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► **To cite this version:**

Siniša Malešević. Forging the Nation-centric World: Imperial Rule and the Homogenisation of Discontent in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1878–1918). *Journal of Historical Sociology*, In press, 34 (4), pp.665-687. 10.1002/johs.12350 . hal-03456507

HAL Id: hal-03456507

<https://cnam.hal.science/hal-03456507>

Submitted on 30 Nov 2021

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Forging the Nation-centric World: Imperial Rule and the Homogenisation of Discontent in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1878–1918)

Siniša Malešević 

Abstract

Historical sociologists have questioned the idea that nationalism and imperialism are mutually exclusive phenomena. In contrast to traditional historiography that depicted empires as ‘the prison houses of nations’ contemporary scholarship emphasises the structural and ideological ambiguities that characterised the 19th century European imperial projects. Hence instead of ‘popular longings’ for national independence the focus has shifted to the experiences of ‘national indifference’. In this paper I aim to go beyond this dichotomy by questioning the role of (nationalist) agency in the collapse of imperial order. Drawing on the primary archival research I zoom in on the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the Austro-Hungarian rule (1878–1918). The paper contests the view that the imperial state was severely undermined by the presence of strong nationalisms. I also challenge the notion that the majority of Bosnian population remained ‘nationally indifferent’ during this period. Instead, I argue that understanding the character of the Austro-Hungarian rule is a much better predictor of social change that took place in this period. Rather than stifling supposedly vibrant nationalisms or operating amidst widespread national indifference the imperial state played a decisive role in forging the nation-centric world through its inadvertent homogenisation of discontent.

INTRODUCTION

Nationalism and imperialism are typically understood to be mutually exclusive ideological projects. In the South East European historiography empires have often been described as the ‘prison houses of nations’ that were destined to collapse and give way to ‘authentic’ nation-states. Furthermore, national movements have regularly been identified as playing the central role in the destruction of imperial orders and creation of national states.

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Funding information: Open access funding provided by IReL, WOA Institution: University College Dublin, Blended DEAL: IReL

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However much of recent research has questioned these assumptions. A number of historians and historical sociologists have demonstrated that there is more continuity than discontinuity in the 19th century imperial and national projects (Hall 2017; Judson 2016; Kumar 2017; Malešević 2019; Stephanov 2018; Stergar and Scheer 2018). Moreover, this scholarship has successfully deconstructed traditional understandings of the late Habsburg and Ottoman worlds by explaining how empires have often unwittingly fostered development of institutional and ideological structures for the proliferation of nationalisms. Hence these studies show convincingly that the 19th and early 20th century nationalisms and imperialisms were not inevitably on collision course but have often coexisted and reinforced each other.

This paper follows in the footsteps of this new research. However, my aim is to push this analysis further by questioning not only the traditional historiographic paradigms of 'popular longings' for national independence but also the influential notion of 'national indifference' that has dominated recent analyses. More specifically the paper focuses on the role of Austro-Hungarian imperial structure in the homogenisation of discontent in the late 19th and early 20th century Bosnian and Herzegovina. I contest the view that the imperial state was undermined by the existence of strong national identities. Nevertheless, I also challenge the idea that the majority of Bosnian and Herzegovinian population remained 'nationally indifferent' during this period. Instead I argue that understanding the character of the Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a better predictor of social change that took place in this period. Rather than stifling supposedly vibrant national identities or operating amidst widespread national indifference the imperial state played a crucial role in forging the nation-centric understandings of social reality. However, this is not to say that the Habsburg state administration created nationalist resistance *ex nihilo*. Instead, the nationalisation of discontent was largely unintended consequence of the uneven and increasingly coercive policies of the Austro-Hungarian state. I argue that the disconnect between the coercive, ideological, and micro-interactive powers, which underpinned the Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina, contributed substantially towards the homogenisation of very different forms of resistance. By framing all forms of anti-state discontent as a form of nationalist rebellion the Habsburg state contributed substantially towards the nationalisation of different acts of discontent. The first part of the paper briefly reviews recent debates on nationalism, imperialism and state formation and articulates the key argument. The second, short part, outlines the methodology and the archival data used in the paper. The third part provides some information on the historical context while the final, longest part, offers an in-depth analysis of the social mechanics of the Austro-Hungarian colonial rule and its management of discontent in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

BEYOND 'POPULAR LONGINGS' AND 'NATIONAL INDIFFERENCE'

The traditional European historiography often depicted the late 19th and early 20th centuries as the heyday of nationalism. In this conventional narrative strong nationalist movements spearheaded the collapse of imperial orders and in this way fulfilled the popular aspirations of ordinary people to live in their own sovereign and independent nation-states. The collapse of the Ottoman, Habsburg and Romanov empires has often been interpreted through the prism of rising and uncompromising nationalists who challenged and ultimately overthrew these imperial 'prison houses of nations' (Gerolymatos 2002; Nairn 2011; Snyder 1968). Even some highly influential contemporary scholars of nationalism such as Wimmer (2018, 2013) and Hroch (2015) insist that nationalist leaders and the nationalist movements have caused the collapse of the imperial order. Although they challenge the traditional accounts of 'popular longing' for one's own nation-state they still see rising nationalism as the primary trigger of imperial downfall. For Wimmer (2013: 75) 'nationalists create nation-states, whether or not nations have already been built' while Hroch (2015:37) argues that national movements forged modern nations as they were 'driven by human intent in the shape of subjective "nationalistic" dreams and hopes'. These approaches share the traditional historiographic emphasis on the role of agency in the formation of nation-states. In this understanding the focus is on the nationalist agitators who allegedly succeed in mobilising popular support against the imperial

rule. Nevertheless, while the traditional historiography tends to operate with the perennial views of nations as something that has always existed and just needed 'awakening' the contemporary scholars of nationalism such as Wimmer and Hroch are well aware that nationhood is a modern phenomenon.¹ Hence in their interpretation nationalist movements need to change public perceptions and transform ordinary individuals into nationally conscious citizens.

Nevertheless, this well-entrenched view has recently been questioned by several historians and historical sociologists who argue that the collapse of imperial world was not caused by the nationalists and ordinary individuals who wanted the creation of nation-states. Instead these scholars point out that the imperial collapse and the nation-state formation were the outcome of contingent geopolitical changes, wars, revolutions, economic breakdowns, and variety of other social factors (Hall 2017; Judson 2016, 2006; Malešević 2019; Mann 2012; Van Ginderachter and Fox 2019; Zahra 2010). Furthermore, these new studies show that the nation-formation was a protracted and contested process that largely took off not before but after the establishment of independent polities. Thus, instead of being driven by intense nationalist sentiments or clearly defined nationalist programmes that would ultimately cause the imperial collapse, the populations of new polities became nationalised only after these events have taken place (Judson 2016; Malešević 2019, 2012). As Hall (2013:230) argues it was the actions of 'states [that] actually created nationalist movements where none existed before.' In many cases the empires themselves unwittingly created a space for the emergence of nationalist and nation-states.

One of the key concepts developed to make sense of the popular attitudes that were present during this period of historical flux in Europe is the notion of national indifference. As Zahra (2010) and Judson (2006) argue national indifference was a phenomenon associated with the large number of individuals who were reluctant to identify as members of a single and officially recognised nation and have often preferred to describe themselves in local, regional, religious, kinship-based, residential, cosmopolitan, or other terms. These 'nationally ambivalent populations' would either reject the official categorisations or would consciously switch between two or more identifications depending on the changing social conditions. Zahra and Judson have traced this mass phenomenon to the second half of 19th century and the beginning of the 20th Europe. However, after WWI there was a visible decline of such identifications. Zahra (2010:104) describes this historical experience as a form of 'national agnosticism'. The individuals who expressed such nationally ambiguous identities have often been belittled by the nationalists and the state officials as 'amphibians', 'borderland souls' or 'hermaphrodites'.²

These approaches equally challenge the perennialist and the modernist accounts of nation-formation. On the one hand they show that there was nothing inevitable in the emergence of uniform sense of nationhood in the 19th century and that the pre-modern ethnies were not destined to become modern nations, as argued by Smith (1986) and Armstrong (1982). On the other hand, Zahra and Judson also show that the classical modernist theories of nationalism including Gellner (1983), Anderson (1983) and Hobsbawm (1990) are not sensitive enough to account for the ambiguities of nation-formation. Hence national indifference was not a sign of insufficient modernisation or the lack of premodern ethnic cores. Instead as Zahra (2010, 2008), and Judson (2016, 2006) argue rather than being a remnant of the premodern world national indifference was a product of modernity. In the words of Zahra (2010:105) 'this imagined noncommunity was brought to life and institutionalized through nationalists' own persistent efforts to eradicate it'. Hence national indifference emerged as a response to changing social and political realities of 19th century Europe: as such this was not a 'binary opposite of political engagement, a reflection of popular ignorance, or a premodern relic', but 'a response to modern mass politics' (Zahra 2010:118).

These new perspectives rightly and successfully challenge the traditional and contemporary accounts of the relationship between empire and nation-state. They show convincingly that there is nothing automatic, inevitable and irreversible in the collapse of empires and creation of nation-states. They also demonstrate that the collective and individual attachments are highly malleable, situational and can assume very diverse forms. Nationhood is never a teleological development but a highly contingent, unpredictable, reversable processes characterised by social unevenness, historical oscillations, and multifaceted transformations (Brubaker 2015; Malešević 2013b, 2006).

However, these new perspectives do not tell us enough about the organisational, ideological, and micro-interactional processes that underpin different trajectories of nationhood and national ambivalence. Although these approaches move in the right direction as they recognise that the national movements and nationalist individuals do not necessarily play a central role in the establishment of the nation-states, we still do not know enough why some individuals and groups become fully nationalised and others develop ambiguous collective identities. Moreover, it is not clear whether national indifference is a temporary phenomenon that only arises in situations where nation formation is in flux and where states have not fully monopolised the use of coercive power over their territories and populations. The notion of national indifference has also been criticised for conflating different individual and collective experiences including fluid sense of national attachments, conscious rejection of national categories, unconscious sense of being a-national and the specific behavioural practices such as living in the mixed marriage families, or being bilingual (van Ginderachter and Fox 2019:7, Kamusella 2016).

