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Bosnia and Herzegovina in the First World War, 1914-1918**

Apstrakt

Based on relevant literature and archival sources, the author considers an important period of Bosnian and Herzegovinian history that was marginalized in Yugoslav historiography and defined by ideological requirements. The paper focuses on wartime circumstances and their influence on political, economic and demographic changes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Special attention is dedicated to the conditions in the background, the state of the army at the front as well as other elements which impacted the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian army. It was possible to reach convincing conclusions founded on verified facts through critical evaluation of the existing literature and research of new archival sources, with the aim of obtaining documentation of diverse provenance. The author has attempted to remove historiographic stereotypes related to roles of Bosnians and Herzegovinians in the military organizations of the Habsburg Monarchy during the First World War which were created out of political needs or were for the same reason ignored or marginalized.

Keywords: European crisis, assassination of Sarajevo, war, Bosnia and Herzegovina, fronts, statistics

Apstrakt

Na temelju relevantne literature i arhivskih izvora autor razmatra jedno važno razdoblje bosanskohercegovačke historije koje je u jugoslavenskoj historiografiji bilo marginalizirano i definirano ideološkim zahtjevima. Rad se fokusira na ratne okolnosti i njihov utjecaj na političke, ekonomske i demografske promjene u Bosni i Hercegovini. Posebna pažnja posvećena je prilikama u pozadini, stanju vojske na frontu, kao i drugim elementima koji su utjecali na raspad Austro-Ugarske vojske. Kritičkom evaluacijom postojeće literature i istraživanjem novih arhivskih izvora, s ciljem pribavljanja dokumentacije

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raznovrsne provenijencije, bilo je moguće doći do uvjerljivih zaključaka utemeljenih na provjerenim činjenicama. Autor nastoji ukloniti historiografske stereotipe vezane za uloge Bosanaca i Hercegovaca u vojnim organizacijama Habsburške Monarhije tokom Prvog svjetskog rata, koji su nastali iz političkih potreba ili su iz istih razloga bili zanemarivani ili marginalizirani.

Ključne riječi: Evropska kriza, Sarajevski atentat, rat, Bosna i Hercegovina, frontovi, statistika

Introduction

The international disagreements caused deep crises in the relations between the blocs of great powers, leading to the direct military conflict in 1914. The assassination in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914 seemed to the competent military and political circles in Vienna and Berlin as a cause for a confrontation with Serbia, so a request in the form of an ultimatum was sent to her. When a part of the request had been rejected, the pathway towards the First World War was opened.

The crisis that broke out in the autumn of 1908 when Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina represents a turning point in international political life. Its course and results actively influenced the European political scene until the breakout of the First World War, primarily taking into account the differences between Vienna and Belgrade, the multi-layered South-Slav complex and the difficulties which it caused for the Habsburg Monarchy. The outcome of the Annexation crisis hastened the intention of the Balkan states to resolve the issue of the Ottoman Empire.

After long lasting diplomatic negotiations, a secret final agreement was reached and approved by Russia and France in the spring of 1912. Soon after that, Italy expressed her readiness to support the Balkan states. A foremost agreement was reached on 13 March 1912 between Serbia and Bulgaria according to which it was necessary to go on the offensive against the Ottoman army in the south and be on the defensive against Austria-Hungary in the north. The interested parties also agreed on the territorial division of Macedonia. The disputable zone was confirmed and the Russian Tsar Nikolai II was named the arbitrator. Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and the Ottoman Empire declared general mobilization on 30 September 1912. Montenegro declared war against the

Ottoman Empire on 8 October and started with the attack on Scutari. The vicinity of the battlefield and the strength of forces engaged in military operations caused unease among the relevant circles of the Monarchy.¹ The events of the Balkan Wars had great impact on political relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, deepening the gap between Serb and Muslim policy that was based on agrarian relations. Muslims followed war developments with the fear of the agrarian question being resolved in the same way it was done in Serbia and Montenegro – expecting the same fate in the case of defeat and withdrawal of the Monarchy from Bosnia and Herzegovina only highlighted the connections of the Muslims with the Monarchy which they considered as their only protector.² Serbia's political and military victories in the Balkan Wars intensified national enthusiasm while at the same time attracting support of the Orthodox Christians from the Habsburg Monarchy. Measures undertaken by the Monarchy forced the Montenegrin King Nikola to concede out of fear of her action and he soon ordered partial mobilization in Montenegro. The instruction of the Provincial Government for Bosnia and Herzegovina called of the emergency measures from 15 May.³

The evaluation conducted by political authorities of the Monarchy revealed the strengthening of Serbo-Croatian nationalism in Croatia which had a tendency to transform into irredentism, especially among the young population. Even though certain support for the Yugoslav programme existed, the official aim of Serbian policy was the expansion and extension of the Serbian state.⁴ A part of Serbia's aspirations were realized with the Balkan Wars – Serbia gained the desired part of the Ottoman Empire, but the intentions concerning the Monarchy could not have been achieved. Because of that, Serbs referred to Croats, Slovenes and Serbs in the Monarchy as *unfree brothers* and the success in the Balkan Wars was considered as the realization of one part of the plan, whereas it was believed that Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a Serbian land, belonged to Serbia.⁵

At the beginning of 1914, the military industry in Serbia gained momentum which was a sign for an upcoming continuation of the Balkan Wars. The capital

¹ Deutschmann 1965, 20.

² Weinwurm 1964, 357.

³ Juzbašić, Šehić 2015, 33-34; Deutschmann 1965, 213-214.

⁴ Jelavich 1992, 47.

⁵ Šehić 2015, 103.

of the Austrian Bank helped a lot, the Vienna based *Bodencreditanstalt* participated with 20% in Serbian loans for arms. French weapon factories could not make the deadline of arms delivery to Serbia, so that in spring 1914 Austrian and German weapons factories took their place: 200.000 of the most modern rifles were sent to Belgrade during the spring.⁶ During April of 1914 the Provincial governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina, General Oskar Potiorek met up with a Serb who was in close relation with the military circles in Belgrade. He delivered the message that Serbia planned to create Yugoslavia which would encompass the whole Balkan Peninsula – Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, Slavonia, a part of Hungary, Carniola, Carinthia and Styria. The division would be done in the way that three exclusively Serb districts would be formed, one Croatian and one Slovene. The districts would be divided in accordance with confessions and the transfer of population would be done in the way that 400.000 Catholics from Bosnia and Herzegovina should be relocated to Croatia, whereas Serbs from Lika and Slavonia (around 20%) should be moved to Bosnia and Herzegovina. This offer was followed with a message that it was better to reach an agreement before the Serbs appear with guns near Zagreb, and this was soon to happen, since all the preparations for this had been undertaken. The Balkan League aimed to perform this task. Russia would help by mobilizing the Serbs and forcing Austria-Hungary to send 500.000 soldiers on the borders which should enable the Allies to fight successfully. This actually happened in 1914 and Serbia fulfilled the vow given to Russia.⁷ In this plan Potiorek saw the realization of the idea of Greater Serbia which in return influenced the shaping of his plan about the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina between Austria and Hungary, which he exposed in December of 1914.⁸

After the manoeuvres of 26 and 27 June near Tarčin in which the troops from the Sarajevan 15th and the Ragusan 16th corps took part, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand arrived for the official visit in Sarajevo on the Orthodox feast of St Vitus' day. He was expected not only by the officials, but also by the assassins, and the Archduke's personal security had not been well organized. The bomb, thrown by Nedeljko Čabrinović did not hit the target, but the first bullet fired by Gavrilo Princip was deadly and shot Archduke Franz Ferdinand.

⁶ Wagner 1995, 176.

⁷ Šehić 2005, 24.

⁸ About the plan on division of Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 1914, see more in: Šehić 2010, 168-169.

The other one, intended for the Provincial Governor General Potiorek, killed the Archduke's wife Sophia, the Duchess of Hohenberg.⁹ In the trial, held at a later date, the accused Gavrilo Princip, who had left the gymnasium in Tuzla four years previously and relocated to a gymnasium in Belgrade, stated that he "did not repent for what he did, that he was not a criminal because he only wanted to remove the evil". In the company he kept Princip became known as a veritable Serb nationalist. He hated Austria because he believed that it "only caused evil to the South Slavs". He considered Archduke Franz Ferdinand "the greatest danger for the idea of union of Serbs and generally of South Slavs under the Serb leadership". In his opinion "Serbia had the mission to tear off Bosnia and Herzegovina from Austria". This thought encouraged him to commit the assassination.¹⁰ Immediately after the killing of Franz Ferdinand, Bosnia and Herzegovina faced real wartime circumstances. The assassination caused uproar among the Muslim and Catholic population. Already in the evening hours of 28 June 1914, first demonstrations were held in Sarajevo and the officers took part in them. On the following day, a real small war began. Out of bitterness, Muslims and Catholics started destroying Serbian shops and houses. Police, gendarmerie and even military forces were not capable to stop the demonstrations. Demonstrators concentrated on Serbophile citizens and institutions, and the first ones to be attacked and devastated by the raiders were the newspapers "Prosvjeta", "Narod" and "Srpska riječ", Serbian schools, the hotel "Europe" and many objects that belonged to "Narod" and the group gathered around "Otadžbina". Because of robbery, 58 persons were imprisoned.¹¹ Peace in the town was restored again only after the introduction of the court-martial. Regardless of political orientation, Serbs were bitter, requesting complete compensation for the damage, according to the example of Zagreb. General Potiorek ordered that the persons whose property was damaged be reimbursed from the support funds.¹² After the unrest and prosecution of Serb population, the Grand Mufti Hajji Mehmed Džemaludin Čaušević sent an epistle to Muslims in which he called for *order and peace and the preservation of goods of their fellow citizens*.¹³

⁹ Tomac 1968, 11.

