national versus ethnic attributes became essential in regard to its political implications for the affirmation of the republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The political elite in Bosnia and Herzegovina gave a tactical response according to which the republics were viewed as institutional crystallizations of nationhood (Brubaker 1996: 30) at the twentieth CK SK BiH session in May 1968. This was done by the institutionalization of only the *Bosnian* Muslims as a nation having equal rights with the Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁷ During the session in 1970 Latifić summarized this in the following manner:

Now there are some political demands from the Central Committee in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to which the Muslims should not declare themselves as an ethnic but a national group equal to all other national groups in Yugoslavia. And now the main question is how to deal with this issue in the census in 1971.¹⁸

¹⁶ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc. 12, p. 6.

¹⁷ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, BiH IV, K. 6, fasc.2 and fasc.5.

¹⁸ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, BiH IV, K. 4, fasc. 12, p. 5.

In other words the republican session from 1968 still remained an unsettled issue even after three years. The main disputes centred on two aspects of the census category “Muslim”: its territorial circumscription and its character.

Interestingly, these crucial aspects were discussed in the absence of Bosnian political figures, which had originally brought forward the issue. Only Kiro Hadži Vasiljev, the Macedonian representative, advocated the category as proposed by the Bosnian political leadership. He stated as follows:

There is no doubt that the most important issue here is related to the Bosnian Muslims. According to all statements and academic works, which we have in our material, but also according to all our understandings, they [Bosnian Muslims] are a specific ethnic group. But this is not the case for all Muslims living in Yugoslavia, only for the Bosnian Muslims. I think it is obvious that a Muslim who is not a Turk and who lives in Sandžak [Serbian and Montenegrin region with a Muslim majority] does not belong to the same ethnic group as the Bosnian Muslims, especially if there are Muslims also living in Montenegro and Macedonia. Therefore, I would suggest that we agree upon this and treat only the Bosnian Muslims as an ethnic group. In regard to the nomenclature “Muslim” we use it because we simply do not have any alternative name. And the one who declares himself as an ethnic Muslim should be registered as a Bosnian Muslim and not only Muslim. I think only in this way we can solve this problem, which might appear also in other regions.¹⁹

Hadži Vasiljev’s proposal to recognise Bosnian and not all Yugoslav Muslims as a nation implied a clear articulation of republican policy affirmation in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the spirit of the emphasis on the republican border as the delineation of the ethnic category the question how to define the Muslim category, which in its name did not imply any territorial borders intensified the discussions. Thus, while Hadži Vasiljev’s perception of the (Bosnian) Muslims was explicated in national terms, the Macedonian leadership tried to integrate its own Muslim population as part of the Macedonian nation:

¹⁹ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc. 12, p. 14.

The Muslims, who are living on the other side of Yugoslavia, incurred in Macedonia and participated in the metastatic movements and social developments which happened to our inhabitants in the last 180-200 years, thus coming into a correspondent relationship with the Macedonians.²⁰

What was at stake might be explained as follows: With regard to the commonality of political interests, i. e. republican affirmation, the acknowledgement of national rights to the Muslims and their politicization had in Macedonia and Bosnia opposing political implications. Consequently, different policies were carried out by the representatives of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. While in the first case national affirmation of the Muslims would have implied a weakening of the Macedonian national corpus, in the Bosnian case the political affirmation of the Muslim nation served the interest of republican independence in relation to Serbia and Croatia.

In regard to the designation of a Muslim census category in the discussions on the federal level the location of the nation's subjectivity was shifting. Accordingly, while on the federal level, to the domain of religion, the domain of territory became crucial in the Bosnian republican context the differentiation was marked mainly by cultural (in this case religious) differentiation. In both contexts, however, defining the Bosnian Muslims was happening through negating other externally ascribed identities to them. On the republican level the defining point of Muslims was given by negation of Croatian/Serbian national identities being the adequate definers. Given the federal context, the divisive line was defined by the negation of the category's capacity to stand for Muslims coming also from other republics than Bosnia and Herzegovina. In other words the priority was put on the divisive rather than integrative faces of the category's designation. In regard to the cultural ingredients of the Muslims also at the federal level, only low articulation was given.