In this paper I aim to go beyond the national indifference literature to explore the organisational, ideological and micro-interactional processes that shape the transformation of non-national, anti-national and proto-national categories into the nation-centric forms of thinking and acting. I argue that the transition from a-national to the nation-centric understanding of the social reality is largely moulded through the coercive-organisational and ideological powers and their successful embedment into the networks of micro-level solidarities. Thus, the collapse of imperial structures and the formation of nation-states in the late 19th and early 20th century Europe had less to do with the ambitions of nationalist agitators and the national aspirations of ordinary people and much more with the coercive-organisational capacities and ideological penetration of competing social organisations—the imperial states, the provincial governments, the local authorities, the clandestine societies, insurgent organisations, social movements, and other organised entities. The success and failure of nationalist and a-national discourses is largely determined by their organisational, ideological, and micro-interactional powers.

As I have argued previously both modern empires and nation-states possess sizable coercive organisational capacities and are also capable of effective ideological penetration of the societies under their control. Nevertheless, they usually differ in their ability to enact the micro-interactional power: while the nation-states often can successfully envelop the networks of micro-level solidarities the 19th century and early 20th century empires usually were unable to penetrate the micro-world fully or even partially (Malešević 2019: 70–89). Consequently, nation-state as a form of polity trumped the imperial structures and has gradually become the only legitimate form of territorial rule. In this context nationalism has also replaced imperialism as the most potent and most popular society-wide ideological discourse of contemporary world (Malešević 2019, 2013a). Nevertheless, this was neither a teleological nor uncontested project. Instead nationalism and imperialism have also coexisted and reinforced each other for much of the 19th and early 20th century. They have also been challenged by many other ideological projects. Furthermore, the formation and proliferation of the nation-centric categories of identity was not an exclusive prerogative of the state. In addition to the top-down developments the national categorisation also developed through other social organisations including religious institutions, private corporations, political parties, and other groups working within the sphere of civil society (Kumar 2017; Stephanov 2018; Stergar and Scheer 2018).

However, once the nation-state model attained a hegemonic position at the global level imperialism became delegitimised and discredited as a valid ideological project. Thus, from the second half of the 20th century no polity relies on the imperial doctrine to justify its existence. While it is now clear that this large-scale transformation has taken place over the last two and half centuries, it is less clear how this historical process unfolded in the intricacies of everyday life. Hence to capture segments of this process in motion this paper zooms in on the role of the Habsburg state and its challengers in reshaping the ideological landscape of Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1878 and 1918. The paper focuses on the three key processes that defined the historical trajectories of nationalism and imperialism in this part of Europe. I analyse how the competing coercive organisational, ideological, and micro-interactional powers have shaped the conflict between the imperial and the national projects and why the nation-centric understandings of social and political reality ultimately won.

Obviously, there are many other factors and processes that have impacted on the dynamics of imperialism and nationalism in late 19th and early 20th century Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, this small micro-level study is not intended to capture the enormous geographical and historical variety that has characterised social and political change in this region. This paper has a rather modest aim: to trace the social dynamics of the national and the imperial projects in the everyday experiences of ordinary population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The aim is not to provide a comprehensive explanation of Austro-Hungarian policies towards Bosnia and Herzegovina nor to track the complex and changing developments within the nationalist movements in the region. Instead, the main ambition of the paper is to analyse how specific actions of the Habsburg state shaped the character of the resistance on the ground. I argue that the imperial state contributed heavily towards turning instances of popular dissatisfaction into the nation-centric forms of political resistance. In this context I explore the role of coercive-organisational, ideological, and micro-interactional powers of the imperial state and their impact on the ordinary population.

The coercive-organisational capacity is characterised by one's ability to successfully direct and coordinate people, resources, communication, transport, and variety of other social roles and services. This process entails disciplinary capability and the use of coercive means to implement stated goals. The defining feature of coercive-organisational capacity are effective division of labour, clearly articulated hierarchical chains of command, a degree of meritocratic social mobility, compliance with the rules and the expectation of loyalty and obedience to the organisation (Malešević 2017, 2010). Historically the states have been the most significant containers of coercive-organisational power as they control military, police, security apparatuses and the judiciary all of which are purveyors of disciplinary might. However most complex and durable social organisations possess a degree of coercive capacity as they also operate through the hierarchical systems of control and coordination. Hence the most effective non-state organisations adopt pyramid like structure with the division of labour, hierarchies, control, and the expectation of compliance with the organisational rules and objectives. The increase in the coercive organisational capacity has historically been visible through variety of indicators such as the size of the administrative apparatus, the communication systems, the transport networks, control of finances (i.e. taxation), policing of borders of organisation and the control of its membership, increased systems of surveillance and so on (Mann 2012; 1993).

The ideological power is rooted in the normative codes and principles that justify the existing social organisations and their actions. Since all durable and complex social organisations cannot operate through coercion alone, they devise and use specific ideological narratives to legitimise what they do and why they exist. With the development of coercive-organisational powers through time ideological power has also expanded as it was able to utilise the new and improved infrastructural capacities. For example, the development of transport and communication and administration has ultimately impacted on the standardisation of vernaculars, dramatically increased literacy rates and cultural homogenisation of population. These changes fostered the emergence of the public sphere, compulsory education, mass media and other cultural spheres that have played a central role in the proliferation of ideological narratives. With the rise of coercive-organisational capacities ideological penetration was intensified and was able to reach throughout the social and political orders (Malešević 2019, 2013a; Mann 2012; 1993).

Finally, the micro-interactional powers have also shaped the beliefs and behaviour of ordinary individuals. Since human beings are meaning oriented creatures who thrive on the emotional and moral attachments of small and intimate groups much of their action is governed by the intricacies of this micro-world. In other words, most individuals are embedded in the networks of micro-level solidarity where they form strong bonds with their close family members, kinship groups, lovers, intimate friends, and peer groups. These personalised micro-bonds motivate individuals to support or reject particular course of action and in times of social crises and conflicts these micro-bonds influence an individual's willingness to sacrifice oneself for the significant others. Since these micro-level networks of solidarity are durable, and intensive most social organisations aim to penetrate this micro-world and utilise the existing emotional and ethical ties to advance their own organisational aims. Hence successful social organisations aim to envelop the micro-level solidarities and integrate them into their own ideological projects

(Malešević 2019, 2013a). In this context they often mimic the language of intimacy and the face to face interactions and address members of their organisations in terms of comradeship and close kinship. Thus nationalist ideologies regularly frame individuals as 'our Italian/Thai/Senegalese brothers and sisters', who willingly sacrifice themselves for their 'motherland' or their 'fatherland' and who are determined to protect their 'Italian/Thai/Senegalese mothers, daughters and children' and who fight with their 'Italian/Thai/Senegalese comrades and friends'.

Historically the states tended to have more coercive-organisational and ideological powers than the non-state organisations. From the pristine city-states to the patrimonial kingdoms, empires, and other forms of polity the state power has traditionally been defined by centralised authority, hierarchical division of labour, control of military, judiciary, and administration. Although the pre-modern polities usually did not have enough organisational capacity to establish the monopoly on the legitimate use of violence the modern state system is built on the principle that state possess such monopolies and also tend to monopolise the taxation, and judicial system and in many cases education too (Elias 2000; Gellner 1983; Weber 1968). The nation-states differ from the pre-modern polities in a sense that they can develop, operate, and maintain high levels of coercive-organisational and ideological powers while also penetrating deeply into the pouches of micro-solidarity. Although 19th century empires possessed formidable coercive-organisational capacities and coherent ideological projects they were largely unable to fully envelop the networks of micro-solidarity (Malešević 2019:70–89). The non-state organisations such as the private business corporations, religious associations, social movements, political parties, cultural institutions, or insurgent military organisations usually have less coercive and ideological powers than the states. However, they can still develop strong and resilient organisational and ideological powers and can successfully penetrate the micro-interactive world. For example, during the civil war in Colombia the state apparatus could not envelop the networks of micro-solidarity among the peasants in several provinces of Colombia. Although the state possessed much more powerful coercive-organisational and ideological capacities than the FARC insurgents it was still unable to penetrate the micro-world. In contrast FARC was successful in developing and maintaining an effective administrative apparatus which together with the deeper ideological penetration enveloped fully the networks of micro-level solidarities across the territories under its control and even in the villages that were outside of its direct control (Gutierrez 2020).

This discrepancy between the state and non-state powers is particularly relevant for nationalism. For one thing since the states possess much larger coercive organisational and ideological capacities they can institutionalise and disseminate nationalist ideas and practices over much wider space. With the control of the legislation they can standardise and impose specific cultural policies and linguistic practices (i.e. prohibiting some languages and dialects and privileging others). They can also allocate funding for the organisation of particular national commemorations while ignoring other historical events. The states can influence the process of language standardisation and the imposition of uniform teaching practices in the educational systems. They can also support mass media that is partial to the specific interpretations of the national past and present and so on. To counter this asymmetry many nationalist movements and organisations tend to focus on the civil society and the domestic sphere trying to influence ordinary individuals through the subtle diffusion across the networks of micro-solidarity. When successful the nationalist movements can establish a degree of hegemony across large sections of a society. For example, in the Francoist Spain Catalan and Basque nationalists could never match the coercive-organisational powers of the Spanish state but they were often much more successful in controlling the nationalist narratives in the civil society and the domestic sphere. Hence many ordinary individuals living in Catalonia and the Basque country were not persuaded by the coercive-organisational and ideological powers of the Spanish state that they are Spaniards only. Instead despite prohibitions on the language use and the deployment of many other coercive measures the Spanish state could not penetrate the hubs of micro-level solidarity and repression often had a countereffect as it enhanced the Catalan and Basque nationalisms (Conversi 1997).

