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“MAKING BOSHNJAK ETHNONATIONAL IDENTITY BY CREATION OF BOSNIAN LANGUAGE IN BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA AND SANDŽAK, 1993 - 2009”¹

Abstract:

This research paper is a part of a wider study upon the reasons and the stream of the dissolution of the ex-Yugoslavia published by Vilnius University Press in 2006 under the title: “Sociolinguistic Aspect of Dissolution of Yugoslavia and Serbian National Question”. The research object of the paper is to examine the process of making separate (from Serbian, Croatian and Montenegrin) Boshnjak ethnonational identity by using the technique of “linguistic engineering/chirurgic” in the process of creation of an independent (from Serbian/Montenegrin and Croatian) Bosnian Language as a national language of Bosnian-Herzegovinian and Sandžak South Slavic Muslims (former speakers of common Serbo-Croat language). The final aim of the paper is to discover/present the ways in which various elements of linguistic diversity within former Serbo-Croat language have been “emblemized” and taken as markers of ethnonational and political identity of Muslim Boshnjaks and multicultural Bosnia & Herzegovina and Sandžak from 1993 (when official Boshnjak ethnonational identity was introduced) up today.

Keywords:

Balkans, ex-Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Sanžak, Montenegro, Serbo-Croat language, Bosnian language, Boshnjak identity, sociolinguistics

“We have always been here and the Muslims have only been here since the 15th c.”

*The Serbian mayor of Bratunac in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
the New York Times, April 22nd, 1993*

1. From linguistic point of view, the Balkans (or in more modern expression the South East Europe), appears to be both very fragmented and united. Surely, it is a meeting ground between language families. The Slavonic languages of Bulgarian, Macedonian, Croatian, Slovenian and Bosnian are similar (in some cases the same) and linguistically can be treated as a single language, like the disparate dialects that were forged into what is today standardized German and English language in the public use. Historically, it did not happen for the sake that Balkan Slavs went to separate state formations that prevented creation of a single South Slavic (“Yugoslav”) standardized language.² The only success was proclamation of “Serbo-Croat” standardized language in both first Yugoslavias (1919–1941/1954–1990) that was at the same time and a native spoken language of four (out of six) officially recognized *nations* in J. B. Tito’s Yugoslavia: Croats, Serbs, Montenegrins and

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² Stephen Barbour, Cathie Carmichael, *Language and Nationalism in Europe*, Oxford University Press: New York, 2000, p. 223.

Muslims (today Boshnjaks).³ Slovenes and Macedonians have been officially speaking separate languages. At any case, the common Serbo-Croat language was in fact the Shtokavian dialect that is unquestionably up today mother tongue of these four nations regardless how officially it is named after the collapse of ex-Yugoslav federation in 1991.

Even if we can refer in the Balkan case to detached languages from different language groups, the popular speeches of the Balkan inhabitants have experienced a great deal of admixture during the past times and due to the migrations.⁴ Many scholars are inclined to define the Balkans in terms of one or more the so-called “linguistic community”.⁵ Surely, today all “independent” South Slavic languages are belonging to one linguistic community by both linguistic criteria (grammar, morphology, phraseology, lexicon, syntax, orthography) and the level of understanding.⁶ The characteristic use of the infinitive verb is often given as an example of a “linguistic community” phenomenon in the Balkan peninsula. It is clear that Balkan peoples greatly influenced each other’s languages.⁷

2. The present day Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided between the Croatian-Boshnjak Federation (51%), which is covering the south-western area, and the Serbian Republic (49%), administering the north-eastern provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Dayton-Paris peace settlement in the fall of 1995 does not recognize the former pre-war ethnic composition according to the census of 1991. The language of the Serbian Republic (*Republika Srpska*) is from 1996 defined as *Serbian*, whereas within the *Federation* (composed by Boshnjak and Croatian parts) the “Croatian” and “Bosnian” are spoken and used in the public life. The practice shows that till the late 1980s mainly it was very difficult to recognize linguistic differences between those three ethnoreligious groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the 1980s experienced a deeper

³ In the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1918–1929) and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929–1941) it was even *Serbo-Croato-Slovenian* language as official one, but in the practice it was split into *Slovenian* and *Serbo-Croat*. Spoken Serbo-Croat was more uniformed in 1991 than in 1918 or 1945. Nevertheless, the Serbo-Croat became the basis of current Serbian, Montenegrin, Croatian and Bosnian language(s). According to Croatian philologist Sito Sučić, the lexical variation between these languages is 3–7% (Sito Sučić, “The Fragmentation of Serbo-Croatian into Three New Languages”, *Transition*, No. 29, 1996, p. 13). They are mutually comprehensible, and, what is very important, dialect frontiers cut across state boundaries. The practice proved that it is possible that one “nation” (Croat) can have several (three) linguistic spirits (Shtokavian, Chakavian, Kajkavian), that one sub-dialect can be shared by several “nations” (Ijekavian by Serbs, Croats, Montenegrins and Boshnjaks), that one “nation” (Serbs) can have standardized two sub-dialects for their literal language (Ekavian and Ijekavian), and that in one state (Bosnia and Herzegovina) is possible that the same spoken language (ex-Serbo-Croat) is standardized into three separate “national” languages (Serbian, Croatian and Boshnjak).

⁴ Павле Ивић, “Миграције балканских Словена у светлости лингвистичке географије”, Павле Ивић, *Изабрани огледи I. О словенским језицима и дијалектима*, Просвета: Ниш, 1991, pp. 239–269; Mark Pinson (ed.), *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Their Historic Development from the Middle Ages to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1996, pp. 14, 60, 81, 132; Robert J. Donia, John Fine, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed*, Columbia University Press: New York, 1994, pp. 37–38, 73.