The definition of the Muslim census category based on language *and* religion was proposed by the Hungarian representative Laslo Rehak. In his view a solution would be to distinguish between Muslims speaking Macedonian and Serbo-Croatian. The latter would include not only the Muslim population in Bosnia, but also Muslims in Sandžak.

²⁰ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc. 12, p. 46.

Sure that there is a problem in regard to the Muslims in Macedonia as they live in the Debar region. And they are for sure another ethnic group, since they speak Macedonian which differentiates them from the Serbo-Croatian speaking Muslims. There is an academic piece of work whose title is “The Serbo-Croatian Muslims” although this PhD-candidate was advised to write only about the Bosnian Muslims, which is the official attitude in Bosnia and Herzegovina.²¹

The work mentioned by Rehak was written by Salim Ćerić, and its title, refers to all Serbo-Croatian speaking Muslims, whereas its content deals with the ethnic and national past of the Bosnian Muslims. His work, as will be discussed later, also represented a major intellectual codification of a normative national Muslim culture, with its religious and linguistic traditions located within the territorial context of the republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Ćerić 1968). The main purpose of writing this kind of history was to legitimate the Bosnian communist’s policy of republican affirmation.

Since the census category served the Bosnian elite primarily for the political emancipation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the subjectivity to be constructed under the category “Muslim” was mainly to be determined territorially and endowed with national attributes. This, however, on the federal level, could be interpreted as an exclusivist position. In this sense Laslo Rehak stated:

The Bosnian fellows are especially cautious not to become representatives of other Muslims outside their own republic. Therefore, I want to propose a discussion about this issue, since I think that the Sandžak situation is rather specific, although I am very familiar with it.²²

According to Fazlija Arlan from Kosovo the definition of the Muslim category for the census was already agreed upon and did not deserve any further attention²³. He added:

²¹ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc. 12.

²² AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc. 12.

²³ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc.12, p. 22.

I would not agree with Kiro's suggestion to use the label Bosnian Muslims because this does not solve the problem. We have Montenegrin Muslims, Muslims from Sandžak, we have Muslim who live in other parts of the country, in Kosovo and a great number of Muslims who moved from Sandžak and live now in Kosovo. We cannot neglect what they say and simply label them Bosnian Muslims in Kosovo. That is not possible.²⁴

The Serbian representative Dobrivoje Radosavljević provided a slightly different, but still broadly inclusive categorization by stating:

In my opinion it is impossible to equate Sandžak..... with the Muslims. This is for sure. [...] According to us they [Muslims living in Sandžak] are an ethnic group. If we are going to exceed this in relation to the Muslims living in Bosnia and Herzegovina is another issue. But Muslims as an ethnic group are absolute. Everybody has the right to say if he wants to be a Turk, Serb. If he does not want he can choose the ethnic category Muslim and the situation is clear. This will not bother the statistic accounts since it will show up that those are the Muslims in Serbia who may live in Niš or in Bor.²⁵

Although in Radosavljević's opinion the contested category might encompass all Yugoslav Muslims, his interpretation still allowed for a potential emphasis on the Bosnian Muslims, through the national attributes already formulated in the Bosnian political framework. However, his speculative rather than affirmative rhetoric implies a certain distance to the official view.

New Places, New Discursive Practices

The complex process of selection, rejection, modification and codification of census categories eventually led to further discussion on February 18, 1970. Symbolically enough, the topics and complex of problems were discussed in Sarajevo, the centre of the "problematic republic". With the president of the Bosnian Central Committee Branko Mikulić, the chairman of the Bosnian Commission for inter-ethnic relations, Nisim

²⁴ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc. 12, p. 23.

²⁵ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc. 12, p. 23.

Albahari, and the party secretary Hamdija Pozderac as the main advocates of the census category “Muslim”, the proposed political identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina could be now clearly and more affirmatively articulated. While the first session was mainly considering the boundaries of the category “Muslim” the emphasis at the second session was placed on the national versus ethnic versus religious character of the controversial issue.