¹⁰ From the discussion about the high treason. *Sarajevski list* 247, 14.10. 1914, 2.

¹¹ Madžar 1986, 208.

¹² Madžar 1986, 209. The damage caused during demonstrations amounted to about 500.000 crores. 150 persons were injured who were compensated with 37.787 crores.

¹³ *Sarajevski list* 137, 4. 4. 1914, 3.

The Provincial Government for Bosnia and Herzegovina announced the establishment of court-martial for the territory of Sarajevo municipality and Sarajevo district on 29 June 1914, suggesting death sentences for 12 kinds of crime.¹⁴ After Sarajevo, demonstrations also spread to other places: Doboј, Vareš, Zenica, Županjac, Žepče, Bugojno, Visoko, Maglaj, Mostar, Travnik, Tuzla, Stolac, Kojnic, Čapljina, Ljubuški, Livno, Šamac, Brčko.¹⁵ As a result of devastation of Serb property, courts-martial were established in Tuzla and Maglaj counties.¹⁶ The common Minister of Finances, Leon Bilinski, believed that ideas about shutting down the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Parliament should be suppressed since such a measure was contradictory for a favourable situation. He was convinced that once the Parliament began working again it would not only save the existing condition but would also act pleasingly on the general situation. In a telegram sent to Potiorek, Bilinski exposed the agenda of administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the assassination and the disorder. Interpreting the attitude of Monarch Franz Joseph who received him for the audience on 29 June, listened to his reports and completely expressed his satisfaction with the measures undertaken by Potiorek, Bilinski insisted on further work of the Bosnian Parliament and arrangement of the condition. He stated that the Emperor had expressed his opinion that for the crimes of individuals and dropouts of enraged groups of population the whole country should not be punished. The majority of population was loyal to the Emperor and for them the breach of political and economic interests would mean a lot. The former political course was still in force according to which it was necessary to work together on the constitutional system with the majority of people in the country. Emergency measures in Bosnia and Herzegovina were introduced foremost with the Legal Decree of the Provincial Government from 26 July 1914, suspending certain provisions of the Provincial statute, which represented the legal foundation for the introduction of emergency measures based on the Law on Emergency Measures from 5 March

¹⁴ *Sarajevski list* 131, 29. 6. 1914, 1. *The punishment was anticipated for the Crime of high treason, Crime against military power, Crime against disturbance of public order, Crime against uprisings, Crime against revolts, Crime of public violence for certain cases, Crime of assassination, Crime of murder, Crime of severe body injury, Crime of arson, Crime of robbery, Crime of providing help for some of the mentioned examples.*

¹⁵ Slijepčević 1929, 222.

¹⁶ ABiH, ZMF, 1914, No. 781 / Präs. BH. *Verhängung des Standesrechtes über die Bebirke Tuzla u. Maglaj*, The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, Sarajevo, 2 July 1914.

1910. These were proclaimed in numerous orders by the Provincial Government. On the day of the announcement, it was stated that weapon certificates had lost their validity for the whole country and that weapon owners were obliged to submit their arms to authorities within 8 days. Those owners who were in possession of explosive were obliged to submit it within 24 hours to political authorities. For the disregard of these provisions, the fine of 2.000 crones was determined and the initiation of proceedings at court-martial.

After the decree in Bosnia and Herzegovina was in force, individuals who were involved in illegal affairs, cooperated or were in touch with the enemy, broke the oath about military service or who did not respond to the call for service, committed therewith a criminal deed for which they were surrendered to court-martial which were in charge for such deeds so that other punishments were not taken into consideration.¹⁷ Emergency measures were announced in a number of orders of the Provincial Government such as the Order on restriction of travel documents, reporting, organizing and gathering, Order on prohibition against fleeing of conscripts over the border, Order on restrictions for possession and selling of arms, Order on subjection of civilians to military power, Order on strengthening of criminal proceeding for Bosnia and Herzegovina and abolishment of jurors at courts, Order on the introduction of censure on post and the supervision and control over telegraph communication.¹⁸

After the decisions of the Ministry council, Vienna and Berlin worked on a Memorandum which was kept in secrecy. On 24 July, diplomats of the Monarchy informed the governments in Petersburg, Paris, London, Rome and Istanbul about the undertaken actions and the content of the ultimatum. Shortly after the president of the Serbian Ministry council, Nikola Pašić, submitted a note stating that the Serbian government refuses to investigate the assassination on her territory, the Austro-Hungarian representative in Belgrade indicated that the content of this message was not pleasing and that the delegation would leave Belgrade the same day. By the end of ultimatum, Serbia started mobilization since it was expected that war declaration would follow in a few hours.¹⁹ A day before the war outbreak, the High Command of the Balkan military forces

¹⁷ ABiH, ZMF, 1914, No. 1.059/ Präs. BH. *Verordnung des Landeschef für Bosnien und der Hercegovina und Arméeinspektors in Sarajevo über die zeitweilige Unterstellung von Zivilpersonen unter die Militärstrafgerichtsbarkeit*, The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 26 July 1914.

¹⁸ *Sarajevski list* 155, 26.7.1914, 1.

¹⁹ Dorst, Wünsche 1989, 44-45.

was appointed. Its commander was entitled to independently lead operations on the Balkans. With a forthcoming offensive against Serbia, it was decided to submit the civil and military administration to military commanders of the Balkan armed forces in the case of crossing over to enemy's territory.²⁰ An omen of an upcoming war was also the fact that the families of officers were transported from Bileća and Trebinje.²¹ When it became certain that the breakout of the war was inevitable, on 31 July, Emperor Franz Joseph issued authorisation for the High command that all fortified places in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Dalmatia and the fortification Petrovaradin were to be set up for warfare.²² Mobilization included not only armed forces but also economy, industry, agriculture, traffic and media which gained the main role in creation of public opinion. An act for general mobilization was signed by Emperor Franz Joseph on 31 July, but 2 August was defined as alert day whereas 4 August was the first day for mobilization. A part of *B-echelon* which had not begun with transport towards Serbia, was detained in places of mobilization from where it was sent directly to Galicia. Mobilization in the Monarchy was done correctly and lasted 3 days for the cavalry and 7 days for infantry and artillery.²³

In all parts of the Monarchy the situation was almost the same. Among one million people who were enthusiastic about future victories, rarely anybody saw a battlefield in front of them. Religious dignitaries blessed the soldiers who left for the war without a clear goal, and military marches were a marker for their way into the unknown. In the night of 4 August when the British ultimatum expired and the World War started, Sir Edward Grey, standing at the window of his room in the Foreign Office, told his friend: "The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our life-time".²⁴

At the beginning of August 1914 three fronts were formed in Europe and maintained their primary significance until the end of the war. From December 1914, the Western front spread from North Sea to Switzerland, 700 kilometres in length. On this front the German army opposed the British-French and Belgian armies. The Eastern or Russian front spread from the Baltic Sea to Romania where the Austro-Hungarian and German armies were opposed to the Russian

²⁰ Ö. St. A, AOK, Op. Abt, No. 5, k. u. k. Ministry of war to the Military command in Sarajevo, 27 July 1914.

²¹ Ö. St. A, AOK, Op. Abt, No. 43, k. u. k. Ministry of war to the Military command in Sarajevo, 27 July 1914.

²² Ö. St. A, AOK, Op. Abt, No. 95, k. u. k. Ministry of war to the Military command in Sarajevo, 31 July 1914.

²³ Ö. St. A, AOK, Op. Abt, No. 156.