⁵ For instance, “The language of the Croatians is the Slavonick somewhat corrupted, but there is very little difference between them. The great extent of this language is something surprising. For it is talked not only here but likewise in Bosnia, Servia, Albania, Dalmatia, Moldavia, Wallachia, Bulgaria, in great parts of Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, Russia and (if one may believe travelers) in Tartary, and almost as far as China: and all these different countries have only so many different idioms of the original language” (“Letter of May 31st, 1737”, *Jeremiah Milles’s Letters to the Bishop of Waterford*, British Library Add., MS 15,774).

⁶ Level of understanding between remote South Slavic provinces is much higher in comparison with the German speaking remote areas.

⁷ See for instance: P. Hendriks, *The Rodožda Verćani Dialect of Macedonian: Structure, Texts, Lexicon*, Lisse: Peter de Ridder, 1976.

sociolinguistic practice of making more independent republican and ethnoconfessional republican linguistic differences, which finally destroyed the *Novi Sad Agreement* of 1954 according to which, a single *Serbo-Croat* language was promoted with two regional variants – *Eastern* and *Western*.⁸ However, as a result of sociolinguistic policy of differentiating dialects from each other, at the census of 1991 overwhelming majority of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims accepted *Bosanski* (Bosnian) as their native speech, but only after decisive advice by the leading Muslim local Party of Democratic Action which fought for the political independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁹

The relationship between language, nation and state is a part of an ideological composition either in Bosnia and Herzegovina or in the rest of the Balkans (similarly to majority of European regions). Bosnia and Herzegovina is a Balkan historical province where the consequences of the clash between national ideologies both domestically rooted and imported from outside with more or less autonomous currents of thinking and behaviour have been deep and extreme. Imported ideology of the 19th c. German Romanticism of linguistically rooted ethnonational identity and solving the national-state problem (“Eine sprache, ein folk, ein staat”) fused with more autonomous currents that were heavily imbued with “bloody memories” from the WWII and resulted in what is labelled to be “post-Communist nationalism”. Such amalgamation became a basis for creation of increasingly homogeneous states with rejuvenation of inter-ethnic intolerance in the most extreme meaning.¹⁰ The land of Bosnia and Herzegovina is probably the best Balkan example of a crucial interface between language and nationalism. For the purpose that they are separate nations all three major ethnoconfessional players in Bosnia and Herzegovina legally proclaimed their own national languages to be disconnected with ex-Serbo-Croat one. That was of especial importance to the Muslims/Bosnjaks as without “evidence” that their native language is different from Serbian and Croatian they will hardly convince international community that they are not originally Serbs or Croats what was of a crucial justification of their claims to live in internationally independent “national” state organization.¹¹

3. The *Bosnian* language (de facto of only Muslim Bosnjaks), as a separate and newest (South) Slavic one, was officially inaugurated in 1996 by publishing the book: S. Halilović, *Pravopis bosanskog jezika* (“Orthography of Bosnian Language”) in the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo. According to the “Orthography...” (and other similar publications), Bosnian language is different in comparison with “relative” Serbian and Croatian because of the following main reasons:

- The use of phoneme “h” in certain words differently from Serbian, Croatian and Montenegrin. For instance, the word “coffee” is written and pronounced in these languages

⁸ R. D. Greenberg, “The Politics of Dialects among Serbs, Croats and Muslims in the former Yugoslavia”, *East European Politics and Societies*, No. 10, 1996, pp. 393–415. The text of the 1954 Agreement states that “the national language of the Serbs, Croats and Montenegrins is a single language”. The Muslims/Bosnjaks are still not mentioned as a separate nation as they have been considered at that time only as a confessional ethnicity.

⁹ Sito Sučić, “The Fragmentation of Serbo-Croatian into Three New Languages”, *Transition*, No. 29, 1996, pp. 10–16.

¹⁰ See: Vladislav B. Sotirović, “Emigration, Refugees and Ethnic Cleansing in Yugoslavia, 1991–2001 in the Context of Transforming Ethnographical Borders into National-State Borders”, *Beginnings and Ends of Emigration. Life without Borders in the Contemporary World. A Collection of Scholarly Essays*, Vytautas Magnus University, The Lithuanian Emigration Institute: Kaunas, 2005, pp. 85–108. For the matter of example, the father of Bosnian Serb army commander, General Ratko Mladić was killed by Croatian fascist party military troops – the *Ustashi* during the WWII.

¹¹ An extra ordinary feature of Bosnia and Herzegovina is that it covers the fault lines between three major confessions: Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Islam. From this point of view, local nationalism(s) are not only ethnic; they are even more confessional ones.

as: in Bosnian: *kahva*; Serbian/Montenegrin: *кафа/kafa*; Croatian: *kava*; in Bosnian *hudovica* (widow), in Serbian/Croatian *udovica*, etc.¹²

- Greater use of “Turkish” words (i.e. of Oriental origin) like *ahbab* (friend); *amidža* (uncle); *adet* (custom/habit), *akšam* (twilight), etc. (all of these words are known in Serbian, Montenegrin and Croatian but not used regularly).¹³
- Using of only one form of the Future tense: “ja ću kupiti/kupit ću” (I will buy) that is used in standard Croatian as well, but no use of forms “купићу/ја ћу да купим” as in Serbian/Montenegrin.¹⁴
- The use of Ijekavian sub-dialect of the Shtokavian dialect but not the Ekavian one of the same dialect.¹⁵ However, Ijekavian sub-dialect is used in spoken and standard language by all Serbs, Croats and Boshnjaks westward from Drina River and by Serbs in Western Serbia and by all Slavs in Montenegro.