Accordingly, the session was at first dedicated to the question of the categories “Muslims” and “Yugoslavs”. The Bosnian CK member Ahmet Čatić’s presentation on Bosnian Muslim identity was the introduction to the general discussion. In contrast to the previous three modes of *anti*-Yugoslav/Croatian/Serbian definitions of Bosnian Muslims, the new points of identity legitimization were derived from within the recent political past of the Communist party and its attitude towards the Bosnian Muslims. Being a politician, Čatić did not trace the genealogy of the “national” history in a *lounge durée* going back to medieval times. Instead, he recounted political events like the fifth regional conference of the CPY in July 1940 and the ZAVNOBIH-declaration made in July 1944, which were to embody the formal validation of the Bosnian Muslim national category.²⁶ The argumentation mirrored the logic of the political discourse: what needed to be officially institutionalized needed to have primarily its political rather than a long cultural past.

In addition to the issue of territorial boundaries, the discussion on definitional criteria of Muslim nationhood was now widened by a sharp distinction between religious and secular characteristics. The articulation of a Muslim identity had to be made within a framework that disregarded the formative culture (Islam) and any reference to religious criteria. This led to a politically reasoned trans-location of religious subjectivity into a secular sphere, and an effort to avoid the obvious religious connotation of the concept “Muslim”. In view of this ambiguity, Čatić’s definition of the concept “Bosnian Muslim” deserves to be quoted in full:

In sociological-ethnic terms the “Muslim” ethnic category as a national identity has been differentiated from the “Muslim” religious-Muslim-Mohammedan theological category.

²⁶ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 1, fasc. 4, p. 8.

In other words, the religious community has been separated from the ethnic one, which made the affirmation of the national community prevail over the affirmation of the religious community. The ethnic substance of the Muslims, as it is the case with the Serbs, Croats or Montenegrins, has historically developed within the borders of our country and under specific historical-cultural circumstances, in which the Serbo-Croatian language served as its main basis. The crucial determinant of the Muslim national identity is the language on which their whole culture is based and which connects them with the Montenegrins, Croats, and Serbs and their cultures. Their confessional determinant, Islam, connects them with some nationalities in our country like the Albanians, Turks and others. In the same way, Serbs and Croats are connected in linguistic terms but different in confessional terms, or Serbs and Macedonians are different in linguistic terms but share the same religious affiliation.²⁷

The deprivation of the Bosnian Muslim identity from religious content went hand in hand with making the political field conducive to the articulation of national rather than ethno-religious interests. Again in close relation to the Muslim census category the Yugoslav category was mentioned as well.

In our opinion the Yugoslav identity, independently from being interpreted as national, supranational or a-national originated from a wrong understanding of the inter-ethnic relations and insufficient theoretical considerations about the nation. [...] The statistics from the previous census has shown that the Yugoslav category was mainly utilized in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time I just want to remind you that especially among the Muslims this category was used in order to escape the identification with Serb or Croatian national category.²⁸

That the promotion of national rather than ethno-cultural attributes was made can be explained by the presence of the Bosnian political elite, which obviously played a pre-eminent role in the policy of institutionalization. In his presentation Branko Mikulić argues:

²⁷ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 1, fasc. 4, p. 8.

²⁸ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 1, fasc. 4, pp. 9-11.

We were very cautious in order not to cause some problems due to the lack of differentiation between “Muslim” in national terms and “Muslim” in religious terms, which might cause confessionally defined Muslims, who are in national terms Macedonians, Montenegrins or Albanians, to declare themselves as national Muslims. This would distort the picture. Therefore, I think it would be best if we would say Muslim in national terms. For if a Muslim feels like Macedonian, Albanian, and Montenegrin etc, he will say that he is Montenegrin and not Muslim in national terms.²⁹