²⁴ Horvat 1967, 152.

army. Along the rivers Sava and Danube, the Balkan front was formed where Austro-Hungarian army confronted Serbia. After the declaration of war for the reinforcement of the border towards Serbia and Montenegro, beside gendarmerie and the Veteran corps (1.600 soldiers), among the loyal local population the Protection corps were engaged with 11.000 people and they were attached to gendarmerie. In this way, at the beginning of mobilization, the beating heart of the country was established – a narrow gauge railway and the border zone towards Serbia and Montenegro.²⁵

At the beginning of mobilization in Bosnia and Herzegovina, by the order of the army inspector Potiorek, i.e. the commander of the 6th army, "Schutzkorps" ("Protection corps") was established by gendarmerie and they were composed of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Muslims and Catholics. The "Schutzkorps" was formed and filled by people who were not subject to military duty and from the composition of the second and third reserve that were not scheduled for war. Their purpose was to provide instructions and support for gendarmerie in preserving peace and order in the country. They were also used against gangs and to lead "small wars" against the broken opponents. The formation and establishment of *Schutzcorps* was exclusively in military authority and the Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina did not have any influence on it. The "Schutzkorps" functioned according to the principle of territorial defence, providing instructions on mobilization and protecting military objects, military devices, railway, post and telegraphy...²⁶ Beside this, a voluntary "Protection corps" ("Freiwillige Schutzkorps") was formed. The decision about its formation was assigned to the command of the gendarmerie corps for Bosnia and Herzegovina. A contingent of 1.000 infantrymen and 22 horsemen was formed for Bosnia and for Herzegovina.²⁷ On the front, the members of the "Schutzkorps" moved together with their military units. Bosnian and Herzegovinian Serbs, who had joined Serbian and Montenegrin forces at the time of their breach into Bosnia and Herzegovina and caught at the time of duration of court-martial, were punished with a death penalty. The executors of these penalties were members of "Schutzkorps" and were largely Bosnian and Herzegovinian Muslims. In historical memory of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Serbs this fact was

²⁵ ÖULK, Bd 1, 1914, 92

²⁶ ABiH, ZMF, 1914, No. 14.498. Schutzkorpsmanschaft, Versorgung. The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, Sarajevo 3 November 1914.

²⁷ Ö. St. A., KA-W, N. P, K. 6, Geh, No. 68 b, Sarajevo, 12 September 1914.

later used as an instrument for genocide policy towards Muslims. During the service in "Schutzkorps" there were violations of duty for which its members were charged and prosecuted. One such lawsuit, where several persons were convicted, was led by the end of April 1916.²⁸ By the order of general Potiorek, many kinds of military formations were established along with the regular army. For the purpose of defence of Sarajevo and its surroundings a concrete plan for the creation of *Scharfschutzkorps* was made during the September of 1914.²⁹ This military organized body was to patrol, gather intelligence and ensure safety and command. Special attention was dedicated to weapon handling and fostering of sharpshooting among the younger people, as was the custom in Alpine countries of the Monarchy. For performing of tasks, a command of "Scharfschutzkorps" was established with three permanent inspectors at the front who should change shifts every 8 hours. Twenty members of "Scharfschutzkorps" were distributed per each barrack, fully prepared for war, dressed in brown-grey clothes, with breeches, long stockings or puttees.³⁰ "Bürgerwehr" was also formed, as civil protection to administer public order and peace in the country and was not subject to the regulations of military discipline. The Provincial Government decided on the formation of these units on the 11th August 1914. They should have been formed according to gendarmerie regions with the task to patrol unarmed even if their commander was armed. For the formation, it was necessary to recruit four times more people than the number of rifles they possessed. This "civil army" functioned as civil guard and on the battlefield and it was subordinated to gendarmerie.³¹ Apart from this, the "Schutzwehr" – small-armed units along the gendarmerie stations, were also set up. In the country, watch guards were organized in the areas which included 6 or 12 villages. All these formations were officially called "Bürgerwehr" and their goal was to support police since police officers had left for the regular army. They were supposed to carry out police patrols, keep watch in front of administration buildings, posts, next to telephone and railway lines and prominent places along river banks and to reinforce financial watches.³²

²⁸ Prozes gegen Schutzkorps Leute, Sarajevoer Tagesblatt, 30 April 1915, 5.

²⁹ ABiH, ZVS, 1914, No.12.020, Formierung eines Scharfschutzkorps, The fort command Sarajevo to the The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, 22 September 1914.

³⁰ ABiH, ZVS, 1914, No. 11.721. Entwurf für die Aktivierung des Sarajevoer Scharf-Schutzkorps, Military command Sarajevo, 3 September 1914.

³¹ Ekmečić 1974, 474, note 89.

³² Ekmečić 1974, 173.

After war broke out and mobilization was proclaimed, a significant role was attributed to religious leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina – the Grand Mufti Čaušević, Archbishop and Metropolitan Evgenije Letica, and the Bishop of Mostar Mišić, who took care that mobilization was done in peace and order, thereby using the opportunity to spread patriotism and emphasize the connection with the Monarchy.³³

In the first year of war, the impact of military “soul carers,” chaplains, imams and rabbis on military conscripts was especially strong. The emphasis in their activities was placed on atonement in case of breaching the oath given to the Emperor and the King which had crucial significance for their conduct on the front and endurance of superhuman efforts.³⁴ General Potiorek was especially interested in using the enthusiasm of the Muslim population for the war goals of the Monarchy, insisting to manifest it in every possible moment. When the war started, prayers were held for the victory of Central Powers in all mosques in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When Great Britain entered the war on 15 August, after the prayer for the Emperor in the Emperor’s mosque, in agreement with General Potiorek, the Grand Mufti and the waqf director Šerif Arnautović organized a prayer against Britain. Grand Mufti Čaušević, dressed as mullah of Mekka and Medina, delivered a solemn speech from a specially decorated podium. This act was photographed; postcards were made with the text of his speech and addressed to Muslim soldiers at the Russian front and Muslim countries all over to India.³⁵

After the war declaration, General Conrad ordered that the *B-echelon*, along with units of the Minimal group Balkans, should also be concentrated towards Serbia. It was very active during the following days in South-Eastern Bosnia. The Serb and Montenegrin operation plan against Austria-Hungary, which was presented on 6 August 1914 by Ratomir Putnik, suggested to engage the strong Austro-Hungarian forces and to weaken therewith the attack in direction of Russia. The basis for the offensive operation plan which suggested the

³³ *Sarajevski list* 183, 13.8. 1914, 2; *Sarajevski list* 184, 14. 8. 1914, 2 ; *Sarajevski list* 191, 19. 8. 1914, 2.

³⁴ While on the Italian front, captain Pero Blašković met a Muslim who was hungry and thirsty, and was pulling a gun onto a far-away hill, crying and saying that “trodding as a goat he was constantly praying to Allah to be shot down by artillery, because this is not life”. These words portray the attitude towards the military service: the oath to God and the Emperor, because one includes the other, was the motive which moved the soldiers to endure superhuman efforts. Blašković 1939, 368.

³⁵ Ö. St. A., KA-W, Nachlass Potiorek, Kart. 5, No. 136, Sarajevo, 15 August 1914.

combined operations of the Serbian and Montenegrin army was the engagement of Serbian army from Užice which was to operate on the direction Višegrad-Sarajevo and the Montenegrin army in the direction Pljevlja-Goražde-Sarajevo.³⁶ The offensive toward Sarajevo was founded in the strategic concepts of Serbian general staff but its success was limited to connecting and marking of Austro-Hungarian forces. The tasks of Chetnik units show offensive character.³⁷ Raising revolts in Bosnia and Herzegovina was included in the plans of military circles of Serbia. After the outbreak of war, Colonel Dragutin Dimitrijević-Apis composed an instruction for the conduction of Chetniks' activities in the war against Austro-Hungarian military forces. This document foresaw that in the case of offensive, Chetnik troops should cross over on territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and serve there as a nucleus for instigating revolts in areas inhabited by Orthodox Christians. The High Command of the Serbian army entrusted Chetnik units with the execution of specific military tasks, mainly guerrilla warfare. During offensive operations Chetniks should have been engaged as precursors and patrols of regular Serbian army with the task to intrude on territory controlled by the Austro-Hungarian army, to attack them from behind, also to attack in hinterland, destroy communications and large mobile institutions, gather intelligence etc. Their basic goal was to force the enemy to take apart its forces and to weaken its attacking abilities. During the withdrawal of the Serbian army, Chetniks were supposed to remain on the occupied territory behind the back of their enemy's army, to attack and destroy bridges, passages, telegraph and telephone lines, the chamber etc. Troops were also to be formed from the remaining population. Through specially organized intelligence channels, Chetniks established connections with the regular Serbian army.³⁸ The place and role of Chetnik units during First World War was confirmed by a special directive of High command. All Chetnik formations were sent to the River Drina on 9 August.³⁹ Some units were engaged during 1914 on the territory of Bosnia, i.e. the area of Vlasenica, Olovo, and also towards Srebrenica, Han Pijesak and Pale and even arrived in the direct vicinity of Sarajevo. In the places where Serbian and Montenegrin forces penetrated, Chetniks were joined by local population who voluntarily entered their troops. The attempt to provoke an uprising through the

³⁶ Hrabak 1964, 5.

³⁷ About the role of chetniks see: Šehić 1971, 13-39.

³⁸ Šehić 1971, 40.