Nominally, Bosnian language is written by both Latin and Cyrillic scripts. However, in practice it is done only by Latin (like Croatian) for the purpose to break any link with the Serbs for whom the Cyrillic script is (by language law) the first, while Latin is the second national alphabet.¹⁶ It has to be emphasised that Croatian, Bosnian, Montenegrin and Serbian Latin script is absolutely the same one. In historical context, the native language of the inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina (claimed to be *Bosnian* one) was written by three alphabets: “latinica” (Latin), “bosančica/bosanica” (Cyrillic) and “arabica” (Arabic). However, what concerns “bosančica”, it is not recognized the fact that this script came to mediaeval Bosnia from Serbia and during the Ottoman rule was known within the Bosnian Muslim feudal circles as “Old Serbia” up to the mid-19th c.¹⁷ At the same time Croatian philology claims that “bosančica” is Croatian national Cyrillic script.¹⁸ By “arabica”, undoubtedly, it was written one of the most beautiful profane lyric, religious and fine literature – “književnost adžamijska”.¹⁹

¹² For instance: Isaković A., *Rječnik karakteristične leksike u bosanskoj jeziku*, Svjetlost: Sarajevo, 1993, p. 6.

¹³ “Lexical differences have been a primary criterion for the establishment of a separate Bosnian language” (R. D. Greenberg, “Dialects and Ethnicity in the Former Yugoslavia: The Case of Southern Baranja (Croatia)”, *The Slavic and East European Journal*, vol. 42, № 4, winter 1998, p. 717).

¹⁴ However, both Serbs from Eastern Herzegovina (regularly) and Western Serbia (in many cases) are using future tense construction “ja ću kupiti/kupit ću” like in standard Bosnian and Croatian.

¹⁵ Former Serbo-Croat language was composed by (officially) three dialects: Chakavian, Kajkavian and Shtokavian. The last one became standardized literal language for Serbs, Croats, Montenegrins and Muslims/Boshnjaks. Shtokavian dialect was/is subdivided into three sub-dialects: Ijekavian (*mlijeko* = milk), Ikavian (*mliko*) and Ekavian (*mleko*). Ikavian is not standardized.

¹⁶ Similar policy of using alphabet in *Bosnian* language was pursued by Austro-Hungarian authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1878–1918 (С. Танасић, “Босанска вила’ о српском језику”, *Јужнословенски филолог*, № LV I/1–2, Београд, 2000, p. 1167; Ranko Bugarski, *Jezik u kontekstu*, Beograd, 1997, p. 35).

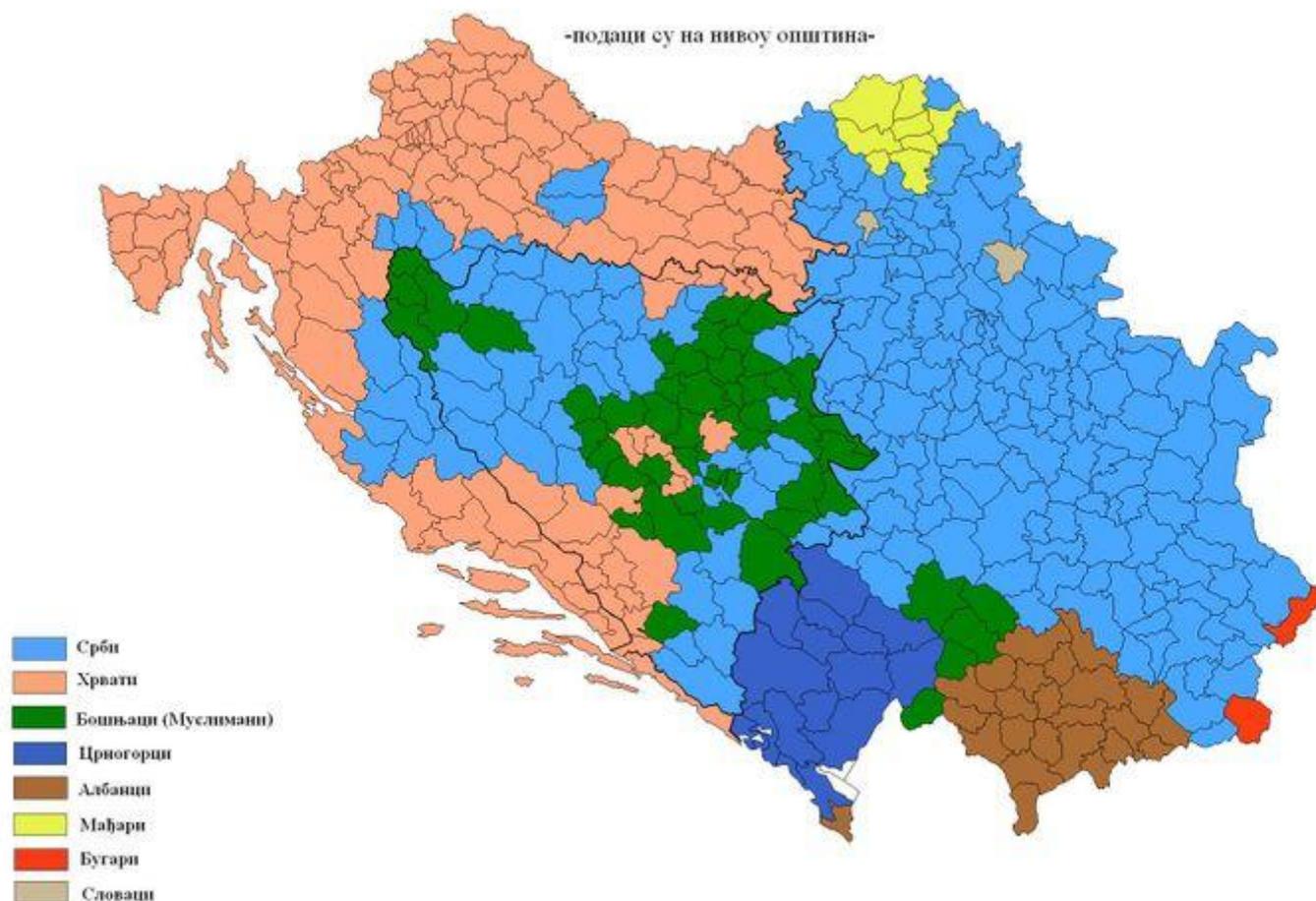
¹⁷ Upon Serbian claims see: Иван Вуковић, Лазо М. Костић, *Истина/Чуја је Босна*, Добрица књига: Нови Сад, 1999, pp. 21–56.