According to Mikulić’s reasoning, there were two crucial changes compared to the definition from 1961; the application of secular national attributes only to the Bosnian Muslims, rather than the whole Yugoslav Muslim population, and the location of the remaining Muslim population within the religious rather than ethnic (as was the case in 1961) sphere. This solution did not collide with the Macedonian policy, as Abramovski explained:

We support the statement, which our Bosnian comrades articulated in the information part which we have received and which proposes to accept the “Muslim” category. But at the same time we want to call for further discussion on how to deal with the Muslims who will declare themselves in this sense. This is problematic. We have such people in Macedonia, in Kosovo. We have Muslims who are nationally indifferent, which perceive themselves neither as Albanians, nor as Turks. Those are the Torbeši in our republic, which until now have declared themselves as Muslims. Our suggestion is to keep the category “Muslim”, but to differentiate between those who define themselves in religious terms but belong to another nation and the Muslims who declare themselves as nationally indifferent, which would be the case with the Bosnian Muslims.³⁰

The Serbian representative Marić had another opinion:

Our opinion is that despite all the arguments that have been presented by the Bosnian political elite the Muslim ethnic identity cannot be restricted only on certain republics or certain languages. In our republic Serbia we have Muslims in Sandžak and Kosovo and

²⁹ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 1, fasc. 4, p. 70.

³⁰ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 1, fasc.4, p. 70.

all of them must have the freedom to declare themselves as Muslims independently from their previous identification.³¹

Who and what were the Muslims at the end? According to the Bosnian party they were a nation, restricted within the republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with its subjectivity given in terms of specific culture language and territory. According to the Macedonians projection of homogeneity, they were a part of the Macedonian nation, totally integrated according to the official view, but still divergent in religious terms, which in this case seemed not to matter. For the Serbian leadership they were an ethnic group which territorially spread over several republics. However, they were not recognized as a nation. What connected all those answers was the fact that they were provided from republican leadership which republican administrative territories were however inhabiting an existing Muslim community (Bhabha 1995: 297). The principles according to which the Muslim population should be embraced within a national or rather ethnic category depended on the political ends of the republican leadership. Eventually, only in case of Bosnia and Herzegovina question of the political status of the Bosnian Muslim were to be utilized politically in giving to it an explicit national status with the political function to build Bosnia's authenticity beyond Serbian and Croatian political influences. For Serbian politicians the acknowledgement of not more than ethnic status of the category Muslim, promised a political division cluster which guaranteed a category's reflection of Serbian republic dominance despite its Muslim population situated mainly in Kosovo and Sandžak. The rest of the republics sought their unifying force under different cultural attributes. In the case of Macedonian elite, which tried to assimilate its Muslims population, it therefore oscillated between affirmation of territorially around Bosnia bounded scope of the national category "Muslim" and total category's deprivation of any national attributes.

What was the popular perception on this issue? That there was some interest in "ordinary people" is evident since Hamdija Pozderac commissioned the three main intellectual nation-builders, Muhamed Hadžijahić, Mustafa Imamović, and Atif Purivatra

³¹ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 1, fasc. 4, p. 23.

to conduct a study on the attitudes of Bosnian Muslims towards the census.³² The study was conducted by the Faculty of Political Sciences at Sarajevo University. In its narrative structure, it is conceptualized similarly to Redžić's article on the history of identity patterns among Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1961), although this time as a source of nationhood instead of just ethnicity.

The authors represented the results from a small scale inquiry on the perception of Muslim intellectuals regarding the census category "Muslim". The survey encompassed 322 sent questionnaires of which 235 were answered. No information was given regarding the survey questions, and most interestingly, no quantitative analyses of the results were provided. Nevertheless, the informants categorized themselves in a variety of ways, ranging from Croats, Serbs, and Yugoslavs to Muslims and Bosniaks.

Those who identified with the Serbian or Croatian national categories argued that they chose their identities because they were living in a Croatian or Serbian environment. This confirms in a sense Höpkins assumption about the environmental influence on self-declaration, although no notion of pressure is voiced in any of the examples.³³ In regard to the Yugoslav category, the authors presented it as a category attractive only to people from mixed marriages.³⁴ Where the "prison" of the institutionalized nations did not suffice, the Yugoslav category provided an alternative.