³⁹ Šehić 2007, 92.

actions of Chetnik units did not succeed since the population who were not allowed to carry weapons was either interned in the inner parts of the Monarchy or were mobilized or assigned to work units. This is why Chetnik orders in the area where they operated, found mainly older people, women and children.⁴⁰ During their military operations, the captured committees were shot or hanged. In the county of Mostar 154 people were killed, in Duvno 19, whereas in both counties 36 people were killed in battles. In the county of Trebinje 78 people were hanged, 30 were killed in battles, whereas in the Bileća county 6 people were shot dead and six were hanged.⁴¹

Breach of Serbian and Montenegrin military forces into the territory from Višegrad to Foča caused massive flight of the Muslim population from the counties of Višegrad, Rogatica, Čajniče and Foča whereas the Orthodox Christians welcomed them as liberators, cooperating and joining them. This attitude of the local Serbian population served as a motive to implement the harshest repressive measures. After the Montenegrin army had withdrawn from Čelebići near Foča, in the middle of August 1914, 180 Serbs were arrested and 71 shot dead in Foča on the basis of the court-martial decision, whereas 24 were sent to the camp Arad.⁴²

In the morning of 17 September a part of the Sandžak army entered Rogatica. The county administration of Rogatica informed the Provincial Government what had been going on after the offensive of Austro-Hungarian forces by the end of October 1914. Pillaging started immediately after Sarajevo. On both sides of the road, houses were burnt down, mainly desolated and plundered. All Serbs from Sokolac and Podromanija withdrew with the Serbian and Montenegrin troops. Montenegrins arrived at Rogatica in the afternoon of 17 September. Local Serbs welcomed them with applause, flags and flowers. The town administration was in their hands. One third of the Muslim population, who had not escaped on time, remained in the town and was exposed to the terror of Montenegrins. One café owner and one-day labourer were killed, whereas Muderis Muhamed Effendi Škaljić, 8 imams, respected citizens – Bećirbeg Šahinpašić, Uzeiraga Daidžić, hafiz-Effendi Muftić, Ibrahim Teskeredžić and 70

⁴⁰ Šehić 1971, 41.

⁴¹ Slijepčević 1929, 396.

⁴² ABiH, ZMF, 1914, No. 1.715/ Präs. BH. County office in Foča to the Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, 23 September 1914.

other persons from the county were taken as hostages. Muslims were stopped on the streets and were deprived of their money and watches. Montenegrins burnt down 20 houses with side buildings, 20 shops and a mosque in a neighbourhood. Serbs and Montenegrins plundered and took everything possible – supplies, clothes, precious things and equipment. They even robbed the local Orthodox Christians with the excuse that Austro-Hungarian money was not valid any longer and should be exchanged. They extorted the money and collected in this way around 4.000 crowns. Due to the penetration of Austro-Hungarian troops, 80% of Orthodox Christians joined Serbian and Montenegrin forces which were withdrawing, to a great extent voluntarily but partially also because they were forced to do so.⁴³ For instance, the complete population of Trnovo fled. Montenegrins, dressed in uniforms of the Austro-Hungarian army, burnt properties and plundered everything, even Serbian women so that the population had to escape. The return of Serbian population was not an option since it was assumed that they would join the enemy.⁴⁴ By the end of October 1914 the county branch of Trnovo was completely cleansed from Serbian and Montenegrin troops, so that the traffic on the route Sarajevo-Trnovo-Kalinovik was established and after it the postal service as well. Muslim families from Trnovo started returning home. One small part of Orthodox Christians remained whereas a greater part of them had fled and joined the Serbian and Montenegrin units. After the reoccupation of the places, many inhabitants made the statements at the stage headquarter about the events in the county of Vlasenica during the invasion of Serbian and Montenegrin forces. When Serbs marched into the villages Pomol and Štedra for a second time, many residents were massacred. Serbian patrols besieged Muslim houses requesting food and cattle which was given to them without any resistance and after which they requested money. In these villages, soldiers also raped women.⁴⁵ After the offensive of Serbian and Montenegrin units, around 50.000 people from East-Bosnian counties of Kladanj, Srebrenica, Vlasenica, Rogatica, Višegrad and Zvornik left, partially voluntarily and partially because they were forced to do so since military circles spread the news that "Swabians were killing everyone on their way". Apart from this, fear was present among them after the solemn welcome of Serbian and

⁴³ ABiH, ZMF, 1914, No. 1.740/ Präs BH. County office in Rogatica to the Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, 20 October 1914, transcript.

⁴⁴ Ö. St. A., KA-W, N. P, K. 6, 86 ad c, Rapport, 27 September 1914.

⁴⁵ "Zlodjela Srba u Bosni" *Sarajevski list* 114, 24. 4. 1915, 3.

Montenegrin units and involvement in plunders. Army gathered refugees and directed them towards Serbia.⁴⁶

Having expelled Užice and Sandžak armies from South-Eastern Bosnia, General Potiorek resolved the question of securing the hinterland on this space, after which he had to decide about the third offensive against Serbia.⁴⁷ In the governing circles in Sarajevo it was considered that a fast pacification of the Orthodox Christians should not be expected if the Austro-Hungarian forces did not act decisively on the prevention of an uprising. From 28 June to 15 August at Central Courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina criminal lawsuits were raised against 637 persons. After finding the material from Loznica, several hundred people were taken to the prison in Sarajevo either from the group of hostages or through new arrests.⁴⁸ It was surprising to see to what extent the Serbian idea became popular not only among the intelligentsia but also among the rural population.⁴⁹ Military authorities in Trebinje used penal measures so that on the 12th August, Gujo Gudelj from Pokrajčiči, who sent signals to Montenegrin troops was hanged and Vid Parežanin from Lastva-Korjenic taken hostage because Serbs from Lastva joined Montenegrins during the attack on Trebinje.⁵⁰ Such scenes and examples of fanaticism strengthened the conviction that they could only be fought by force. The committees were not always fought consistently. At first they could not be differentiated from the regular troops and many of them were captured. Only after some time, they began not to be treated as soldiers. They themselves did not know what they were fighting for, only that they were pushed forward by their officers.⁵¹ The Austro-Hungarian administration considered that such examples indicated that Bosnian Serbs were long preparing in secrecy in terms of high treason for the events which followed. "They were

⁴⁶ Ö. St. A., KA-W, N. P, K. 5, 109 b, Kladanj 17 October 1914. M. Ekmečić denoted the flight of Orthodox Christian population from eastern Bosnia as "ethnic cleansing of its subjects by Austro-Hungary." Ekmečić 1974, 180.

⁴⁷ Zelenika 1962, 638.

⁴⁸ Šehić 2007, 97.

⁴⁹ Hauptmann, Prasch 1981, 430. It is known of the case of a Serb peasant who, before his hanging, shouted three times "Long live King Peter". He was then massacred by the soldiers, and while he was dying he mentioned his name again.

⁵⁰ ABiH, ZMF, 1914, No. 1.410 /Präs. BH. The transcript of report No. 320 from 13/8 1914, A branch of command in Trebinje to the gendarmarie command. While he was standing on the scaffold with a rope around his neck, priest Parežanin shouted: " Long live Serbia, Serbian army, Serbian people and Great Russia."

⁵¹ Hauptmann, Prasch 1981, 430.

raised in that way, because logically, it is difficult to assume that an ordinary uneducated peasant or even old women could have offered such military services without previously being prepared for it", concluded the court counsellor Grasl, suggesting that the "administration has the main goal to educate people that it governs in the spirit of loyalty towards the throne and respect of law regardless of personality and to show in all administrative procedures good intentions and consistent firmness." He believed that it was important to eliminate any kind of militaristic spirit and thereby the harmful protection which obstructed the work i.e. giving recognition for merits to each individual. "If this was done", he concluded, "It could not happen that among Serb intellectuals, there are many of those who are deep in their hearts on the side of the enemy."⁵² Investigation against participants of assassination carried out in Sarajevo showed the entire severity of the crisis in education and school system in the country and the proportions of the youth movement which negated Austro-Hungarian rule. Authorities investigated, arrested suspicious high school students and prepared lawsuits against them. According to the Austro-Hungarian central authorities, high schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina faced a crisis, discipline problems and conflicts among students.⁵³ As the number of excesses of high school students increased with years, for the suppression of this phenomenon and its causes, the emergency measures proved to be unsustainable. It was established that the excesses were motivated by elements who systematically and frequently acted and agitated against loyal elements in school bodies. As result of this, regulations of the second main body, of the third section of the Criminal code for Bosnia and Herzegovina were supplemented. Those who were convicted could expect imprisonment from one to six months. If the convicts were not citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, they were expelled from the Monarchy.⁵⁴ Military command from Mostar estimated that Serbophile propaganda which had earlier been eliminated by the example of draconic measures was fully continued after mobilization. Proof of such convictions was the sending of signals to the Serbian and Montenegrin army as well as the mood of the Orthodox Christians who openly demonstrated joy after the slightest sign of failure of Austro-Hungarian

⁵² Šljivo 1987, 138.

⁵³ Kapidžić 1965, 398.

⁵⁴ ABiH, ZMF, 1914, No. 1078/ Präs. BH. Entwurf eines Gesetzes womit die Bestimmungen des zweiten Hauptstückes des dritten Teiles des Strafgesetzes ergänzt werden. The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, Sarajevo, 26 July 1914.

army which was followed with rumours. Due to this, military command required more effective measures for prevention. Primarily, all enemies were to be expelled from the country and emigration of population from the Balkan countries was to be prohibited. All those who were hostile towards the country should be confiscated their property.