¹⁸ Upon Croatian claims see: Milan Moguš, *A History of the Croatian Language: Toward a Common Standard*, Nakladni Zavod Globus: Zagreb, 1995, pp. 27, 53.

¹⁹ Besides these mentioned, historically, on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been used and Glagolitic and Greek scripts.

Етнички састав Србије и Црне Горе, Хрватске и Босне и Херцеговине 1981. године

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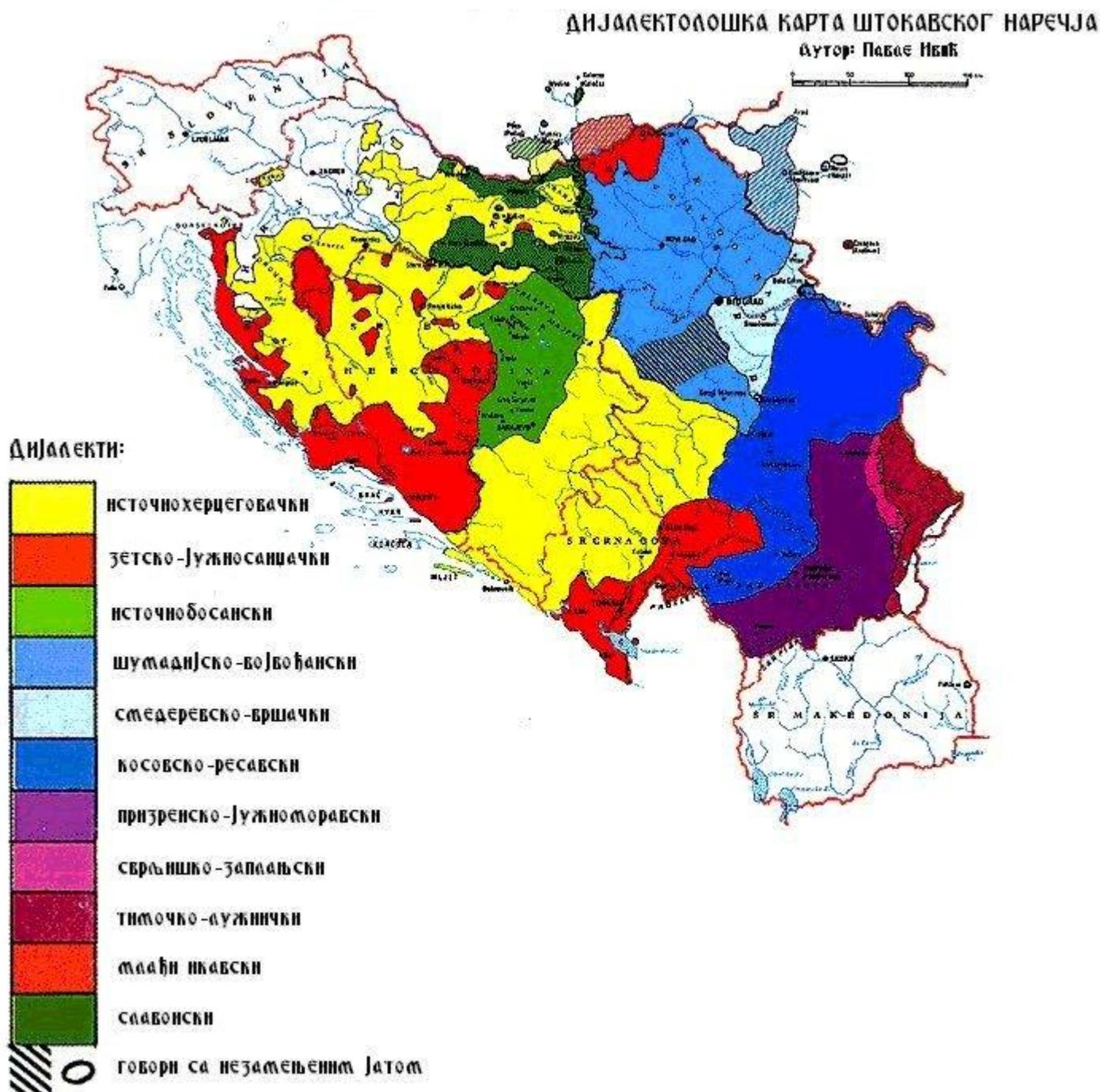


аутор Варјачић Владимир

Ethnic composition of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro (the territory of former Serbo-Croat language) by census in 1981

Regardless on official domestic and international recognition of separate Bosnian language from the neighbouring ones, linguistically speaking, grammar and orthography of Serbian, Montenegrin, Croatian and Bosnian languages are the same what means that linguistic structure of them is not differentiating.²⁰ It shows that all four of them have the same origin, process of development and linguistic essence. Even the fact that there are 8% of lexical differences between them does not make any practical obstacles for inter-understanding in every day life.