While nationalist movements and organisations possess some coercive organisational capacities the nationally indifferent individuals usually lack any such powers. While there is an abundance of national organisations and societies for protection of one's culture, language, traditions, religion, and history there are no associations for

'imagined non-communities' (Zahra 2010:106). Thus, it is difficult to historically trace the individuals and groups who have constituted such 'imagined non-communities' in the Habsburg worlds. Nevertheless such instances of national ambiguity and indifference can be observed through the governmental records and documents produced by nationalist associations both of which tend to describe behaviour of people who do not fit easily into the ideological categories imposed by these competing social organisations.

In this paper I explore how coercive organisational and ideological powers of imperial Austro-Hungarian state have historically clashed with the popular discontent across Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1878–1918. I also analyse the social dynamics of national ambivalence and how inadvertently the coercive imperial structures have contributed to development of the nation-centric understanding of social and political reality. I argue that the coercive and ideological actions of the Habsburg state have played a central role in the nationalisation of the Bosnian Herzegovinian discontent. Rather than the nationalists being responsible for the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian imperial rule it was the actions of the Habsburg state that fostered homogenisation of very diverse forms of grievances into a relatively coherent proto-nationalist narrative. The increased coercive-organisational capacity of Austro-Hungarian state apparatus has unwillingly contributed to the increased organisational power of Bosnian resistance while the enhanced ideological penetration throughout the society has galvanised ideological homogenisation of resistance. At the same time despite its substantial efforts the Habsburg state has never managed to successfully envelop the networks of micro-level solidarity in the urban and even less in the rural areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ultimately it was not the nationalists that delegitimised the imperial rule, but the imperial state and its administration were responsible for codifying and enhancing the nation-centric categories of identification in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This codification was central in framing all forms of popular discontent as acts of nationalist resistance.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

This paper is based on the primary sources collected during the archival research conducted in 2018 and 2019 in the Archives of the Republic of Srpska (RS), Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina. I have also consulted archival materials from the Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, and Die Protokolle des gemeinsamen Minister-rates der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie 1867–1918 in Vienna, Austria (<https://hw.oeaw.ac.at/ministerrat>).

During my research trips to Banja Luka, I have read and analysed all the available documents held in the Archives of RS covering period from 1878–1918. The documents analysed include official government communication and correspondence: the documents issued by the central government in Sarajevo (*Zemaljska vlada* Sarajevo), county Banja Luka administration (*okružna oblast* Banja Luka), other county administrations in Bosnia and Herzegovina (i.e. *okružna oblast* Travnik), various district administrations (*katarski ured* or *seoski katarski ured* Bosanska Gradiška, Banja Luka, Kostajnica, Kotor Varoš, Sanski Most, Prnjavor, Bosanska Dubica, Tešanj, Bosanski Novi, Prijedor, Derвента, Odžak, Kozarac, Bihać, Doboj) and city administration (Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka). Other documents analysed in the paper include the official reports from the military headquarters in Sarajevo (*Vojna komanda* Sarajevo) and military administration in Banja Luka, the military court in Sarajevo, municipal courts, the police reports from the central police administration in Sarajevo (*komanda žandarmerije*, *žandarmarijski korpus*), to reports from the local police stations in Banja Luka and adjacent districts (*žandarmerijska postaja*, *redarstvena straža*), the documents from the financial inspectorate in Sarajevo, the prison reports, the documents from the municipal courts and the information provided by the Austro-Hungarian consulate in Belgrade. All documents are quoted with the date of when they were issued and a specification of the agency that has produced the document. In most cases the entire year of documents was collected in a single box so there was no need to reference the number of boxes used. The only exception here is the period 1914–1918 where the number of the box used is specified. All the archival material analysed in the paper is from the same archival fond (Archive of Republic of Srpska, Austro-Hungarian period 1878–1918).

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

After four centuries of Ottoman rule (1463–1878) Bosnia and Herzegovina was occupied by the Austro-Hungarian empire. Following the congress of Berlin's (1878) decision the Austro-Hungarian troops crossed the Sava river in the summer of 1878 and soon encountered strong resistance from 79,200 Bosnian volunteers and around 13,800 regular Ottoman troops (Schindler 2004:532). Although the majority of insurgents were Bosnian Muslims there was also a sizable number of Orthodox Christians who objected the Habsburg occupation and joined the resistance led by the local agitator Hadži Lojo (Salih Vilajetović). After two months of intensive fighting involving continuous deployment of the new Austro-Hungarian troops and significant losses the resistance was crushed. At the end of this military campaign the Habsburg state was forced to engage 278,000 soldiers which amounted to 'more than a third of the Habsburg Monarchy's ground forces' (Schindler 2004: 537).

Once fully occupied the new colony was run by the joint ministry of finance of Austria and Hungary. Although Bosnia and Herzegovina remained nominally a part of the Ottoman empire until Austro-Hungarian formal annexation in 1908 the new rulers moved quickly to take a control of all aspects of social life in the country. Fearing continuous resistance from the Bosnian Muslim and Orthodox population the new government reorganised the main religious institutions where all clergy became Austro-Hungarian state officials. The leading Muslim clergy lost their connection to Istanbul as their traditional subordination to the Sultan has been replaced with the state mediated organisation of the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Similarly, the Habsburg rulers signed a treaty with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople through which the Serbian Orthodox Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina became integrated into the Austro-Hungarian state (Hajdarpašić 2015; Okey 2007). In the early years of Habsburg rule the ambition was to transform Bosnia and Herzegovina into a model colony that would fully reflect the Austro-Hungarian commitment to the ingenuity and progress. The imperial Minister of Finance and a long-term chief administrator of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1882–1903), Benjamin von Kállay, was a principal proponent of the Habsburg civilising mission in the new colony. His administration was eager to industrialise, urbanise and modernise the country while also attempting to contain all forms of resistance to the imperial rule.

Hence between 1878 and 1914 Bosnia and Herzegovina experienced significant social and economic development in industry, infrastructure, and education. Building on the well-established Ottoman fiscal and agrarian laws and the functioning road system³ the Habsburg rulers have created a new model of administration, have built a wide network of railways, and have fostered the development of mining, forestry, food-processing, carpet making as well as the tobacco and salt production. As Palairet (1993:138) explains: 'The lack of infrastructure, markets, and industrial labour skills limited the attractions of Bosnia to private investors, so the administration embarked on a far more interventionist industrial policy than was ever pursued either in Austria or in Hungary'. This state-led industrialisation relied mostly on the German and Austrian investors who developed an export centred economy. Consequently, the country experienced very high annual growth rate of 12.4 percent over the period 1881–1913 (Palairet 1993:143). Although the country was the less developed part of the empire by 1907 Bosnia and Herzegovina was 'three times as industrialised as Serbia in 1910 and five times as industrialised as Bulgaria in 1910/11' (Palairet 1993:149).

This focus on the economic development went hand in hand with the ideological and coercive-organisational fight to pacify any form of political resistance. In this respect Kállay's principal ambition was to mould ethnic and religious differences of Bosnia and Herzegovina into a single political identity. Hence the Habsburg administrators forcefully promoted the idea of a single, multi-confessional, Bosnian nation. Drawing on the Ottoman attempts of Topal Osman Pasha, a Grand vizier who in the 1860s advocated the notion of a multifith Bosnians, Kállay supported and provided an institutional backing for the all-Bosnian national project of Bosnianhood (Bošnjaštvo). This concept stood for the idea that all inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina constitute a single nation who speak the same Bosnian language and possess the same rights despite professing three different religions. In this context Kállay encouraged development of all Bosnian cultural institutions such as the inter-confessional primary and secondary schools, book publishing, mass media, national museums, and galleries. The

schools were required to use state approved textbooks promoting Bosnian language and an idea of shared Bosnian history (Okey 2007: 55–73). However, the notion of Bosniahood was not conceptualised or implemented in a sense of civic nationalism. Instead Kállay's administration conceived of Bosniahood as a segment of 'dynastic patriotism' which would generate a sense of loyalty towards the empire. This policy was in tune with the actions of Habsburg administration in the other parts of the empire (Cole & Unowsky 2009: 1–10).

At the same time the Habsburg authorities discouraged or prohibited distribution and circulation of books, magazines and newspapers from Serbia and neutralised any attempts to promote Serbian or South Slav national ideas among the Bosnian Orthodox and Catholic population. Kállay believed that 'the Bosnian beys were direct descendants of medieval leaders who accepted Islam to retain their predominance in the land' and as such he identified the Bosnian Muslim landowners as the backbone of the all-Bosnian nation (Okey 2007:60). Thus, the Habsburg civilising mission combined the policy intensified economic development with the fostering of imperial 'dynastic patriotism' associated with the idea of Bosniahood.