Fifteen days before he was dismissed, the Provincial governor Potiorek, in a report addressed to the Common ministry of finances, had justified the harsh measures in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the assassination in Sarajevo. In the report he argued that after gathering information during the previous months, the majority of the Orthodox Christians successfully acknowledged the state idea. Moreover, facts in all areas of administration indicated that the subversive spirit and disloyalty were not only present among some exalted politicians but were also deeply rooted in all strata of society to an unimaginable extent. A great part of clergy, teachers in religious schools and other educated people of free vocations, as well as town landlords were infected with this spirit. It was even spread among provincial clerks and officials of all categories despite their oath to serve. The conservative and loyal population was seduced by the irredentist movement, completely joining the Serbian army near borderline. According to Potiorek's opinion, the trial showed the assassins that Serbia had fanned national passions among the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and inspired their megalomaniac aspirations. Potiorek cited complaisance of the administration towards the requests of Serbs as the main reason for strengthening of Serb nationalism, especially after the movement for church and school autonomy had finished. Giving Statute to church and school autonomy was considered to have been a fatal mistake of the administration. It established a national church and school and created such a conscience among Serbs that they did not feel any longer as Bosnians of Orthodox Christian faith or members of Monarchy but as a special privileged element which considered that they had the right to separatist aspirations and created a proper platform for subversive activities.⁵⁵ Immediately after the announcement of mobilization in Bosnia and Herzegovina, military authorities started taking hostages. This measure was supposed to guarantee peace in the country and in this way the activities of committee troops were limited. Hostages vouched with their lives for the damage that

⁵⁵ ABiH, ZMF, 1914, No. 1.994/ Präs. BH. The report of the chief of the Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, Sarajevo, 15 December 1914.

could have happened in the country to the army, military objects, transport, public transport means and everything that was important to the army. They were positioned on those places which could have been in danger from guerilla warfare.⁵⁶

A note from the Provincial government for Bosnia and Herzegovina addressed to county offices and branch offices in the country from 28 July 1914 contained instructions on introduction of the institution of hostage. The most influential and most respected persons of Orthodox faith who politically belonged to "Narod", "Otađzbina" and "Srpska riječ" should be taken as hostages and serve as pawns for the loyal behaviour of their members and supporters. It was emphasized that it was of special importance to take hostages who were their closest relatives in order to achieve calming effects on the population. Political authorities should teach the population about the significance of taking hostages, arguing that it is not punishment but an instrument for protection of state and respect their treatment. Hostages vouched with their lives for objects of military significance and every incident had as consequence their execution.⁵⁷ For deliberate damage of railways, bridges, roads, telegraph and telephone lines the penalty was hanging. Every municipality that suffered such destroying was exposed to high penalties or other difficult contributions which needed to be initiated immediately. Military commands for insurance of railways and bridges and commands of military transports were authorised to take hostages and could dispose them at the department for protection and military trains. In attacks on railways or bridges, hostages should be shot on the spot.⁵⁸ In all municipalities, especially in those near railways, posters were to be put on prominent places.⁵⁹ In the inner parts of the Monarchy politically suspicious hostages were taken first.⁶⁰ From 380 Orthodox priests in country, 163 of them were captured or taken as hostages.⁶¹ In regard to repressive measures against the Serbian population which participated in battles of the Serbian and Mon-

⁵⁶ Šljivo 1987, 91.

⁵⁷ ABiH, ZVS, 1914, No. 7.493/ Präs. *Aushebung von Geiseln und Behandlung derselbe*. The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to all county offices and county branches, Sarajevo, 28 July 1914.

⁵⁸ ABiH, ZVS, 1914, No. 8.352/ Präs. The decree of the command of the 15th corps.

⁵⁹ ABiH, ZVS, 1914, No. 7.441/ Präs. *Beschädigung von Kommunikationsmitteln*, The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to all county offices and county branches, as well as to the government's commissary for the capital Sarajevo, 27 July 1914.

⁶⁰ Ö. St. A., KA-W, N. P. K. 6, Geh, No. 61 b.

⁶¹ Hauptmann Prasch, 1981, 444.

tenegrin army against Austro-Hungarian troops, the Ministry of foreign affairs of Monarchy approved the undertaken measures. It principally agreed to deprive them of their citizenship and to confiscate their property remarking the principle of its implementation of distribution of property to loyal neighbours. Reason for such an attitude was fear that division of confiscated property would serve as a motive for Russia to do the same in regions of east Galicia, occupied by Russian troops. These measures could have had long lasting negative consequences for the Monarchy in a political sense. Because of this, it was believed that the right for confiscated land should be given to the Provincial Government for Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁶²

After the deportation of Serbian and Montenegrin forces from East-Bosnian counties and establishment of Austro-Hungarian administration, the question of settlement in border areas became current again. In the end, the opinion was accepted to expatriate the Orthodox Christians and to confiscate their property. Since they turned away from the Monarchy, their property was to be taken by other, mixed population, primarily Muslims and Catholics from different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, war victims, veteran soldiers, corporals, gendarmes and financial guards.⁶³

After the end of the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman Empire was in a difficult situation because of the loss of the greatest part on the European continent and immediate threat to Istanbul from Bulgaria and Greece and their aspiration to its territory. After the assassination in Sarajevo the government in Istanbul was convinced that it could not escape entry to war. Even though the Minister of war, Enver Pasha, was the most influential politician and personally fond of Germans, the Porte initially attempted to approach the Entente forces. Germany used this immediately and on 2 August concluded an agreement about participation of the Ottoman Empire in the war on the side of Central Powers. Germany hoped that this arrangement would positively influence Bulgaria, Romania, Persia, and Afghanistan to join it. Germany expected a lot from the Sultan's reputation as a religious leader of the whole Muslim world of around 300 million people. It hoped that the announcement of *holy war (jihad)* would show that their place

⁶² ABiH, ZMF, 1915, No. 980/ Präs. BH. Ministry of foreign affairs to the k. u. k. Ministry of war, 15th June 1915.

⁶³ ABiH, ZMF, 1915, No. 1.377 /Präs. BH. "Pro domo"

in this war was on the side of Central Powers.⁶⁴ The entry of the Ottoman Empire into the war on 1 November 1914 had a significant impact on events in the South-Eastern Europe. Foremost, for the proclamation of *holy war*, the Sheikh ul-Islam's needed to proclaim a holy fatwa so that the Sultan might proclaim the war on its basis. In Istanbul, on 14 November 1914, after the noon prayer in Fatih's mosque, a representative of Sheikh ul-Islam presented the fatwa which proclaimed the *holy war*. A crowd of people moved to the Ministry of war, in front of the Porte where a prayer was held for the victory of army and navy.⁶⁵ The Government sent the media the proclamation of holy war, bearing the date 21 November 1914, and the Sultan ordered the proclamation to be sent to all Muslim countries. It was signed by the current and former Sheikh ul-Islam, as well as by 24 great Muslim scholars. All Muslims were invited to take part in the war on the side of Central Powers. Hence, to Muslims in the Balkans, it was clearly shown that their place was on the side of the Monarchy.⁶⁶ According to Sharia all Muslims were obliged to participate in the war. Children, women, slaves, the blind and disabled people did not have to fight. If the enemy was defeated the war could end, but if it was the other way around and the enemy won, then a wife could go to war without asking her husband, a slave without asking his master. Mutilation of the enemy was forbidden. All Muslims were obliged to participate in the war against those who were marked as enemies of Islam.⁶⁷

General Potiorek did not hesitate to order the reading of Sheikh ul-Islam's fatwa with the command about the *holy war – jihad*, in all mosques in the country and to all soldiers at the front as a welcome tool for psychological and ideological war fighting. In order to direct their religious enthusiasm towards a voluntary joining of the army, General Potiorek sought to influence the Grand Mufti as soon as possible so that the fatwa of the Sheikh ul-Islam would be published in all the mosques in the land, proclaiming *jihad* against the British, French and Russians.⁶⁸ At the same time he told Palavichini, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Istanbul, to ask the Sheikh ul-Islam for an explanation as to whether the Muslims can fight under the imperial flag. Bearing in mind that jihad was a legal institution of Islam, he wanted to know whether it had to

⁶⁴ Tomac 1968, 152-153.

⁶⁵ *Sarajevski list* 278, 17. 11. 1914, 1.

⁶⁶ *Sarajevski list* 290, 26. 11. 1914, 1; Cf. Bihl 1982, 35.

⁶⁷ *Sarajevski list* 282, 18. 11. 1914, 2.