²⁰ According to the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina official languages are: Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian. Such constitutional-linguistic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is quite similar to the Swiss one – Italian, French and German (plus Romansh, spoken by very small community).



Map of the Shtokavian dialect spoken by 75% of the people from ex-Yugoslavia

The common link that is connecting in practice and even in literature Bosnian with neighbouring Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian and Montenegrin languages are c. 3000 Oriental words (“turcizmi”). For many of them there is no domestic Slavic alternative.²¹

²¹ During the Bosnian civil war of 1992–1995 Bosnian Serbs tried unsuccessfully to purify their language by elimination of the “Turkish” words. However, in many cases it was impossible without creation of new neologisms (ex: *čarape*=socks, *šećer*=sugar, *pamuk*=cotton, etc.). It is interesting that common nickname for Bosnian Muslims given by local Christians, but also and as a group name used by Bosnian Muslims to identify themselves, was *Turci* (Turks). Bosnian Christians used and the term

4. One of the main problematic issues concerning ethno-linguistic-statehood reality of Boshnjaks is the fact that their ethnic, language and state names are not having the same terminology as it is championed by majority of European nations (ex. Polish nation; Polish state; Polish language, etc.). In the other words, their ethnonational name – “Boshnjaks” does not correspond to the name of their national state – “Bosnia and Herzegovina” and both do not correspond to their national language name – “Bosnian”. In this context, we can wonder, for instance, which language speak population in Herzegovina or why Boshnjaks does not speak Boshnjak language but Bosnian one? On this place it has to be said that originally from 1991 up to 1996 Boshnjaks pretended to officially speak Boshnjak language (but never tried to rename Bosnia and Herzegovina into “Boshnjakia”). Such practice was even internationally sanctioned by the Dayton Peace Treaty in November 1995 when the text of the agreement was signed in four languages: English, Croatian, Serbian and Boshnjak (not Bosnian!).²² However, very soon the ideologists of Boshnjak ethnonational identity understood that international science of Slavonic philology is very suspicious upon the use of *Boshnjak* language as it is not at all rooted in the historical sources in which from the year 1300 up to 1918 is mentioned only *Bosnian* language (in fact as a provincial language spoken by the Orthodox, Catholic and from 1463 Muslim communities).²³ Elevation of Bosnian language, as a mother tongue of all inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina was especially promoted at the time of Austro-Hungarian administration in this province from 1878 to 1918.²⁴ However, such solution was decisively rejected by Serbs and Croats

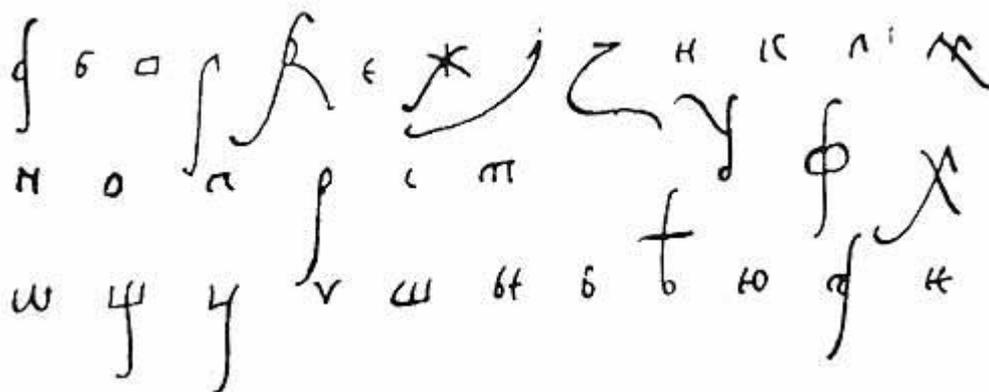
poturice (those who became Turks). Bosnian Muslims, on the other hand, called the real Turks (Turkish language speakers) from Anatolia as *Turkuše* or *Turjaši*.

²² Wyn Jones, G. (ed.), *Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States*, Europa: London, 1997, p. 98.

²³ In historical sources the name *Bosanski jezik* (Bosnian language) is mentioned for the first time in the year of 1300 (“Historijat jezika i države” in <http://www.bosnianlanguage.com>). It is true that the earliest Slavonic philologists like P. J. Šafařík, J. Dobrovský and J. Kopitar used the term *Bosnian* language but only as provincial speech of all inhabitants of Ottoman Pashaluk of Bosnia but not as a language of *Bosnians* in ethnic term (Петар Милосављевић, *Систем српске књижевности*, Трeбник: Београд, 2000, pp. 67–68).