Nevertheless, this policy soon proved to be beset with many problems on both fronts—the economic modernisation remained uneven and deeply polarising, while the project of building a single Bosnian nation within the confines of the imperial rule ended in a complete failure. Although the Habsburg rulers invested substantially into industry, infrastructure, and education their interventionist policies largely benefited very small sector of the population. Most individuals employed in the administration and the state-run industries were immigrant middle classes from other part of the empire (Lyon 2014:30) while the Bosnians and Herzegovinians, being mostly employed in low paid jobs, experienced no substantial benefits. Despite the impressive growth rates in industry this sector constituted only 5.79% of labour force while over 90 percent of population in Bosnia and Herzegovina were involved in agriculture (Palaret 1993:139). One of the key problems that Habsburg rulers inherited from the Ottomans was the issue of the land ownership. During the Ottoman period the Muslim landowners controlled most of the arable land while the much of the Christian population were serfs. The Austro-Hungarian rule introduced some changes including liberalisation of the traditional lord-serf relationships, but it never attempted to institute a radical land reform. Hence according to the 1910 Austro-Hungarian census the landownership structure was very similar to the one that was in place before the Habsburg rule: the Bosnian Muslim landlords owned 91.1 per cent of land while the Orthodox Christians owned only 6 percent, Catholics 2.6 percent and others 0.3 percent (Population Census of Austro-Hungary 1910 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1008163/total-population-austria-cisleithania-1818-1910/>). Furthermore, as Okey (2007:65) shows, despite its proclaimed lofty goals Kállay's administration did not embark on the society-wide cultural transformation but tended to focus almost exclusively on Sarajevo and a few other towns. Instead of systematic building of new primary schools throughout the country the Habsburg administration prioritised creation of secondary schools in Sarajevo: '74.5 percent in the budget for 1889 was devoted to the handful of secondary institutions...in the years 1882 to 1890 the government spent more on the Sarajevo Gymnasium... than on all primary schools in the same period' (Okey 2007:66). Furthermore, most students did not go to the state schools but to the private schools usually run by the religious organisations (Pejić 2018). Consequently, the literacy rates remained abysmal. The last Austro-Hungarian census shows that the overall literacy rate for Bosnia and Herzegovina was only 12.16 percent (compared to the industrially less developed Bulgaria which had literacy rate at 42 per cent). In 1911/12 only 17 per cent of the eligible age group children were enrolled into primary schools throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina (Palaret 1993:151).

This uneven and thin modernisation generated deep social discontents and divisions with the large sections of population being profoundly dissatisfied with the Habsburg rule. One of the folk proverbs popular among the peasantry during this period was '*Sjaši Murta da uzajši Kurta*' ('Murat [Ottoman] gets off the horse so that Kurt [Austrian] can get on the horse', horse being the Bosnian peasants). Thus, the Habsburg rule was characterised by periodic acts of resistance including protracted strikes, destruction of property, banditry, uprisings, assassinations, and protests. In addition, many dissatisfied citizens emigrated from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Serbia, the Ottoman empire, other parts of the Habsburg empire or to the Americas. Despite its nominal commitment to continuous development the empire extracted more resources and labour from the country than it brought in (Ruthner 2018;

Lyon 2014). One of the guiding principles of the imperial rule was that the all advancements in the colony had to be financed by the colony itself. In this context local entrepreneurs were completely overpowered by the imperial economy: 'Austro-Hungarian policy practically excluded native capitalists from participating in the industrialisation of the province...the Salom brothers and Alkalay [were the only two] local entrepreneurs who were able to establish industry of any significance in the Bosnia and Herzegovina under Austro-Hungarian rule' (Sugar 1963: 214).

The intermittent and asymmetrical modernisation together with the Habsburg unwillingness to undertake a land reform also undermined the second pillar of their rule—the project of forging a unified pro-imperial Bosnian nation. Since Kállay and other administrators privileged Muslim landlords and mostly ignored the pleas of the Orthodox Christian peasantry for land reform they unwittingly created a space for resistance and radicalisation. It is no accident that nearly all members of the Young Bosnia including Gavrilo Princip and other anti-imperial organisations were children of peasant serfs who grew up in dire poverty during the Habsburg rule (Hajdarpašić 2015; Vojinović 2018). The imperial administrators never attempted to address the deep social inequalities that uneven modernisation produced. Moreover, while they gained some support from the Muslim landowners the Habsburgs were continuously distrusted by the ordinary Muslims. The Muslim peasantry, although smaller in size than their Christian counterparts, was just as much dissatisfied with the lack of land reform. The small Muslim middle class were heavily underrepresented in the civil service, industry, education, military, police, communications, and other public jobs (Lyon 2014:30–31). Although all Bosnians and Herzegovinians were underrepresented in the public service (out of 14,000 civil administrators only just over 4000 were the local employees) the Muslims were completely absent in most middle-class professions: 'Almost all directors of train stations, post offices, officials in state institutions and administration, doctors, judges, attorneys, pharmacists, and public-school teachers were Christians or Jews' (Lyon 2014: 31). Even the Bosnian Catholic population was mostly dissatisfied with their situation. The Habsburg rule was beneficial in terms of increased religious freedom and social status within an essentially Catholic dominated empire but their socio-economic position has not improved: 'Catholics were the poorest section of the population and were sharply affected by rising prices and taxes in an unresolved agrarian situation' (Okey, 2007:109). The continuous existence of these deep social, economic, and political grievances combined with the entrenched religious differences impacted negatively on development of a single, pro-imperial, nation project. Hence forging a unified nation where religious and class divides overlapped and where the imperial rule was mostly resented was an impossible task. Kállay's successor Istvan Burián recognised the failure of this project and conceded a cultural autonomy to all three ethnic/religious groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Burián's administration even decided to change the official name of the language spoken in the country—from 'Bosnian' to 'Serbo-Croat' (Hajdarpašić 2015: 186).

IMPERIAL RULE AND THE MOBILISATION OF DISCONTENT

The conventional historiography often depicts the anti-imperial resistance as a product of conscious and intentional action of nationally conscious individuals and groups who aim to replace the coercive and exploitative foreign rulers with the new, native ruled, state based on the idea of popular sovereignty. In this context the traditional historical accounts tend to overemphasise the insurgent actions such as the 1914 assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by Gavrilo Princip and other members of Young Bosnia. In this well-established narrative Princip is depicted as a hardened Serbian nationalist deeply dissatisfied with the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Habsburgs in 1908 which would prevent unification of Bosnia with Serbia (Butcher 2014; Clark 2012). In this interpretation he and his co-conspirators were also infuriated by the repressive actions of the imperial state against the Serbian cultural and religious organisations (many of which were banned in 1913). The argument is that this strong nationalist commitment was behind the plan to assassinate the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne (Butcher 2014; Clark 2012). Clark (2012:50–1) insists that Princip and other members of Young Bosnia were fanatical Serbian nationalists who 'dwelt at length on the suffering of the Serbian nation, for which they blamed everyone but Serbs themselves, and felt the slights and humiliations of the least of their countrymen as if they were their own'.

Nevertheless, these rather simplified and stereotypical historiographic accounts are deeply grounded in the teleological understanding of empires as being destined to be replaced by the nation-states. In this retrospective, nation-centric, interpretation it is the determined and unwavering nationalists who are the dramatis personae of history and who ultimately bring down the rotten imperial orders. There are numerous historical articles and books that refer to Princip's assassination as 'the shots... that brought down the not just the monarchy but the whole European order' (Barker 1998: 68). However, these post hoc nation-centric explanations are not rooted in historical evidence. Young Bosnia was not a fully-fledged Serbian nationalist movement but an association of discontented youths who were equality inspired by anarchism, socialism, anti-imperialism, and south Slav pan-nationalism (Hajdarpašić 2015; Vojinović 2018). Nationalism did not bring down the Austro-Hungarian empire, it was the empire itself that inadvertently fostered the rise of nation-centric understanding of social reality in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The imperial policies played a central role in homogenising diverse forms of discontent into a relatively coherent anti-Austro-Hungarian activities. Moreover, the actions of colonial bureaucracy fostered the unification of resistance around the nation-centric categories of identity. In other words, it was the empire and not the nationally conscious agitators that spearheaded the breakup of imperial state and the emergence of nation-centric understandings of social and political life.

The Austro-Hungarian empire contributed towards the nationalisation of discontent in three principal ways: (a) through the systematic coercive-organisational activities; (b) via ideological and counter-ideological penetration of society and (c) through its inability to capture the networks of micro-level solidarities.

THE COERCIVE-ORGANISATIONAL POWER

All colonial rule relies heavily on coercive power. The Austro-Hungarian control of Bosnia and Herzegovina was achieved through the military means and was also sustained by sizable military and police presence in the country. Despite its popular image as an orderly and civil state, or as Kumar (2017:145) calls it, 'the most lovable' of all empires, Austro-Hungary possessed a formidable coercive bureaucratic apparatus that was regularly deployed to police and punish any forms of resistance to the imperial rule. The local authorities imposed bans on many social and political activities, confiscated political literature, curtailed and monitored most forms of political agitation, spied on suspicious individuals, forced military draft on the resisting peasantry, broke up and barred workers strikes and would also periodically arrest and imprison all those who persistently challenged the imperial rule. Nevertheless, these coercive actions usually did not differentiate between various forms of anti-state behaviour and were typically implemented uniformly against all types of political or social transgressions. During the occupation and annexation periods the rulers have constantly expressed concern and were fearful of any form of dissent. Hence the police has often rigorously penalised variety of individual and collective forms of discord and resistance: the worker's strikes, the desertions from military draft, the countryside banditry, the religious agitation, the illegal imports of suspicious magazines and books from Serbia or the Ottoman empire, the individual insults of the Habsburg royalty, the suspicious travel plans abroad and the unwillingness to declare oaths of loyalty to the empire. The Austro-Hungarian authorities have regularly monitored activities of all potential dissidents including known political agitators, supporters of worker's rights, religious leaders, traders, and even ordinary peasants. For example, in 1883 the authorities in the county of Banja Luka reported critically on the activities of several individuals with very different social and cultural backgrounds. The report indicates that the brothers Hrvaćanin have applied to open a grocery shop in Bosanska Dubica but since one of the brothers, Mujo Hrvaćanin, is described as 'committed supporter of the Youth party' the report is advising against granting of such a licence (9/2/Z44/1883). In another document produced in the same year and in the same county authorities are expressing concerns about the activities of the Serbian Orthodox priest Mihajlo Opačić' who is described as 'a well-known agitator' (10/6/1883). The government invested significant resources in monitoring and policing of

everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is well illustrated in several reports where local authorities ask for new appointees that would help with the monitoring and spying of correspondence and activities of suspicious individuals. Hence in 1910 the county of Banja Luka authorities report that 'to facilitate the information collection on the presence of politically and otherwise suspicious individuals we require a person responsible for the sorting of letters' (21/3/1910).