The respondents, who represented Muslims from various social strata, gave different arguments to their choice of identity. However, not all of the arguments were congruent with the official line of argumentation. Some of them deserve to be quoted:

For a certain time I declared myself as nationally indifferent, because I did not have any other alternative, due to the existing fallacies, tendencies and arbitrary interpretations of the national identity of Muslims. We were forced either to accept another national identity or to remain indifferent, or to be a part of nothing, some kind of neglected and unaccepted part of our community.³⁵

³² Hadžijahić 1970.

³³ Hadžijahić 1970, p. 96.

³⁴ Hadžijahić 1970, p. 103.

³⁵ Hadžijahić 1970, p. 223.

A self-understanding in territorial, rather than national terms is reflected in the following quote:

I have chosen to declare myself as a Muslim in national terms. I would prefer to be a Bosnian or a Bosniak. In this case, however, it is not important; the only thing that counts is that this group has received its own national individuality.³⁶

Regarding the ambiguity of a category politically defined as a nation, but denied religious content, one respondent was reasoning in the following way:

For a Muslim who is a member of the religious community, the Bey's mosque is a house of prayer and the centre of religious life, while for the Muslim atheist it is a part of the culture of a nation, to which he belongs. And the name "Muslim" is an immanent part of Muslim individuality as is folklore or other determinants.³⁷

The Elite Perception on Yugoslav identity

Parallel to the issue of the category of Muslim, the category "Yugoslav" was of great importance in the discussion. Their antagonistic complementarity was to symbolize the oscillation between the dominance of the federation and the affirmation of the autonomy of the republic. However, given the new political context, in which republican independence and influence on the federal level was aspired by all republics, in regard to Yugoslavism, in contrast to the highly disputed category "Muslim", there seemed to be a consensus. Thus, at the time the federation was still seeking legitimacy for its political authority, Yugoslav identity was endowed with positive connotations. In the context of the new distribution of power, the category underwent a redefinition and was not to be portrayed as a symbol of unitarism and centralism, which were devaluated in the new political context. Gvozdenov commented on this:

In several analyses it has been confirmed that the popular attitude towards inter-ethnic relations including the attitude towards Yugoslav identity does not correspond to its

³⁶ Hadžijahić 1970, p. 225.

³⁷ Hadžijahić 1970, p. 225.

objective formal qualifications. It has been the opposite. Among the well educated people and among the communists Yugoslav identity has been proved to be very popular. [...] In the test census a substantial amount of educated people and students declared themselves as Yugoslavs in national terms. Some of them even insisted on a Yugoslav language as their mother tongue. We can say that this is stupid, which it is. But we have to take this fact into account.³⁸

Thus, what initially might have looked like acknowledging a more dialectical process of identification turned out to be of less importance for the party's census policy. The LCY showed an interest in categorizations, but the results, which were presented at the session, seemed not to have any decisive influence on the official census. Instead, the category of Yugoslav was filled with a new political content that resembled the soviet identity designation (Slezinke 1994: 432).

In addition, in complex cases, which entailed more than one of the offered national categories, for example children from mixed marriages, the Yugoslav category could at least provide a space for identification.³⁹ Therefore, despite the officially promoted rhetoric of democratization, the party in fact did not take the assumed popularity of Yugoslav identity into consideration. This leads us back to Bourdieu's account of the state's symbolic power as the power to state what is what and who is who, and thereby to impose legitimate principles of vision and division of the social world (Bourdieu 1994: 13).

In respect to the relationship between the Yugoslav and Muslim categories, those who most eagerly neglected Yugoslav identity were at the same time the most ambitious advocates of a Muslim identity. Consequently, Hamdija Pozderac on the 26th session of the Central Committee associated Yugoslavism with a nationalist and chauvinist orientation:

Under the circumstances of a self-management socialism, Yugoslavism as a national or supranational category does not have any predispositions or basis. Therefore it can be

³⁸ The surveys Gvozdenov was talking about were added in the party meeting as material. AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 1, fasc. 4, p. 87.