²⁴ For instance, according to the decree of 1880 for Austro-Hungarian administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina existed only *Boshnjaks* who are by confession divided into those of Muslim, Catholic and Orthodox denominations: “Vlada u odnosu na domaće stanovništvo u Bosni i Hercegovini zna samo za Bošnjake koji se po vjeri dijele na muslimane, istočno-pravoslavne i katoličke hrišćane” (*Arhiv Bosne i Hercegovine*, Sarajevo, Zajedničko ministarstvo finansija, № 6687/Bosna i Hercegovina, 1880). To be more precise, the regime of Benjámín Kállay (Austro-Hungarian Minister of Finance, 1882–1903) in Bosnia and Herzegovina promoted the *bošnjaštvo* (Bosnianism) in order to create local patriotic loyalty to Bosnia and Herzegovina but not to independent Serbia or even Croatia (which was already a member of Austria-Hungary). Especially Serbian irredentistic policy was of extreme danger for territorial integrity of the southern part of the Monarchy particularly after military success of Serbia during the First and Second Balkan Wars (1912–1913/1913) when popularity of the idea of *Yugoslavia* among the Austro-Hungarian South Slavs became extremely high. That was a reason why Austro-Hungarian administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the WWI tried to suppress any Serbian identity of the province usually by promotion of *bošnjaštvo*. It has to be said that historically (at least simple) majority of inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been the Serbs shows and the first post-WWII census in Bosnia and Herzegovina (after genocide against the Serbs committed by Croats and Muslims) in 1948: Serbs - 1.136.116 (including 71.125 of Muslim religion); Croats – 614.142 (including 24.914 of Muslim religion), and *Muslim undetermined* - 788.384 (Robert J. Donia, John Fine, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed*, Columbia University Press: New York, 1994, p. 176). What concerns the linguistic policy of Austro-Hungarian authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina the first official language in this province to be announced was *Croatian*. The name was changed after the protest of the local Serbs firstly into *Land* language (“Land sprache”) and finally into *Bosnian* one. In the schools was also used from 1907 and *Serbo-Croat* language (M. Pacić, “Prosvetna politika Austro-Ugarske u Bosni i Hercegovini”, *Jugoslovenski narodi pred Prvi svetski rat*, Beograd, 1967, pp. 703–724).

from Bosnia and Herzegovina who called their languages after their ethnic names. Thus, the idea of Bosnian language at that time (as today as well) was accepted only by local Islamic inhabitants.²⁵



The *Bosančica* from the end of the 14th c.

Nevertheless, the Austro-Hungarian policy of Bosnian language as a native one of all inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina is accepted today in a full extend by the main advocators of Bosnian language as a mothertongue of Serbs, Croats and Boshnjaks from Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the Boshnjaks from Sandžak area (*Паука* in Serbian language and historiography). The last one was divided after 1913 between Serbia and Montenegro but before 1878/1908 being a part of Ottoman province (pashaluk in Serbo-Croat) of *Bosnia* (not of Bosnia and Herzegovina!) which existed from 1580 to 1878/1908.²⁶ There is also and unproved claim (in the sources) that even before Slavic settlement at Bosnia (the 7th c.) existed such name for both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sandžak.

5. The truth is that in the 15th and the 16th cc. “Bosnian” (or “Serbo-Croat” or “Serbian” or “Croat”) language was second diplomatic and official language at the court in Istanbul (after the Turkish one) due to the fact that at that time there were many highest Ottoman officials and the Janissaries²⁷ in Istanbul (including and Grand Vizirs) originating from Bosnia and Herzegovina.²⁸ However, this fact became a basis for the claims that exactly *Bosnian* language was at that time some kind of Balkan *lingua franca* and even one of the most diplomatic languages in Europe. Nevertheless, the sources are telling us that in the most cases the local South Slavic population of ex-“Serbo-Croat” language (especially those from Dubrovnik) have been calling their language as “our

²⁵ It has to be emphasized that even before Austro-Hungarian administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina the local population used the terms *Bosnian* (“bosanski”) for the language and *Bosnians* (“Bosanci”) for themselves as inhabitants of this province alongside with more pure ethnic names *Serbian/Serbs* and *Croatian/Croats* (Miloš Okuka, *Eine Sprache — viele Erben. Sprachpolitik als Nationalisierungsinstrument in Ex-Jugoslawien*, Klagenfurt, 1998, p. 47).

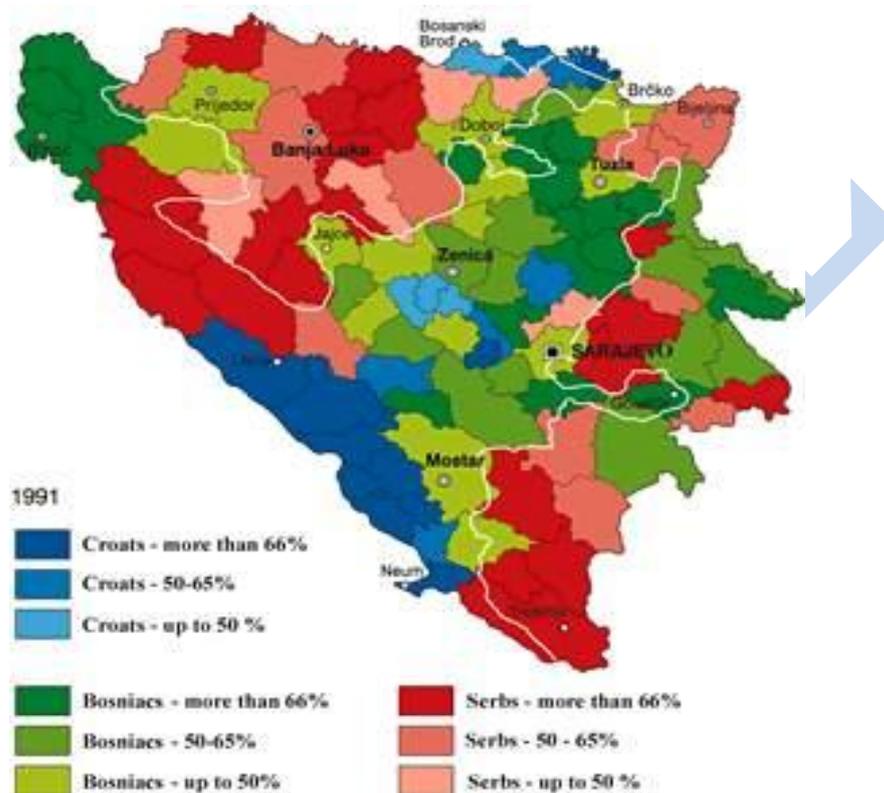
²⁶ Ottoman Pashaluk of Bosnia before 1683 encompasses and parts of historical territories of Croatia and Dalmatia.