Many reports written by the local authorities and police indicate that all forms of dissent were addressed in similar, mostly coercive, ways. The Austro-Hungarian administration closely monitored and, in some instances, also banned travel within and outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina. For example, in 1886 a local authority in Travnik has dispatched a warning to Sarajevo that 'seven individuals from Herzegovina and several Montenegrins have travelled through Glamoč to the region around [river] Una where there was the rebel leader Stefan Marinković' with the aim 'to organise an apprising around Unac [river]' (8/1/1886). The authorities have also monitored travel to Serbia and the Ottoman empire. Hence in 1891 several reports indicate that 'many Serb peasants from different parts of the country have travelled to Serbia and that many others are planning to go' with a note that 'we are monitoring the situation and the results will be reported soon' (22/8/1891; 3/12/1891). The same suspicion is expressed in reports documenting the travel of Muslims to the Ottoman empire and Middle East. In 1895 the local authorities have noted that 'two suspicious Muslims from Bosnia have travelled to Istanbul' and that they should be monitored. Similarly, in 1903 the report from the Sarajevo government's central office indicates that the individuals who are returning from the haj in Mecca can only enter Bosnia via Bosanski Brod where they will be thoroughly examined (11/4/1903). Despite clear cultural, religious and class differences between the individuals involved in these reports the Austro-Hungarian authorities have tended to treat all these, mostly non-political acts, as suspicious. These policies contributed to popular discontent and also prevented emergence of 'nationally indifferent' populations.

The authorities have applied more coercion in situations where acts of individual resistance have directly affected government's plans in economy and military. For example, the periodic labour strike action was often depicted as a political act intended to undermine the government. In this context the strike leaders were regularly deported or imprisoned. In 1894 the group of workers organised a strike in Karanovac near Banja Luka. The workers were dissatisfied with the pay and housing conditions but the local government was adamant that the strike was a political act orchestrated by infiltrators from the outside who were arrested and 'taken to Banja Luka in order to deport them to their own place of origin' (10/5/1894). In a similar vein, the labour strike action that took place in 1906 in Banja Luka was interpreted through the prism of political activism. One of the speakers at the worker's assembly, teacher Vladimir Škarić, was accused of anti-government activities and his salary was terminated. He was also informed that he has been suspended from teaching and the county court prosecutor has initiated a court case against him with recommendation that he be deported from Banja Luka (23/5/1906). In 1908 after the case of disciplinary action against him was suspended for the lack of evidence the teacher Škarić was warned to avoid speaking against the government in the future or he will be 'rigorously punished' (18/6/1908).

The dodging of military conscription was another area where government utilised coercive powers to punish the noncompliance. In 1891 in response to the desertion of three soldiers from Bosnia and Herzegovina the government's central office in Sarajevo issued a command to all local offices to prioritise the apprehension of all deserters (21/7/1891). In 1895 the central government's office has sent a document found during the arrest of a deserter from Mostar, Ahmet effendi Kajtaz. This document indicates that 'during his trip to Belgrade Ahmed agha Mesić from Tešanj has established links with the worst enemies of our government and that in his treasonous agitation was collecting signatures for support from Russia' (5/4/1895).

The local authorities would also deploy coercive power to police speech and public activity. The reports often refer to public displays of animosity towards the Austro-Hungarian rule and the monarchy. The public pronouncements such as insults of the king and the royal family were regularly noted and punished. For example, in 1907 the county of Banja Luka has forwarded the notification to the prosecutor against Niko Kasalović for

'insulting his majesty' (16/10/1907). Just a few days later another notification has been forwarded to the persecutor against Vid Lazić from Klačnice for 'insulting his majesty' (19/10/1907). In 1914 the central government has issued a list of 50 individuals who have been persecuted for insults against the royal house (14/7/1914, Box 1).

The police was engaged to monitor public activities of individuals that were considered to be radical and suspicious. The focus was on the local residents who were known to be opponents of the Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For example, one document from 1894 zooms in on 'the political behaviour of Sava Pišteljić' who was described as 'extremely radical' and who was monitored regularly. However, the 'interceptions of his correspondence have not generated anything of substance' because 'secret messages are communicated through other channels' (20/8/1894). The external activities of Bosnian and Herzegovinian citizens were also monitored by the government. Hence the Austro-Hungarian consulate in Belgrade reported that the magazine 'Greater Serbia' has published several articles from the correspondents living in Bosnia: 'The contributors from Bosnia include Vaso Vidović, a trader from Bosanska Gradiška, who took part in the Nevesinje uprising' (6/8/1888). More prominent individuals such as Vaso Pelagić, a socialist writer and Petar Kočić, a nationalist writer and a parliamentarian, were treated with more caution. The same policy was applied to the well-known individuals visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina from Serbia. For example, when a professor from Belgrade University, Jefto Dedijer, was researching in Bosnia his activities were monitored with great care and caution: 'Jefto Dedijer, docent at the University of Belgrade is traveling through Bosnia while undertaking his research. Considering his political views, it is necessary to inconspicuously monitor his movement. We have to avoid the situation that transpired last time when the police patrol arrested him for the collection of statistical data which proved to be a very harmful act' (23/10/1912).

The authorities were also monitoring activities of Bosnian and Herzegovinian citizens who emigrated to Serbia and were still involved in the anti-Austro-Hungarian activities. For example, in 1888 the reports describe former traders who took part in the 1875 Nevesinje uprising against the Ottomans and who now live in Serbia and agitate against the imperial rule (6/8/1888).

The reliance on a more coercive measures intensified during the war⁴ when many Bosnian and Herzegovinian individuals were interned or imprisoned for obstructing the war effort or supporting Serbia. For example, during the 1914 and 1915 a large number of influential and educated individuals considered to be sympathetic towards Serbia have been interned and kept away from influencing ordinary population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several reports refer to the internment policies: 'interning teacher Vlado Škarić, Ilija Mihić and Pero Popović who have worked in the Serbian Sokol society and Serbian reading room. They are politically very unreliable'... In addition, 12 Arbanas [Albanians], 17 Serbians and 20 Montenegrins' have been interned (18/8/1914, Box 2)...or... interned Serbs from Bosnia and Herzegovina...the administrators have too much work and cannot interrogate all interned individuals' (12/5/1915, Box 1) or 'with the start of war many Serbs were interned to Arad, deemed to be politically suspicious. Although this was a deliberate policy the speed of this action might have inadvertently led to imprisonment of some innocent people. Hence the district administration will undertake a revision to identify some individuals' (8/2/1915, Box 1).

In 1915 the central government issued a clear and strict guidelines on different treatment of Bosnian and Herzegovina population: 'During the recruitment medical check-up in January 1915 the priority should be given to recruiting the dissatisfied elements of Serbian nationality while protecting Catholics and Muslims. The harsh treatment should be particularly enforced in the districts of Gradiška and Petrovac where the wealthy individuals, so called peasant leaders should be recruited. The district leaders will coordinate these actions with the presidents for the military boards so that this can be done skilfully. This recruitment of Serbs is not necessary for military reasons but primarily to weed out as many suspicious elements as possible' (3/1/1915, Box 1). Hence what is clear here is that the coercive policies of the Habsburg administration have further polarised the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina by differentiating sharply between different ethnic groups and in this way nationalising the Serbian Orthodox peasantry.

Others have been arrested and imprisoned for opposing the war or speaking against the Austro-Hungarian empire. For example, one report indicates that the judge from the country court in Sarajevo has ordered the arrest of teacher Časić and the student teacher, a son of the school principal, Cvjetko Popović, and their transportation to Sarajevo (11/1/1915, Box 1).

The wartime reports focus on potential spies and saboteurs and regularly invoke imprisonment for any anti-government activities. For example, the police often identify and provide description of suspicious individuals: 'Gustav Pavišić, a butcher's apprentice, from Sremski Karlovac is suspected of espionage and should be arrested on spot' (8/1/1915, Box 1).

The central administration has also compiled a list of deserters who joined the Serbian military: 'Deserters from the army who have joined the enemy include Jovo Žerjavić, Boško Vukotić, Meho Mizić, Mustafa Smajlikić i Hakija Ramić' (13/10/1915, Box 2) or 'deserters from Bosnian-Herzegovinian troops who have joined the enemy side. There are more than 100. All their property has to be confiscated (13/10/1915, Box 2) or 'Velimir Vukić from Prijedor, a soldier from 2. BH regiment has deserted. He was in Milan where he had a medical treatment and since then he was not in contact. His property has to be confiscated and his citizenship revoked' (30/10/1915, Box 2). What is interesting here is that the government officials tend to homogenise different reasons for desertion into a single anti-state act. In this process they have amalgamated together social, political, economic, and ideological concerns and inadvertently have contributed towards the homogenisation of popular discontent.

The Austro-Hungarian government also demanded public expressions of loyalty to the empire. Thus, on the Emperor's day (18/8/1914, Box 2) 'around 500 citizens' declared their loyalty to the monarchy. This event was followed by 'speeches and singing of the anthem' (21/8/1914, Box 2).

With the start of war, the central authorities have also targeted Serbian Orthodox clergy many of whom were deemed to be collaborating with the enemy side: 'the charges have been initiated against Mladjen Popović, the Orthodox priest from Skender Vakuf, Kosta Čavić, a priest from Maslovari and Dušan Mladjenović, a priest from Kotor Varoš for holding a suspicious meetings with the recruits. Popović was talking to the peasants about the assassination on St Vitus day and was shooting from the revolver. The police has inspected his house and confiscated books and other things. Čavić and Mladjenović [and Popović] have been arrested and transported to Banja Luka' (13/8/1914, Box 2).