³⁹ AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 1, fasc. 4, p. 64.

constituted neither in theoretical nor in practical terms. To propose it as a substitute for one's own national identity goes in hand with unitarist, bureaucratic, and nationalist tendencies, which are against any real equality among the nations and nationalities in our multinational community.⁴⁰

While the federal commission considered a redefinition of the category “Yugoslav”, the republican commission went one step further by contemplating its elimination from the census. At the session of the republican commission for interethnic relations 28 May 1970, two positions were outlined, on the one hand by the historian Enver Redžić, who wanted to retain the Yugoslav category, and on the other hand, by Atif Purivatra, the president of the commission in BiH, and Hasan Grabcanevic.⁴¹ Given his communist and Yugoslav orientation, who at the same time was the first one to write a history of Bosnian Muslims Redžić's defence of Yugoslav category was based on a subjectivist definition of nation,⁴² which was not a valid line of reasoning for Purivatra and Grabcanevic. The crucial issue was a distinction between the national and the political dimensions of identities:

[Redžić] does not differentiate between the nation and national sentiments, on the one hand, and political sentiments, which are represented by the concept of Yugoslavism, on the other hand. [...] In regard to national indifference, Yugoslavism in the political sense cannot replace a national identity, nor can it be a label for a national identity, which does not exist. Therefore, it is not possible and academically inadequate to equate those two different terms which imply different meanings. In this case this would be done with national and political sentiments by insisting on the category “Yugoslav” in the census within the national categories.⁴³

For Grabcanevic in a census on national affiliation, there was no space for non-national identities. The same logic was applied to territorial categories such as “Bosnian”,

⁴⁰ ABH - Komisija za međunacionalne odnose u BiH, material not registered and ordered yet. , p. 3.

⁴¹ ABH - Izlaganja na sjednici Predsjedništva RK SSRN BiH od 28. maja 1970. godine, in: Komisija za međunacionalne odnose pri SSRN BiH, archive material not registered yet.

⁴² ABH - Komisija za međunacionalne odnose 1970, p. 3.

⁴³ ABH - Komisija za međunacionalne odnose 1970, p. 10.

or “Dalmatian”, despite their presence in some of the inquiries. The suggestion to eliminate the category was, however, not accepted on the federal level. In the 1971 census the category “Muslim in national terms” was adopted (without territorial connotations). Instead, the Yugoslav category was to serve as an identity for people in mixed marriages and internationalists.⁴⁴ As stated at the end of the sessions, the final decision was to be made by a higher authority.⁴⁵ To whom or what this referred, remains unclear. Tito? Probably. However, at a meeting with youth, Tito exclaimed his disdain for any compulsory identification via national categories, which in regard to the Muslims could have been interpreted in different ways, depending on whether one took Yugoslav, Muslim, Croatian, Serbian or other categories into consideration. Tito said about himself: “I was born in Croatia, in Zagreb are my ancestors. This is known by everybody. But I am a Yugoslav in all aspects. And not only this. I am an internationalist.”⁴⁶ More research is needed, however, before we will have a clear picture of Tito’s views on the matter.

Conclusion

Returning to the introduction and the theoretical discussion, I have argued that the national recognition of Bosnian Muslims was possible only after a political restructuring of the Yugoslav federation. I have also argued that the institutionalization of the Muslim national category should to be understood not as a result of an ethnic given, but as a result of certain political factors, that influenced nation-building. In the case of the Muslims, for the recognition of a political status as a nation the crucial precondition was the process of restructuring the centralist Yugoslav federation into a decentralized and con-federal political unit, which was finally confirmed in the constitution of 1974. This process reshaped not only the transfer of power from the federation to the republics but also enabled the republican leaderships to intensify national claims or even institutionalize new national categories. This alteration of the political form is inseparable from the reformulation of the ideological frame under the title of socialist self-management. Self-management in fact evolved into a synonym for a policy of territorial decentralization,

⁴⁴ ABH - Komisija za međunacionalne odnose 1970, p. 52.