⁶⁸ Rauchensteiner 1991, 183.

be waged under Muslim command.⁶⁹ After he officially received the fatwa and the epistle from Sheikh ul-Islam, the Grand Mufti Čaušević invited all the muftis and dignitaries to Sarajevo, at the same time issuing an epistle to all muftis, imams, and sharia judges to begin collecting contributions for the army.⁷⁰ In the courtyard of the Gazi Husrev-bey's mosque on 11 December 1914, before noon, the Muslim population began gathering in order to hear the speech of the Grand Mufti. The mosque and the courtyard were full and it is estimated that more than 3.000 individuals were present at the time. In the mosque all of the most prominent representatives of the Muslim people came together. After the Friday noon prayer, the imam of the Bey's mosque, hafiz Esad effendi Sabrihafizović, delivered a khutba and later extracts from the Koran were read from the surah on the victory. After the reading was finished, the Grand Mufti climbed to the pulpit, turning to the gathered populace, stressing that the Ottoman Empire had entered the World War as an ally of the Monarchy and Germany.⁷¹

The war destruction on the area of military operations, mobilization, migrations, evacuations and interning of people caused a great disturbance in the economy of the country. In the majority of industrial companies and mines the production did not reach the pre-war level, and in many cases it was halved or completely stopped. Due to the lack of working power during the war the agricultural production was organized on the principle of compulsory public works. The agrarian produce declined swiftly so that during 1916 they were twice smaller than in 1914. The war contributions and the lack of food conditioned the excessive slaughtering of cattle and the quick regression of livestock farming. The war especially hit the poorer layers of the society. With the engaging of labour capable population for the war effort, the economy was left without workforce so that the militarized companies resorted to employing women and children, and during 1915 and 1916 they also employed prisoners of war and militarized workers who filled work places in mining, metallurgy, and wood cutting.⁷² With its production Bosnia and Herzegovina could not satisfy the necessities for cereals even in peacetime, so that it had to import large quantities. The knowledge that the war would last for a longer period of time forced the

⁶⁹ ABiH, ZMF, 1914, No. 1815. Heilige Krieg, Tuzla, 15-16 November 1914.

⁷⁰ ABiH, 1914, No. 1.913/ Präs. BH. Heilige Krieg, The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, Sarajevo, 2 December 1914.

⁷¹ *Sarajevski list* 306, 12.12. 1914, 2-3.

⁷² Hadžibegović 1990, 70.

authorities to undertake numerous measures for the rational spending of existing supplies and ensuring the provisioning of the population. Special attention was given to the spring sowing in 1915 which had to include all the security organs in the state – gendarmerie, *Schutzkorps*, veterans, foresters, and all municipal officers. Also, the refugees were to be involved in the sowing since they received help from the state resources.⁷³ For the conducting of the spring sowing, an especially important role was given to the gendarmerie which was given the instructions for its implementation. The ploughing and sowing was to be conducted via public works, so in each settlement all labour capable male and female workforces were required to help. In these works refugees were also supposed to be involved, whereas only the necessary female workforce was allowed to remain home. Under no circumstance was it allowed to take the working cattle to graze before the sowing was completed. On the agricultural units where the male individuals were mobilized, not one single part was supposed to remain uncultivated. This land was supposed to be worked on by the whole population, in the final instance even if some of them had to be forced to do it. Each settlement needed to provide all of the labour capable men, women and children, with the available cattle and equipment in the service of the state, so that from the early morning hours until very late in the evening they would be engaged in sowing until the job was completed in a certain region. If a surplus of workforce was to appear, it was to be sent out to aid the neighbouring areas.⁷⁴ In the lack of agricultural workforce for the sowing even prisoners were engaged and they were organized by the authorities from the county and regional courts. Beside that, it was allowed to involve school children in the performing of easier agricultural tasks, and the supervision and control of these measures was entrusted to the teaching staff. Also, it was favourable to engage females among the Muslim refugee women and girls in the conducting of field works. The lower organs were especially reminded not to intensively engage these categories of refugees, but that this should be done in an appropriate way, since this was

⁷³ ABiH, ZMF, 1915, No. 8.820. Wirtschaftliche Massnahmen der Landesregierung für Bosnien und Herzegovina während des Krieges (bis Mai 1915.). Im Auftrage der Landesregierung verfasst von Dr Stephan Fodor, Regierungssekretär, The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, 16 August 1915, 83.

⁷⁴ ABiH, ZMF, 1915, No. 8.820. Wirtschaftliche Massnahmen der Landesregierung für Bosnien und Herzegovina während des Krieges (bis Mai 1915.). Im Auftrage der Landesregierung verfasst von Dr Stephan Fodor, Regierungssekretär, The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, 16 August 1915, 84-86.

the first instance of activity of Muslim females in public life. These provisions were met by complete understanding from the Grand Mufti and he supported them strongly.⁷⁵ In order to prevent the chaos in the provisioning of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina the Government passed on 3 August 1914 the Law on the rational provisioning with necessary life supplies. All food supplies were required, and export from Bosnia and Herzegovina was forbidden without a special permission of the authorities.⁷⁶ For the more effective control of prices and supplying of population, the Provincial Government was authorized by the law of 7 December 1914 to undertake special measures in the field of economy due to the outstanding circumstances caused by war.⁷⁷ The law of 29 March 1915 arranged the trade of wheat and grist for the mill. It established the monthly-allowed ration per capita of 7,2 kg of flour or 9 kg of wheat, which amounted to 250 grams of flour or 300 grams of wheat per person per day.⁷⁸ Since the supplying of the population was in constant decline, the Provincial Government, dissatisfied with the work of the Office for the trade of wheat, formed by the end of 1915 the Institute for the trade of life supplies which was united with the Office. Its task was to find supplies of life victuals and to distribute them equally on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁷⁹

After the southern and eastern areas of the country became the direct zone of war operations, a great part of the population was forced to flee their homes, whereas on the other side a large number had to be evacuated militarily. In that way the problem of refugees became prominent immediately after the outbreak of the war. Considering the small receiving capabilities in the country, as well as the specific social, confessional and economic relations, the solution of this issue was more problematic than in Austria and Hungary. The movement

⁷⁵ ABiH, ZMF, 1915, No. 8.820. Wirtschaftliche Massnahmen der Landesregierung für Bosnien und Herzegovina während des Krieges (bis Mai 1915.). Im Auftrage der Landesregierung verfasst von Dr Stephan Fodor, Regierungssekretär, The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, 16 August 1915, 91.

⁷⁶ Law that regulates provisions on procurement of population with basic supplies while emergency circumstances are in force caused by war. Glasnik Zakona i naredbi za BiH 1914, 363.

⁷⁷ Law that authorises the Provincial government, due to war circumstances to order what to do on the field of economy. No. 167, 7 December 1914. Glasnik Zakona i naredbi za BiH 1914, 589.

⁷⁸ Law that regulates the transport of wheat and grist. No. 32, 29 March 1915, Glasnik Zakona i naredbi za BiH 1915, 81.

⁷⁹ Order of the Provincial government according to which the Institute of the Provincial government for Bosnia and Herzegovina for the transport of life provisions was founded, No. 128, 3 December 1915, Glasnik Zakona i naredbi 1915, 291.

of refugees began in the end of August of 1914 when the Austro-Hungarian units retreated from Sandžak, and when 9,000 Muslims joined them with women and children. When the wave of refugees began moving from Sandžak, General Potiorek thought that the best solution would be to include all capable males into military units.⁸⁰ He believed that their return by force was out of the question due to the consideration towards the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since they could not remain on the border due to military reasons, and since inland accommodation was excluded because the possibilities and the authorities could not bear it, their passage to Ustiprača was approved, and after that they were to be directly transported towards Bosanski Brod. At the same time the k. u. k. Ministry of war required the refugees to be settled outside of the country.⁸¹ After they reached Brod, the refugees were dispersed to Banja Luka, Kotor Varoš, Kozarac, Derventa and Teslić, while the refugees from Foča and Čajniče were taken to Vareš, Fojnica and Busovača.⁸² The Muslim population from Sandžak fled en masse with their cattle towards Bosnia in order to save themselves from the Montenegrin attacks. The k. u. k. Ministry of War ordered that the refugees are to be treated in the same way as they were in 1912.⁸³ The Office for the supervision of war thought that the refugees from Sandžak should be allocated in the interior, along with the conduction of strict sanitary measures so that the outbreak of any infections would be prevented.⁸⁴ Under the leadership of the Grand Mufti Čušević an action was initiated for the gathering of aid for the refugees, and it brought funds in the amount of 61.687 crones and 84 hellers. Franz Joseph and minister Leon Bilinski gave larger contributions, 10.000 crones each, while the other donations were mostly the result of the Grand Mufti's work. Since the refugees were supplied from the provincial budget, the income of the fond was used for the improvement of their position, for the buying of food, clothes and footwear, Nestlé flour for the feeding of children... These necessary supplies were bought by the Refugee office of the Provincial government and the regional offices on whose areas the refugees were settled.⁸⁵

The Muslim population which did not succeed to flee because they were surprised by the enemy, remained on the occupied territory. On 20 September

⁸⁰ Ö. St. A. KA-W, N. P, K. 5, 48. Dienstzettel, 10 August 1914.

⁸¹ ad Potiorek to Bilinski, Sarajevo, 29 August 1914.

⁸² O. St. A. KA-W, N. P, K. 6, 52, Dienstzettel, Sarajevo, 30 August 1914.

⁸³ O. St. A. KA-W, N. P, K. 6, 52 d, 30 August 1914.

⁸⁴ O. St. A. KA-W, N. P, K. 6, 52 f, 1 September 1914.

⁸⁵ "Sabiranje za muhadžire" *Sarajevski list* 39, 28.2. 1917, 2.