²⁷ Vinko Pribojević, a Dominican friar from the island of Hvar in Dalmatia in his *De origine successibusque Slavorum* (Venice, 1532) pointed out that Ottoman sultans appointed many South Slavs as the commanders of his army and that 20.000 of his guard (the Janissaries) are recruited among the Thracians, Macedonians and Illyrians (for Pribojević all of them have been South Slavs – aboriginal Balkan people, speaking one language that was later on called “Serbo-Croat”). With the help of them the Ottomans subjugated many states and peoples in Europe.

²⁸ Ivan Božić, Sima Ćirković, Milorad Ekmečić, Vladimir Dedijer, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, Beograd, 1973, p. 141.

language”, “Slavic language”, “Illyrian language”, etc., but only in very rare cases by ethnic names.²⁹

Creators and promoters of modern idea of separate Bosnian language from the relative neighbouring ones, in order to prove their standpoint, implied the technique of “linguistic engineering”, similar to their Croatian colleagues concerning Croatian language.³⁰ In both cases, it



Ethnonational composition of Bosnia and Herzegovina according to the last pre-war census in 1991 with the border between two ethnopolitical entities

²⁹ Mavro Orbini, a Benedictine abbot from Dubrovnik, in his famous pan-Slavic book (“the Bible of pan-Slavism”) *De regno Sclavorum* (in Italian version *Il regno degli Slavi*), printed in Pesaro in 1601, was very clear telling that all South Slavs are speaking the same language and composing one nation within a wider network of united ethnolinguistic Slavdom (Мавро Орбини, *Краљевство Словена*, Београд, 1968). More precisely, he inclined to call all speakers of ex-Serbo-Croat language of Shtokavian dialect as the Serbs (Никола Радојчић, *Српска историја Мавра Орбинија*, Београд, 1950). However, a Croatian nobleman of German origin from Senj, Pavao Ritter Vitezović (1652–1713) in his political-ideological-programmatic book *Croatia rediviva: Regnante Leopoldo Magno Caesare*, Zagreb, 1700 claimed that all Slavs, including and those in the Balkans, originated from the Croats and speaking in the essence Croatian language with regional dialects (Pavao Ritter Vitezović, *Oživjela Hrvatska*, Zagreb, 1997; about Vitezović see in Vladislav B. Sotirović, “The Idea of Greater Croatia in the Seventeenth Century”, *Statehood Beyond Ethnicity: Comparative and Trans-National Perspectives in Europe*, conference proceeding, Flemingsberg, near Stockholm, 2003, pp. 150–189). The essence of both Orbini’s and Ritter’s (likewise Pribojević’s) writings is that all South Slavs (especially the Shtokavians) are composing one ethnolinguistic group (in modern sense - *nation*).

³⁰ “Linguistic engineering” of Croatian language can be followed even from 1967 when a majority of the most important Croatian scientific, literal and cultural institutions signed a *Declaration upon the name and position of Croatian literal language* (“Deklaracija o nazivu i položaju hrvatskog književnog jezika”) requiring to be officially separated from Serbian one and purified from the so-called “srbizmi” (the words of a Serbian origin).

was and is done for the very purpose to prove that their ethnic groups are linguistically independent what has to give them a right to call themselves as a separate *nations* who is justifiably struggling for their own independent political entities which has to be internationally recognized as independent national states according to the rights to self-determination. However, differently to Croatian case, Bosnian “linguistic engineering” is not based on introduction of neologisms³¹ but rather on re-introduction of the Oriental words which have been brought to the Balkans by Ottoman authorities.

6. In conclusion, we can say that the problem of official recognition of a separate Boshnjak language, as a newest Slavic one, in 1996 can be solved taking into consideration two standpoints:

- ♦ Linguistic standpoint; and
- ♦ Socio/polito-linguistic standpoint.

De facto (linguistically), Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Montenegrin languages are still belonging to one standard-linguistic system. They express unity in orthography, grammar, morphology, syntax, phonology and semantics. For instance, all of them have 30 phonemes (25 consonants and 5 vocals). Between them there are only app. 8% lexical differences (including and “neologisms”). However, there is a tendency to create lexical differences for the sake of lesser inter-understanding in order to firmly justify ethno-linguistic and state-political “independence” from, in fact the same, ethno-linguistic neighbours. The obvious fact is that the level of inter-understanding is almost 100% (excluding the most newest neologisms).

De Iure (in socio/polito-linguistic point of view) these four languages are separate ones and internationally recognised (the case of recognition of the Montenegrin language is in the process of finalisation). However, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Montenegrin are separate languages according to the names, almost no different according to the essence and no separate in structure.