⁴⁵ ABH - Komisija za međunacionalne odnose 1970, p. 118, see also AJ – 507, CKSKJ, XXIII C, K. 4, fasc.2.

⁴⁶ ABH – Komisija za međunacionalne odnose 1971, Omladinski list ”Mladost”, no. 752, 18 March 1971, found as a transcript in the commission for interethnic relations in BiH, 1971. Material without signature.

where power was to be transferred from the federal centre to the republics, both on the state level and within the Communist Party. Particularly after the economic reforms of 1965, major decisions were increasingly to be debated and decided at the republican and provincial levels. As a result, the ideological frame of self-management gradually connected socialism with national interests, a shift in political framing, which was to characterize subsequent developments. Yugoslavism as a symbol of the socialist Federation was interpreted in socialist and territorial terms, without any national connotation. This new political context generated nationally articulated claims, especially in the developed regions Croatia and Slovenia, but also in Kosovo. This would have political repercussions also on Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Muslim identity.

After the decision to recognize a Muslim identity in national terms in 1968, the preparations for the census in 1971 revealed differing views among Yugoslav communists as to the definition of the new nation. Should the Muslim category refer exclusively to Muslims in Bosnia, or to all Muslims speaking Serbo-Croatian, or, again, to all individuals identifying as Muslims, even if the identification was primarily religious. The sources show the importance of context and strategy, in the sense that on the federal level, with the clashing republican interests and competitions. With the introduction of a category “Muslim in national term” without the territorial restriction to Bosnia, the end result in fact was not congruent with the initial political claims of the Bosnian political elite.

An important conclusion is that even within the Bosnian Central Committee there was no unified attitude towards the Muslim identity. While the republican political leadership was advocating a category restricted to Bosnia, which would have served republican affirmation, this definition was not always accepted by other republics. Depending on the republican background, political representatives agreed or did not agree with the Bosnian leadership. Thus, while for certain Serbian politicians, like Radisavljević, a federal-wide category seemed reasonable, although only in ethnic - not national terms, the Macedonians perceived such a definition as a direct danger of a potential mobilization of the Macedonian speaking Muslims. However, as a result of the introduction of a Muslim national category; even without territorial attributes, and the social mobilization during 1971 national structure of the Bosnian regions changed.

Similarly, the Muslim share of the membership in the Bosnian Communist Party rose dramatically, Muslims were increasingly employed in state institutions and enterprises, and in 1974 the new category was confirmed in the new Bosnian and Yugoslav constitutions.

Discussions on national policy within the communist party were mainly framed by discursive practices with keywords like republican affirmation, national equivalence, and affirmation of the underdeveloped regions, phrased in a Marxist-Leninist ideological vocabulary, the cultural image of nationhood, its history and narration was left to the intellectuals. Consequently, intellectuals in Bosnia and Herzegovina were engaged in a process of a national identity construction. The fact that the Muslim population of Bosnia and Herzegovina did not assimilate into Serbs or Croats was a crucial argument behind the proposal for Muslim national recognition.

According to the census results published by the federal bureau of statistics, the number of Muslims increased to 1, 7 million, thus making Muslims one of the constitutive ethnic groups in the republic. In 13 out of 100 municipalities, this led to a change in the majority. While according to the census of 1961 45 Bosnian municipalities had a Serbian majority, in 1971 there were only 39 (Höpken 1989: 202). It would be interesting to analyse and compare the identification patterns among the Muslims in Sandžak, Montenegro, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, to see to what extent there were territorial differences.

Nevertheless, the aim of the census was not to reflect popular self-identification patterns, as officially claimed by the LCY, but to assert republican affirmations and the new distribution of power, especially in the case of politically marginal Bosnia and Herzegovina. And indeed, the census, combined with a better organized political mobilization, a policy of affirmation and the marginalization of Yugoslav identity, gave a new answer to the question “whose is Bosnia?”

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