1914 the regional representative Hrasnica submitted a report to the president of the Provincial government about the violence to which they were exposed: "As soon as the conflict began on the border, and when the border troops began retreating together with the gendarmerie, finances and members of Defensive council, and when the Serb army began encroaching into the Višegrad region, the elders of the Orthodox Christians ceased to perform the entrusted tasks and all to a man joined the enemy along with the population, while the Muslims retreated with the army". They told Hrasnica that they were forced to flee and that they did not have the time to take their cattle in fear that they would remain on the left bank of the river Lim and thus fall into the hands of the enemy. Those who were left behind suffered horrible atrocities: "They were being murdered, enslaved, flayed alive, and from one hajji they took 10,000 crones and then they killed him".⁸⁶ The suppression of the Serb and Montenegrin units was followed by the return of refugees to Rogatica so that by the end of November 1914 their number decreased to 26,448 persons. However, soon a new attack followed and Rogatica had to be completely evacuated again. Due to that, the number of refugees from the eastern areas rose so that in mid-January 1915 the number of refugees was 46,000 individuals, of which around 20,000 were children and 16,000 women.⁸⁷

In the summer of 1915 a total number of 104,000 persons were displaced. This situation lasted until the autumn of 1915 when the successful offensive in Serbia made it possible for them to return. In the spring and summer of 1915 refugees, among which were women and children, found an additional source of income in agricultural work. On the initiative of the Grand Mufti funds were gathered throughout the land for the care of refugees, which brought an amount of 35,000 crones. Despite the difficulties, adapting to the circumstances in the land, the refugees were also provided with shelter and care during the winter. The successful operations in Serbia and Montenegro in the end of 1915 made it seem likely that all the refugees would return home, so preparations were made for such an outcome. In the end of November 1915 a great number of evacuees from the fortified places were able to return homes, in the cases where no additional conditions had to be met. There were 5,000 inhabitable and 10,000 uninhabitable destroyed or damaged houses and economic buildings. By the

⁸⁶ Šljivo 1987, 134-135.

⁸⁷ Bericht über Verwaltung 1914-16, 141.

end of 1916 the number of destroyed buildings was still great: 3.221 houses were completely destroyed, 7.075 economic buildings, 1.644 severely damaged houses and 2.099 severely damaged economic buildings.⁸⁸

During 1915, a series of political trials were held in Bosnia and Herzegovina and they were mostly aimed against the high-school youth. That same year four big student trials were organized: in Banja Luka with 27 accused, in Mostar, but which was held in Sarajevo against 10 accused, in Sarajevo, tried in Travnik with 65 accused, and in Tuzla, which was held in Bihać against 40 accused students. In these trials a number of professors were also accused. In the student trials most of the accused were Orthodox Christians, while a lesser number of *Muslims and Catholics* was tried too. *Apart from many small-scale proceedings, there were a few bigger trials such as the one against Damjan Đurica with 36 people and Savo Ljubibratić with another 30 individuals, Nikola Kašiković and his family, as well as against Gligorije Jeftanović and his son Dušan.*⁸⁹ During the First World War in Bosnia and Herzegovina 17 individual and group lawsuits were organized. After the intelligence archives of the Serb officer Kosta Todorović were found in Loznica and in some other places on the occasion of the entrance of the army into Serbia in August of 1914, the authorities began arresting all those whose names were found on the lists of the confidants. The greatest high treason trial was held in Banja Luka against 156 Serbs, who were public, cultural and political workers from the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It lasted from 3 November 1915 to 22 April 1916. According to the statistical data, 19 clergymen, 14 teachers, 5 professors, 2 doctors, 8 state officials, 32 merchants, 26 peasants and 12 students were brought to trial. The key role for the decision of the court was attributed to the specialist report of the intelligence expert, Georg Sertić, intelligence officer of the Command of the 15th Corps. In the conclusion of his report he stated that in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1911 to 1914, and also during the first year of the war, an expansive, well organized and functional spy network was created, whose leadership was in the hands of the Serb intelligence officers and the "regional inspector" in Loznica, Captain, and later Major Kosta Todorović. The intelligence service was conceived for the times of peace and war. The damaging consequences of these high treason activities for the operations of the k. u. k. army had become

⁸⁸ Bericht über Verwaltung 1914-16, 146-147.

⁸⁹ Komandierende General in BHD, Hochverrat und Spionage-processe in BH, 1917, 3. Manuscript in the Library of ABH.

evident in the first year of the war. The expansive intelligence gathering activities were supported, and furthermore even carried out by the People's defence and other Serb organizations. For the accused in the trial the last point of the report was of crucial significance. "Considering that and the circumstances, that the intelligence confidants were engaged in peace-time specially for the case of war and that the intelligence service organized by Todorović during the times of outstanding military measures in 1912 and 1913, and that it functioned during this war against Serbia, Sertić concluded that the confidants who were organized by Todorović, if they had not been interned immediately in the beginning of the war, were taken as hostages or invited into the army so that they could perform the same tasks in war-time."⁹⁰ By the court verdict which was reached on 22 April 1916, 16 persons were condemned to death by hanging, and other to prison sentences lasting from 3 to 20 years. With the interventions from the outside, the death penalties were reduced to life imprisonment.⁹¹ Beside that, the convicts were ordered to pay 14.644.769 crones to the budget of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a compensation for the expenses incurred for the domestic refugees from border counties and as a compensation for the upkeep of the poor family members of mobilized soldiers.⁹²

In the First World War Bosnia and Herzegovina gave many fighting units whose military value became almost legendary on all battlefronts. On the fronts of Austria, Isonzo, Tyrol, in Russia, Serbia, Montenegro and Albania, they were always among the first ones, the bravest of the brave, representing an example of the ideal soldier. After the mobilization of 1914, the military conscripts from Bosnia and Herzegovina were arranged into the formation of the 4th BH (Bosnian-Herzegovinian) regiment and one BH hunting battalion. In November of 1914 the command of the Balkan military forces used the surplus of individuals who were mobilized in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to form fort infantry battalions No. 1 and 2. In March of 1915 the mobilized conscripts were used to create fort infantry battalions Nos. 3-7, whereas in March of 1916 two more formed (Nos. 8 and 9).⁹³ In August of 1915 on the South-Western front two reserve BH regiments were used to create BH hunting battalions Nos. 2 and 3, with four war units and one firearms department with two guns. In each unit 33% of

⁹⁰ Haselsteiner 1987, 151-152.

⁹¹ Kapidžić 1959, 17.

⁹² Slijepčević 1929, 239.

⁹³ Franek 1933, 22.

absolutely reliable Orthodox Christians were to be deployed, and up to 67% of soldiers of other confessions. Each of the hunting battalions were to be given by the k. u. k. Ministry of war a number of 1.100 repetition rifles. B-H hunting battalions 2 and 3, as well as the 5th battalion of the 1st-4th BH regiments, were supposed to receive an additional war unit per month. In February of 1916 another five BH hunting battalions were formed. The BH battalion No. 4 was created from the fort infantry battalion No. 4, and hunting battalions No. 5, 6, 7 and 8 were formed from the 5th battalion of BH infantry regiments No. 1, 2, 3, and 4.⁹⁴ The High military command of the Austro-Hungarian army immediately undertook preventive measures with the BH units. Each BH regiment could form only two war battalions made up of reliable persons, whereby the battalions were usually made up from an average of 26% Catholics, 41% Orthodox Christians and 32% Muslims, which also matched the confessional structure of the population. Beside that, the High military command ordered that 4 reserve BH battalions be formed, 1st, 2nd and 4th in Budapest and the 3rd in Vienna. From the remaining conscripts unarmed working units were to be formed.⁹⁵

In the first war year the BH units were arranged in various divisions, fighting on the Balkan front, engaging in battle against the Serb forces on the territory of Serbia and Eastern Bosnia, as well as on the Eastern front (on the battlefields of Galicia, Poland and the Carpathians). In the military operations on the Balkan front the 3rd battalion of BH regiments was involved and it was within the 48th infantry division. In the fight near the beech for the hill 552 on 25 November, an esteemed role was played by the commander of the artillery division of the 3rd battalion, 2nd BH regiment, first lieutenant Gojkomir Glogovac, who was awarded the Maria-Theresa medal and a nobility rank – he was proclaimed as the first Bosnian knight with the title of baron.⁹⁶ The 3rd BH regiment in Galicia was involved in battles near Lemberg from 9 to 14 September 1914. In the woods east of Szezerzec the regiment incurred great losses, and then with all other units retreated into the Carpathians. During the retreat, the units caught

⁹⁴ ABiH, ZMF, 1916, No, 108/ Präs. BH. *Aufstellung der bosnisch-herzegowinischen Feldjäger baone Nr 4 bis 8, k. u. k. Ministry of war to the Common ministry of finances, Vienna, 31 January 1916.*

⁹⁵ Ö. St. A., KA-W, KM, AOK, Op. No. 13.784, k. u. k. Ministry of war to the Common ministry of finances, Vienna, 5 August 1915.