The crucial technique of “linguistic engineering/chirurgic” of Bosnian language is its lexical Orientalization with the three sociolinguistic and ethnonational tasks to be achieved: 1) inner homogenization of *Boshnjak* nation; 2) denacionalization of Croats and Serbs within Bosnia and Herzegovina (by suggestion that all inhabitants of this state speak Bosnian language);³² and 3)

³¹ Croatian neologisms in fact have to replace both the international words (not translated in Serbian) and common Croato-Serbian words in order to make a deeper distance between Croatian and Serbian languages for the sake of lesser understanding as a crucial proof that these two languages are separated. For instance: *korjenoslovstvo* (etymology), *narječoslovstvo* (dialectology), *točnozor* (sniper), *vrhoskuplje* (summit), *odmoridbenik* (tourist), *veleprevrat* (revolution), etc. (Miloš Okuka, “O osamostaljivanju hrvatskog književnog jezika”, A. Кюннап, В. Лефельдт, С. Н. Кузнецов (eds.), *Микроязики, языки, интерязыки. In honorem professori Alexandro D. Dulicenko*, Tartu University Press: Tartu, 2006, p. 233). There were and such proposals for neologisms which hardly took roots like: *okolotrbušni hlačodržač* (belt for trousers), *uljudba* (civilization), *vrtolet* (helicopter), *prosudba* (mark), etc. (Владислав Б. Сотировић, *Социоллингвистички аспект распада Југославије и српско национално питање*, Vilnius University Press: Vilnius, 2006, p. 115).

³² The first President of post-Yugoslav independent Bosnia and Herzegovina and a leader of ruling Muslim political Party of Democratic Action (SDA), Alija Izetbegović, was known as an author of nationalistic *Islamic Declaration* from 1970 according to which any form of multiculturalism and multiconfessionalism was not possible for the Muslims who have to establish pure Islamic society firstly by Islamization of the whole Muslim community (Alija Izetbegović, *The Islamic Declaration: A Programme for the Islamization of the Muslim Peoples*, Sarajevo, 1990).

external heterogenization of ethnoconfessional Boshnjak nation in relation to the neighbouring Serbs and Croats.³³

The politics of “linguistic engineering” or “linguistic chirurgic” in the case of Bosnian and Croatian languages was implied for the final aim to create firstly independently standardized national languages within officially common Serbo-Croatian one (during ex-Yugoslav federation) and later (after collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991) internationally recognized separate languages by deepening and using as much as the dialectical/regional differences of the same spoken Serbo-Croatian language. The ultimate result was that minor speaking differences were proclaimed for the national characteristics and as such have been used to be the foundations of the newly declared autonomous *national* languages. Consequently, common Serbo-Croatian language ceased to exist and with him and a common Serbo-Croatian nationality as well.

Finally, the Muslim community in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 20th c. passed the way from *religious community* in inter-war Yugoslavia, to *nationhood* in Socialist Yugoslavia and *statehood* in post-Communist era³⁴ with the final codification and internationally recognized their own *national* language. However, Boshnjaks, Croats and Serbs from Bosnia and Herzegovina (likewise from Montenegro, Sandžak or ex-Republic of Serbian Krayina) all speak the same language which in the 20th c. came to existence as *Serbo-Croat*³⁵ and have a shared historical past. The only difference between them is discrete confessions.³⁶ If one will apply German Romanticist criteria upon ethnonational identity of/among the Yugoslavs surely at least all Shtokavians (all Serbs, all Montenegrins, all Boshnjaks and majority of Croats) would be considered as a single ethnolinguistic nation with the right to live in their one national state organisation which we can name as *Shtokavia*.

³³ The most problematic and unproved in the sources hypothesis upon the ethnic origins of the Boshnjaks (supported by, for instance, Bosnian linguist Dževad Jahić) is that they are posteriors of the mediaeval Bosnian *Bogumils* who allegedly have been a separate ethnic group, i.e. not Serbs or Croats (*Simpozij o bosanskom jeziku [Zbornik radoval], Bihać, 7.–8. IX 1998, Sarajevo, 1999*). Such hypothesis are scientifically absolutely irrelevant (A. V. J. Fine, “The Medieval and Ottoman Roots of Modern Bosnian Society”, Mark Pinson (ed.), *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Their Historic Development from the Middle Ages to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1996, pp. 11–15).

³⁴ See the chapter by Ivo Banac: “Bosnian Muslims: From Religious Community to Socialist Nationhood and Postcommunist Statehood, 1918–1992”, Mark Pinson (ed.), *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Their Historic Development from the Middle Ages to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1996, pp. 129–153. This book, likewise of Donia and Fine (1994) or Malcolm (1994), is trying “to demonstrate the antiquity of a distinctive Bosnian identity”... However, “they certainly do not contribute to a demonstration of the antiquity of the nation; but they do contribute a great deal to the contemporary process of its retrospective, symbolic construction at a time when the legitimation of a Bosnian state is fundamentally contested” (John B. Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, Columbia University Press: New York, 2000, p. 323, footnote 9).

³⁵ For accounts of historical development of literal languages on the Serbo-Croat-Boshnjak-Montenegrin territory see: Павле Ивић, “Развој књижевног језика на српскохрватском језичком подручју”, Павле Ивић, *О језику некадашњем и садашњем*, БИГЗ–Јединство: Београд–Приштина, 1990, pp. 87–140.

³⁶ Robert J. Donia, John Fine, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed*, Columbia University Press: New York, 1994, pp. 9, 13.



*The coat of arms of Bosnia and Herzegovina
as a land of Austria-Hungary from 1878 to 1918*

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