The Austro-Hungarian state relied extensively on the coercive-organisational power to maintain its rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this process the coercive apparatus has often approached and treated diverse forms of resistance in a similar way. The official documentation indicates that the central authorities have regularly treated the real, potential and imagined threats to the Austro-Hungarian rule as if they are the same including the class-based grievances, the religious and ethnic tensions, the rural vs. urban animosities, the hostilities between native and non-native population and so on. Hence instead of developing different remedies for different social problems the central authority tended to amalgamate all grievances together thus inadvertently fostering unification of different forms of resistance. The coercive treatment of class, ethnic, religious, and ideological resistance contributed substantially towards the nationalisation of wider resistance movement and has ultimately contributed to forging of proto-nationalist organisations that supported the breakup of the empire (Malešević 2019; Hajdarpašić 2015; Okey 2007). It is these coercive policies that played a central role in turning peasants into a nationally conscious individuals. The historical evidence shows that most citizens of the pre-Habsburg era Bosnia and Herzegovina tended to identify much more in terms of religion, kinship, and status than nationhood (Hajdarpašić 2015; Okey 2007). This was even recognised by the nationalist agitators who regularly complained that the 'our peasant has no developed inner life, he has no ideas that could guide him...we must impose the idea of "Serbdom" on the peasant' (Hajdarpašić 2015:124-25). However, during the Austro-Hungarian rule the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina became much more receptive towards the nationalist ideas (Juzbašić 2002; Vojinović 2018). The coercive policies of Habsburg administration fostered politicisation of ordinary individuals thus preventing emergence of 'imagined non-communities' or nationally indifferent populations, as was the case in the other parts of Austro-Hungarian empire (Zahra 2010).

IDEOLOGICAL PENETRATION

In addition to the coercive organisational capacity the empire also relied extensively on the ideological power. Bosnia and Herzegovina was envisaged as a model colony and Austro-Hungarian authorities developed and implemented a distinct version of civilising mission in the country (Okey 2007). The new rulers promoted a version of enlightened monarchism that emphasised the values of economic progress and social prosperity, modernisation, industrialisation, and the values of the Austro-Hungarian imperial project. In this context Bosnia and Herzegovina was to be developed and 'civilised' under the tutelage of its Austrian and Hungarian colonisers.

Initially the focus was on amalgamation of the three main religious groups into a unified Bosnian nation that would underpin 'dynastic patriotism' and would be loyal and dependent on empire (Cole & Unowsky 2009: 1–10). However, as this project relied too much on privileging Muslim lords while mostly ignoring the needs of impoverished Christian (and Muslim) peasantry it soon faltered. The empire was suddenly confronted with a highly dispersed forms of popular resistance. Although most of the opposition had no articulated ideological doctrines some European ideas have gradually trickled down to the main Bosnian cities and have occasionally taken the form of diverse and small proto-ideological movements centred on nascent types of anarchism, anti-imperialism, socialism, pan-South Slavism, and ethno-nationalism (Hajdarpašić 2015; Vojinović 2018). Nevertheless, this cacophony of doctrines could not significantly undermine the powerful Austro-Hungarian state and its imperial ideology. The bigger problem for the authorities was the potentially rising impact of the external ideological currents including the broader developments within Europe and a more focused geo-political pressures by Russia, Serbia, and the Ottoman empire. Hence from the beginning of the 20th century the Austro-Hungarian rulers invested more resources and energy into countering the ideological influences from abroad. Some of these measures were coercive such as banning books, magazines, and newspapers from abroad, expelling suspicious visitors or arresting the local dissidents. For example, the authorities have regularly issued bans and confiscation orders for books and magazines that were considered to be threatening to the social order. In July 1914, the central government in Sarajevo issued an order that all 'anarchist and nationalist books from the libraries will be confiscated. The list of such books has been provided' (28/7/1914, Box 2). Other measures focused more on incentives to local population - rewarding the acts of loyalty and denouncing of the potential protesters and deserters, providing a financial and other support to groups and individuals who were considered to be sympathetic to the Austro-Hungarian rule and delegitimising new ideological discourses that would challenge the imperial rule.

This ideological carrot and stick approach was useful in influencing some sectors of population but has also proved counterproductive for containing the resistance. In fact as the authorities tended to treat all forms of resistance as if they were coming from the same sources they unwittingly contributed to the proliferation of relatively coherent ideological discourses and to amalgamation of different resistance groups into a more homogenous anti-imperial movement. The unsuccessful experiment of forging a multifaith Bosnian nation has also politicised dissent and worked against development of national indifference as was the case in other parts of the empire (Zahra 2010, Judson 2006). The imperial administration unwittingly reinforced creation and proliferation of national categories of identification.

In the early years of Austro-Hungarian rule, the focus was on accommodating religious elites. For example, in 1883 the county of Banja Luka authorities report on the state's support for the Islamic charitable endowment (waqf) of Ferhad Pasha mosque in Kola 'which left a very good impression on the Muslims' (10/6/1883). The central government was also eager to emphasise its privileged treatment of the leaders of the Serbian Orthodox Church: 'the archbishop Mandić from Sarajevo has to be shown full respect and that the government officials provide him any help he needs during his travels' (29/5/1899).

At the same time the government was concerned with the presence of influential individuals who were previously involved with resistance to the Austro-Hungarian occupation. For example the county of Banja Luka authorities report on 'Ahmed Agha from Banja Luka who now lives in Kosovska Mitrovica and is temporarily located in

Istanbul and who was a former standard bearer for Hadži-Lojo [the leader of rebellion against AH rule in 1878]... and Hajrudin Agha from Rožaj, now based in Novi Pazar. They should be both be apprehended, and it is necessary to find out all about their activities' (30/3/1894). The government was also dissatisfied with the substantial and continuous emigration of Muslims from Bosnia to the Ottoman empire and was committed to ending or slowing down this trend⁵. In this context the informers were employed to assess the motivation of emigrants. The report from the Austrian consul in Skopje discusses the behaviour of Muslim emigrants from Prnjavor and Bosanska Gradiška: 'They sent an appeal to Muhadžir board in Istanbul and wrote that the government official in Prnjavor tried to dissuade them from emigration and has spoken against their pure sovereign sultan' (27/6/1899). Other documents indicate the government's unease with the mass emigration and suggest the adequate course of action to counter the agitation for migration to the Ottoman lands. The informants from Prijedor and Sanski Most indicate that many Muslims are planning to migrate...Hadži Hasan Džihic has returned from the Ottoman empire while his family has settled there...He is visiting villages Suhac, Agići and Hozići (Bosanski Novi) and advocates for emigration...but the people should say that he is speaking against the migration' (5/11/1899).

Although the government encouraged movement of professionals from other parts of the empire to Bosnia and Herzegovina this was not the case with ordinary, landless, immigrants. Moreover, to attract support from the local population and to prevent further emigration the government discouraged mass immigration: 'The Polish and Ruthenian families have been coming daily. They demand cleared lands for settlement. Even though there is no clear land some do not want to return to Galicia. There are 73 families with 420 souls in Rakovac and they did not receive the land. It is necessary to ban entering Bosnia to Galicians who do not have a permit from the central government' (18/11/1899).

The authorities were hostile to the presence of mass media from the neighbouring countries and particularly from Serbia. Thus in 1892 the central administration has declared that 'political magazine 'Zlatibor' from Užice [Serbia] has been banned in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has re-started the publication and it has to be confiscated' (20/10/1892).

The central government has offered variety of rewards for reporting of any anti-government activities. For example, in 1892 the Sarajevo central office has instituted an award of 24 forints to 'anybody who reports and helps the government find the deserters from the Bosnian and Herzegovinian troops' (17/10/1892). The government has also employed informants in Serbia and other neighbouring countries who would regularly report on activities of suspicious individuals. The police unit in Zemun reported on several suspect individuals: 'Isajlo Tomić was in Zemun on 17/6 and went to Okučani on 19/6. He has not met anybody but was in a hotel National where he has written letters to minister Kállay, duke Nikola, Maša Vrbica, Marko Bačković from Užice and Pavle Jovanović, the editor of *Srbobran*' (26/6/1894) or 'the embassy in Belgrade has issued passports for Dr. Vojislav Veljković, professor Bogdan Popović and solicitor Dragutin Protić for travel to Trieste, Dalmatia, Metković, Sarajevo and Brod. These well-known proponents of Greater Serbia should be treated with hospitality but also inconspicuously monitor who they meet. Their movements have to be reported to the government and the districts they visit' (26/7/1894). The same attitude was present when new Orthodox priests were appointed from Serbia to Bosnia: 'Kosta Vuković was appointed to parish Sočanica in the district of Derventa. His behaviour needs to be monitored and by the end of July the report on his activities has to be submitted' (21/1/1895).

The government's focus was not only on Bosnian Serbs but also on suspicious activities of Bosnian Muslim leaders too. The central government in Sarajevo reported on actions of several prominent Muslim leaders: 'Derviš bey Ljubović was in Belgrade to ask that Bosnians and Herzegovinians stay in Belgrade as they are wanted by the Austrian government. He has documents showing that they [Bosnian Muslim leaders] want Serbian government and that they aim to travel further to Europe to ask for help. Hasan Osmanović went to Mali Zvornik to collect money, and Adem agha went to see a refugee from Trebinje, [an Orthodox] priest Sava Pješčica, who was expelled by the [Austrian] government. Adem agha Mesić is collecting signatures and is sending them to Faladžić and Ljubović and they are preparing to send the appeal to Russia, for Bosnian people cannot survive now and need to be cared by Serbia' (5/4/1915, Box 1).

The ideological justification plays an important role in sustaining political power. Hence the Austro-Hungarian state invested heavily into the ideological cement that would bind Bosnian Herzegovinian society together and the province itself to the empire. In this process the imperial administration attempted to counter alternative and threatening ideological doctrines ranging from anti-imperialism, socialism, anarchism, religious ideologies to the pan-Slavism and ethno-nationalism (Hajdarpašić 2015; Vojinović 2018). The government policies centred on creating a unified Bosnian nation loyal to the imperial project largely backfired and, in this process, inadvertently politicised resistance thus making potentially nationally indifferent populations into the proto-nationalists. Although this particular ideological project was later abandoned the introduction of national categories into the everyday practice of government officials remained in place. The Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy was responsible for the proliferation of nation-centric categories of identity throughout the imperial realms (Stergar and Scheer 2018; Judson 2106) and Bosnia and Herzegovina was not an exception. In fact, as the Habsburg government perceived rising Serbia and recovering Ottoman empire as the credible threats to its territorial claims in Bosnia and Herzegovina it displayed suspicion of national irredentism and invested great deal of energy in countering nationalism. However, by framing its enemies and the potential domestic threats in nationalist terms it inadvertently reinforced the ideas of nationhood.

Furthermore, as the imperial administration proved unsuccessful in delivering on its original social and economic promises its rule gradually became contested and openly challenged by variety of groups. To counter this challenge the rulers intensified their ideological struggle and increased their coercive control. In this process they unwittingly contributed to the homogenisation of diverse forms of discontent and also fostered greater ideological development and rise of the anti-imperial movements. Hence nationalism did not destroy the empire. Instead the ever increasing imperial ideologisation of resistance inadvertently fostered the rise and proliferation of nationalist ideologies as the preeminent oppositional force.⁶

THE DISCONNECTED MICRO-SOLIDARITIES

A successful governance relies not only on the coercive organisational and ideological powers but also on its ability to fully penetrate and manage the networks of micro-solidarity. As I have argued before the coercive and ideological powers which lack micro-interactive grounding are unlikely to last. The inability to penetrate the micro-world of locality, kinship, friendships, peer groups and other forms of face to face networks of solidarity often undermines the strength of social organisations and leads towards situations where such entities are replaced by other, better integrated, organisational forms (Malešević 2019, 2017, 2013a).

Despite some modest accomplishments in the early years of its rule the Austro-Hungarian empire has never succeeded in penetrating the microcosm of everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The early developments such as building of better and more extensive transport and communication networks, increasing the number of educational institutions, the industrialisation of economy, introduction of more effective taxation systems and improved urbanisation have all created better structural conditions for the penetration of micro-level solidarities. Nevertheless, the imperial governance was never able to build on these initial developments to envelop the micro-networks of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian society. Much of this structural development was highly uneven. The focus was on Sarajevo and a few other urban centres while largely ignoring the vast countryside (Okey 2007). In addition, the imperial rulers abandoned their original plans of substantive reform of institutions and decreased financial investment and support in the province. As much of recent scholarship shows this 'model colony' was structured to be a self-financing entity and the imperial authority took more resources, finance and tax from Bosnia and Herzegovina than it brought in (Ruthner 2018; Lyon 2014). The unwillingness of the government to undertake a land reform and their orientation towards the socio-economic status quo has also intensified class polarisation. Near the end of its rule the Austro-Hungarian authorities initiated a modest political reform including the establishment of the parliament and the organisation of semi-democratic elections in 1910. However, as these elections also privileged the upper classes their outcome contributed further to the socio-economic and political polarisation.⁷

The authorities maintained a degree of control and some penetration in the micro-world of the urban areas but were unsuccessful in the countryside where 90 percent of population lived. Thus, to pacify the villages the rulers tended to rely more on coercion and ideological messages which often generated discontent and have proved to be counterproductive in attracting the support among the population. The Bosnian and Herzegovinian peasantry was generally suspicious and distrustful of all state authorities and new coercive and ideological measures would usually tend to backfire (Hajdarpašić 2015; Okey 2007). For example, when the government intensified its programme of military conscription the ordinary population found the way to avoid it. Using a health issues as an excuse many individuals avoided the draft. For instance, in 1899 in the town of Bosanska Dubica 59.3% of all military age men failed to pass the medical test and only 5.28% were deemed healthy for military service (14/1/1899).

Instead of attempting to understand and accommodate problems in the countryside the government often crudely interfered in the everyday life of ordinary people. For instance, an ordinary visit to a family living abroad was regularly treated with suspicion: 'A local resident, a Montenegrin Isailo Tomić is supposedly traveling to Zemun to visit his family. Since he is an unreliable individual it is paramount to monitor his meetings and his correspondence in Zemun' (18/6/1894). The local authorities employed an extensive network of informers to spy on the everyday activities of Bosnian citizens and have kept records on the character and behaviour of many individuals. For example, a local Orthodox priest was identified as a troublemaker and somebody who 'is prone to drinking and to conflict with others'... 'he often travels to Prijedor and incites peasants against the priest Radić in Jalovac so that he could take up his post' (30/11/1897). Similarly, another citizen was deemed problematic and his application for gun permit was denied: 'Mujo Spahić Čalić from Konjuhovci has applied for gun permit. He is prone to drinking and socialises with the Orthodox radicals in Prnjavor' (20/6/1900). The reports were also compiled about undesirable social activities. One report indicates that a person who immigrated from Lika (Croatia) to Sanski Most has distributed leaflets about migration agents for America, F. Missler in Bremen, and Zagreb. The authorities instruct that 'if these leaflets are found in other districts' that they should be confiscated (20/5/1901). In a similar vein, the government officials were investigating the information that 'imam Bešlić has received a medal from the Ottoman government for his activities relating to the emigration of Mohammedans' to Istanbul (4/3/1901).

The government would also interfere in the commercial transactions that could affect its long-term population policies. For example the prospective sale of land by would be Muslim emigrants to the Ottoman empire had to be in line with the state's policy on ethnic residence: 'Some emigrants were selling their land and properties to Christians [in Bosanska Gradiška] - the former policeman Zeniva and tradesman Malić. These properties were bought by the mayor Sokol so that Christians would not move into the Muslim parts of the town' (16/3/1901). The local authorities would also issue temporary orders to prevent emigration from Bosnia: 'The stoppage of applications for emigration and selling of land has left good impression on peaceful elements [in Prijedor] while those who demanded passports show dissatisfaction and are revolting' (21/3/1901). Here again one can see how the imperial administration deployed, utilised, and reproduced the national categories in everyday life.

The government relied on such information to police ordinary individuals and also to enforce its policies. In some cases the local authorities collected information on the non-paying of taxes to bring in the police force to punish the non-complaint citizens: 'the village leader [knez] of Agići is asking for the police assistance to deal with the revolt against paying of taxes and unwillingness of many to pay the tax' (17/12/1901).

However, one of the central issues affecting everyday life was the continuous presence of semi-serfdom in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Many reports from the local and central government indicate that the peasants are deeply dissatisfied with serfdom: 'In four districts of Tešanj serfs did not allow aghas to attend the wheat harvest. The country office has undertaken measures to prevent this from happening in the future' (6/8/1910). Or: 'The confidential sources have provided information that the serfs in the village of Krmine have no intention of giving one third of their hay to their aghas. They are saying that their parliamentary deputy told them that from 1.8.1910 there is no obligation to give one third [to the aghas]. The district representative has to go to Krmine to inform the peasants [that the law has not changed] (23/7/1910). Similarly: 'The serfs in Turjak, enticed by somebody, do not intend to give one third from their hay and fruit to subasha of Džinić serfs. The police has been informed to act

against the peasants' (11/7/1910) or 'Risto Dragičević, his three friends and his wife have been arrested for not giving a one third [of their hay] to Džinićs and for cursing and threatening them' (11/11/1914, Box 2). The continuous presence of semi-serfdom further politicised ordinary peasants and instead of becoming or remaining 'nationally indifferent' their social and economic discontent was gradually transformed into the proto nationalist resistance (Hajdarpašić 2015; Vojinović 2018; Okey 2007).

With the start of WWI, the Austro-Hungarian authorities have become even less capable of penetrating the micro-universe of the Bosnian countryside and unable to gain trust among the population. The traditional suspicions towards ordinary people have become even more pronounced and the government has deployed more coercive measures to police the citizens. Any sustained communication with individuals living abroad or prolonged travel would trigger suspicion of spying for the enemy. For example, the central government in Sarajevo warns about 'the wife of an [Bosnian-Herzegovinian] official, Milica Knežić from Mostar who now lives in Banja Luka, is still under suspicion for spying for Serbia. Her connections and letters to the Serbian consul in Vienna make her even more suspicious. She needs to be interrogated, and if there is evidence [for spying] she should be brought to the military court' (19/8/1914, Box 2). Similarly, some wealthy individuals have been targeted for potential spying: 'the former director of the factory Max Steinlechner and Rudolf Čilić who claims to be an engineer have been traveling with the car to Trieste, Rijeka, Pula, Dalmatia and Russia. They are keeping contact with Dr Radulović from Belgrade and are spending money. They should be arrested immediately as they are suspected of being spies' (22/8/1914, Box 2).

Nevertheless, the most coercive policies have targeted the ordinary Orthodox population. The imperial government banned the use of Cyrillic script outside Church and in 1914 Serb Orthodox confessional schools have been closed. In some cases, citizens were arrested for expressing sympathy towards Serbia or for insulting the Austro-Hungarian royal house: 'the list has been sent of 50 citizens and peasants who are to be tried for insults of the royal house and other criminal offenses' (6/10/1914, Box 2) or 'the police office in Bosanska Gradiška has arrested Vaso Babić, a trader, who said that Serbia has occupied seven towns in Bosnian and is now targeting Dalmatia. He has been deported to the war military court' (18/10/1914, Box 2). However, as war progressed the government adopted variety of coercive policies that targeted entire population thus contributing substantially towards the ethno-national homogenisation of Bosnian Serb population. For instance, many prominent individuals have been arrested or interned without any proof of their collaboration with the enemy: '343 politically suspicious individuals have been deported and interned to Arad' (18/8/1914, Box 2), or 'the [Orthodox] priest Dušan Subotić together with the materials found in his possession while searching his house, has been sent to the court' (2/8/1914, Box 2), or 'the indictment against the local leader [knez] Teodor Mijatović for inciting the Serbian-Orthodox population against the Catholics has been issued. He has been replaced from his position and sent to the court' (15/8/1914, Box 2). These coercive measures did not only alienate Orthodox Christians they also contributed to almost universal hostility among peasants against the imperial state. It was the imperial state that nationalised their grievances. The continuous humiliation of ordinary people worked against development of 'imagined non-communities' (Zahra 2010) and in fact forged imagined national communities where they did not exist before.

Some Austro-Hungarian government officials have also voiced publicly their distrust and aversion of the Orthodox population: 'the district leader Komadina...speaks of Serbs as a dangerous element among whom there are no sincerely loyal individuals...since the start of war numerous Serbs have been arrested for insults against the Monarchy, so we cannot trust Serbs' (24/8/1914, Box 2). In a similar vein, another document issued by the Banja Luka district authority depicts the behaviour of Serbian Orthodox Church leaders as deceitful: 'The statement issued by the metropolitan bishop of Banja Luka and Bihać and the Orthodox clergy is not to be trusted. It does not seem likely that they are teaching the loyalty and allegiance to their people towards the Emperor. For this contradicts their previous activities so it looks like a pretence' (8/8/1914, Box 2). The government informers have also focused on monitoring actions of Orthodox population. One such report documents responses among the ordinary population following the declaration of war: 'Croats and Muslims are loyal and delighted, while Serbs are withdrawn and silent...Serbs are poorly responding to the calls for the collection of war support fund except for Prnjavor' (18/7/1914, Box 2).

In this context the government has issued orders to monitor the behaviour of ordinary individuals: 'The security measures against irredentist activities are to be put in place. The curfew will be introduced for bars and the youth will be forbidden to go out and socialise at night' (16/7/1914, Box 2). The central government has also introduced strict policing of educational and cultural activities of Orthodox population. For example, a primary school teachers Stevo Uzelac and Filip Jorgić from Odžak have been arrested and brought to court because 'Uzelac was teaching children Serbian songs, and Jorgić gave a book 'Patriotic songs' from [Jova Jovanović] Zmaj to a pupil as an award' (9/8/1914, Box 2).

These coercive actions including the arrests and interment of teachers and priests have largely been counterproductive as they deepened the mutual mistrust, generated rumours and fears among the ordinary peasantry. This is well illustrated in government's own documents where the informers sent to gauge the feelings of the Orthodox peasantry towards Serbia describe the consequences of government's coercive polices: 'the information provided by the informer, a Serb who visited villages who describes attitude among the Serbs, indicates that they are all delighted in their expectation that the Serbian army will come to Bosnia and that they will join them. They are sad that their priests and teachers have been arrested. The reservists have been instructed not to shoot at the Serbian army but to surrender...There are rumours that the Orthodox priests have been arrested and that people will be forced to convert to the Roman Catholicism. It is necessary to ask the bishop in Banja Luka to send 13 priests that have not been arrested to the villages where there are no priests now' (25/8/1914, Box 2). Or: 'The arrests of Serbs have generated fear among peasants' (14/8/1914, Box 2).

There is no doubt that during their rule the Austro-Hungarian authorities were unable to fully penetrate the networks of micro-solidarity in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While some initial attempts made in Sarajevo and other large towns yielded a degree of moderate success, attained mostly through the economic and social modernisation, these meagre achievements soon evaporated. Nevertheless, the imperial rule never succeeded in embedding and legitimising its rule in the everyday life of the countryside. Deciding early on not to invest substantial material and organisational resources in its 'model colony' (Lyon 2014) and facing periodic crises throughout the empire the rulers opted to rely on coercive and ideological powers at the expense of micro-interactive grounding. This policy contributed substantially towards the proliferation of popular dissatisfaction with the imperial rule with the peasantry, an overwhelming majority of the population, bearing the brunt of everyday hardship. The uneven and intermittent modernisation which largely preserved the economic and social status quo from the Ottoman period alienated majority of the population (Juzbašić 2002; Okey 2007; Vojinović 2018). While the peasantry was dissatisfied with the lack of serious land reform the local merchants and other urban population resented the Empire's privileging the wealthy investors from outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is this pronounced popular dissatisfaction that left no room for political indifference and the emergence or persistence of 'national amphibians' or 'borderland souls' (Zahra 2010). The policies of the imperial state destroyed any rudimentary sense of identification with the empire among the majority of ordinary population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although in the early years of their rule the Habsburg colonial administrators attempted to appease and accommodate sections of Bosnian and Herzegovinian society, as the empire was beset with the variety of social, economic, and political problems it gradually ruled ever more through the coercive practices. At the same time, the Austro-Hungarian administrators largely abandoned any attempt to penetrate the micro-level solidarities in the countryside of Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of these contributed to the popular dissatisfaction which was particularly prevalent among the peasantry and impoverished urban strata (Hadžijahić 1950; Juzbašić 2002; Sugar 1963).⁸

However much of popular dissatisfaction still lacked coherent ideological and organisational articulation. It is the ever-expanding reliance on the coercive and ideological powers that ultimately fostered the development of relatively coherent resistance to the imperial rule. The inability of the government to penetrate the networks of micro-solidarity together with the intensified use of coercion and ideological power across the board and without differentiation has contributed substantially towards the crystallisation of popular discontent around anti-imperial and nation-centric discourses and practices.

CONCLUSION

Nationalist movements have often been identified as playing the central role in the collapse of empires and delegitimisation of imperial doctrines. While the traditional historiography took it for granted that there was a 'popular longing' for independence the more sophisticated analysts such as Hroch (2015) and Wimmer (2018) identified committed nationalist organisations as being decisive in bringing about sovereign nation-states. However, the transition from the mainly imperial to the predominantly national worlds is a protracted, contingent, and messy historical process that owes much more to the actions of imperial state structures than to ambitions and plans of the nationalist movements. Not only that the new nation-states regularly transpire from the changed geo-political conditions, the behaviours of Great Powers, and the deeds of rulers that govern neighbouring polities, but the imperial state itself often unwittingly creates and boosts nationalist ideas and practices (Stergar & Scheer 2018). Thus, the end of Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina also had very little to do with the domestic nationalist movements or 'age old longings'. Instead the empire collapsed through the military defeat in the Great War. Nevertheless, by the time of its downfall the majority of population of Bosnia and Herzegovina was deeply dissatisfied with the imperial rule and some citizens were involved in formal or informal forms of nationalist resistance (Juzbašić 2002; Okey 2007; Vojinović 2018). In other words, instead of becoming or remaining 'nationally indifferent' (Zahra 2010) most ordinary individuals were inadvertently politicised by the coercive, ideological, and micro-interactive actions and inactions of the imperial state. Although much of this popular dissatisfaction was not nationalist in origin as it was generated from various forms of discontent (religious, class, residence, status etc) it was the state's policies that ultimately homogenised these diverse forms of frustration into a proto-nationalist movement.

This outcome was a direct product of imperial governance which relied extensively on the coercive and ideological powers to subdue rising discontent. In this process the state authorities inadvertently fostered homogenisation of very diverse types of grievances—class inequalities, religious dissatisfaction, individual disparities, rural vs. urban tensions, linguistic issues, ethnic frictions and so on—into a single and society-wide anti-imperial sentiment. The excessive reliance on coercion and ideology without being able to penetrate the micro-level solidarities generated a situation where all forms of popular dissatisfaction have eventually congregated into an anti-imperial form of discontent. This resistance has gradually attained proto-nationalist and in some cases fully fledged nationalist contours. However, it was not the individual nationalists or nationalist movements that spearheaded the process of nationalisation of society. Instead, it was the imperial state that stimulated and enforced the nation-centric understanding of reality.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the three anonymous peer reviewers, Sophie De Schaepdrijve, John A. Hall, Ville Kivimäki, Rok Stergar, and Niall O'Dochartaigh for their very constructive comments on the earlier drafts of this paper.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are generated through the archival research and are publicly available in the Archive of Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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ENDNOTES

¹ For criticism of Wimmer's and Hroch's perspectives see Malešević 2019: 111–134 and Malešević 2013b.

² The early formulation of 'national indifference' in the Habsburg world can be traced to King (2002).

- ³ The Ottoman administration has re-organised and created a better administrative system in the country in the last period of its rule (1850–1876) (Palairat 1993:137).
- ⁴ It worth noting that this process started already with the Balkan wars of 1912–13 and has only intensified during WWI. See Grunert 2020.
- ⁵ More about the emigration of Muslim population to the Ottoman empire see Hadžijahić (1950).
- ⁶ As Stergar (2012:52) rightly notes the imperial authorities often failed to differentiate between different forms of nationalist and other grievances. Not all nationalisms and other ideological currents were against the imperial state: 'One could even argue that this somewhat peculiar coexistence was not so much threatened by nationalism as it was threatened by the inability of important parts of the state administration and the military to acknowledge it. For that reason, all nationalist activities were interpreted as signs of disloyalty, which should be vehemently opposed by the state'.
- ⁷ The electoral system divided the population into three categories: (1). The major landowners, priests, civil servants, and college educated citizens who with less than 7000 votes elected 18 seats. (2). The merchants, artisans, and small owners where less than 5000 votes elected 20 seats and the rest of population where close to 350,000 citizens elected 34 deputies (Grunert, 2020; Okey 2007).
- ⁸ As Judson (2016) and Deak and Gumz (2017) have argued convincingly from the summer of 1914 the military dictatorship has largely abandoned the established norms and legal procedures and has governed the empire by relying much more on force and the military mode of rule.

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How to cite this article: Malešević, S. (2021). Forging the Nation-centric World: Imperial Rule and the Homogenisation of Discontent in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1878–1918). *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/johs.12350>