⁹⁶ Gandini 1968, 29; Schahinger 1996, 55-57; "Kapetan Gojkomir baron Glogovac, prvi bosanski vitez ordena Marije Terezije" *Sarajevski list* 229, 19. 9. 1917, 1.

cholera and in a matter of days more than a quarter of the soldiers died.⁹⁷ The 3rd BH regiment went through the most difficult times of war on 21 October 1914. That day the regiment received the order to attack the hill 688 on the side towards the east and the slope on the west towards the road Turku-Samobor. After the battle it was recorded that in the 4th battalion the 13th unit had only 24 soldiers, 14th unit 4, 15th unit 30, and the 16th unit only 15 soldiers.⁹⁸ In the second and third war year the BH units were arranged and engaged on the Balkan, Eastern and South-Western front. In the 48th infantry division, from a total number of 19 ½ battalions, 8 ¼ came from the BH contingent. After the 5th battalion of the 3rd BH regiment took Solar and penetrated the Montenegrin positions on 9 January, the outcome of the battle for Cetinje was settled, and Montenegro capitulated on 13 January 1916.⁹⁹ On the Eastern front during 1916 the BH units fought with varying degrees of success, suffering great losses in the great Russian summer offensive. In the battles on the Italian fronts, the BH units stood out on account of their war efforts. The 2nd BH regiment took the well-fortified hill of Monte Melleta on 8 June 1916.¹⁰⁰

While on both sides the military efforts remained futile, the morale in the background weakened more and more. With greater impatience the public sought an answer to the question how long would the troubles last, placing themselves on the side of those who advised that the useless killing had to be stopped as soon as possible. Due to the difficulties in supplying of the Central powers, the restlessness of population in the background grew. The death of

⁹⁷ Blašković 1939, 119-122.

⁹⁸ Blašković 1939, 133.

⁹⁹ Ö. St. A., KA-W, Nachlass Otto Wiesinger, No. 13. Der Kampf um das Lovćen 1914.-16 1944, 30-43.

¹⁰⁰ Ö. St. A., KA-W, NFA Gefechts-Berichte, Bh IR 2, *Gefechtsbericht über die Erstürmung des Mte. Melle-ta am 7/6 1916*, 85; Schachinger 1996, 93; Gandini 1982, 41-42. The battle of Monte Melleta – day of special sacrifice became the traditional remembrance day for the 2nd BH regiment. The anniversary is marked every year thus surpassing the significance of a historic event. The only exception was made during the reign of national-socialists in Austria from 1938 to 1945. After the Second World War, the surviving members of the 2nd BH regiment continued the tradition of making the battle for Monte Melleta. This anniversary is marked every year in the Garrison church in Graz, on the first Friday in June which becomes the centre of gathering for Bosnians and Herzegovinians from all around the World. On this day, the perished and killed soldiers of the 2nd BH regiment are honoured and the Friday prayer is held. This traditional meeting is organized by the Austrian Society for Bosnian-Herzegovinian relations of the successors of the tradition of the 2nd BH regiment, the commanding battalion one with the Economy chamber of Styria, with the basic principles to connect people, spread tolerance among races and religions and to search for the things that connect them and contribute to maintenance of peace. Šehić 1999, 102.

Franz Joseph on 22 November 1916 opened a new epoch in the political history of the Monarchy. The war would, nevertheless, last for another two full years. The change on the throne was met with indifference and exhaustion. The population in the Monarchy had other worries. The war euphoria had already passed and all the attention was focused to the everyday fight for survival.¹⁰¹ The heir to Franz Joseph's throne, Charles, had a programme but not enough energy to implement it completely. As soon as he came to power he ended the regime of pressure which stifled the public life. Even though the requests of the national minorities had not yet been presented, the Emperor Charles felt the danger that they carried. The economic difficulties worsened, and Hungary, which could have offered help, chose to keep the existing supplies for itself. The solidarity between the two parts of the Monarchy did not exist any more. Charles was also unsuccessful in attempting to finish the negotiations with Great Britain and France, so the war continued with even more gloomy perspectives.¹⁰² After general Sarkotić informed the k. u. k. Ministry of war in mid April 1917 that in the regions of Bileća, Trebinje and Rogatica public unrest was recorded, and as a precaution the High military command was ordered to move one battalion to that area. On the request of the High military command an investigation was carried out and it was established that the tense situation had diminished and that it was caused by the resonances of the Revolution in Russia, entering of the USA into the war, and thus a hope was born among the Orthodox Christians since they had difficulties in obtaining supplies.¹⁰³

The arid and fruitless year of 1916 had significant consequences on the events in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the following year. It was accompanied by hunger, especially among the population in urban areas, in passive regions and in villages. Thus there were recorded instances of people, and particularly children and the elderly, dying of hunger.¹⁰⁴ In the spring of 1917 the reports of the regional representatives and the Police direction to the Provincial government in Sarajevo spoke about the difficult situation in the land due to the bad nutrition of the population. The governmental reports for March and April of 1917 portrayed a defeating picture. Depression and war exhaustion appeared

¹⁰¹ Wagner 1995, 185.

¹⁰² Renouvin 1965, 403.

¹⁰³ ABiH, ZMF, 1917, No. 815/ Präs. BH. Gärung unter der Bevölkerung der Bezirke Bileća, Trebinje und Rogatica. K. u. k. Ministry of war to the Common ministry of finances, Vienna, 25 May 1917.

¹⁰⁴ ABiH, ZMF, 1917, No. 440 / Präs. BH; Kapidžić 1959, 20.

as direct consequences of this situation.¹⁰⁵ During 1917 the condition in the nourishment of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian population worsened to such an extent that the very existence had been completely threatened. Due to the high snowfall, the delivery of food supplies, which were already short at the time, became even more challenging. General Sarkotić considered that the situation was very serious. On his emergent appeal for the delivery of food supplies, the Hungarian minister of economy answered with excuses citing transport difficulties as justification. By the end of February 1917 the gendarmerie reported about more death cases caused by famine. Due to malnutrition the population suffered general weakness and depression.¹⁰⁶ This situation had a negative effect on the discipline and public morale, and more cases were recorded of war profiteering. During May the number of death cases due to malnutrition had increased. The repeated drought had a bad impact on the summer harvest and the situation kept worsening. The population only partially undertook measures of self-help, and those were mostly Orthodox Christians. The Muslims and Catholics fell into apathy, expecting the Provincial government to undertake measures for providing help. In order to ensure the nutrition of the population, the Provincial government of Bosnia and Herzegovina resorted to various measures of which some included irrespective requisitions, which caused bitterness among one part of the population. The low prices for the seized goods brought great losses to producers. General Sarkotić attempted to organize the distribution of supplies better in the interior of the land, trying to avoid austerity. The rationing of goods was small and kept decreasing with time. The small delivery from Hungary, four to six wagons daily, ended up almost completely in Herzegovina where the situation had become critical. The daily need for food amounted to 25 wagons. However, all the interventions of General Sarkotić remained unsuccessful. Eventually, on 4 December 1917 the Provincial government could count on help from the Military command amounting to 90 wagons of flour, with a delivery of three wagons per day.¹⁰⁷ The economic difficulties had significant consequences on the political life in the country. During 1917 livelier political movements in the Monarchy arrived, which had an effect on the activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The long duration of the war, the exhaustion of all the layers of population and the dangers of revolutionary activities under

¹⁰⁵ ABH, ZMF, 1917, No. 573/ Präs. BH.

¹⁰⁶ Klein 1964, 170.

¹⁰⁷ Klein 1964, 172.

the influence from Russia, forced the political circles of the Monarchy to appeasement, so in certain states the parliaments were revived. In May of 1917 the parliament in Vienna was summoned, and somewhat later the Croatian parliament as well. The change on the throne made it somewhat easier, and this was also reflected on the political movements in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The resolution of the Yugoslav club in the Vienna parliament greatly contributed to the revival of political life. It was passed on 30 May 1917 and it concerned the unification of Yugoslav lands of the Monarchy under the sceptre of the Habsburgs. The May declaration posed the question of the unification of the South-Slavic lands, which was in contradiction with official standpoints of the Austrian and Hungarian politicians.¹⁰⁸ The ideas contained in the May Declaration were considered as unsatisfactory by the Serb political circles, since they anticipated the creation of a state on the Habsburg South. However, the development of the political situation in the World, as well as the relations between the political groups in emigration were unfavourable for the political line of Nikola Pašić and the radical party in Serbia, because of the fall of imperialism in Russia and the breakdown of the Russian front, the main support of their foreign policy was lost. This meant that they were forced to compromise. On the meeting of Serb political parties and members of the Yugoslav committee on Corfu an agreement was reached about the future arrangement of the country. The Corfu declaration from 20 July 1917, defined that the future state would be organized as a unitarist, parliamentary monarchy with the name the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The principle of civil and religious equality, along with certain self-administration was emphasized.¹⁰⁹

Socially and politically, the soldier came more and more under the influence of events in the background. On one side, the images of distress of civilians, women standing in long queues for supplies, bread, and on other side the image of those who were not hit by war circumstances and who earned really well from it.¹¹⁰ Because of that, a great number of desertions of soldiers at the front were recorded and against them certain legal measures were undertaken. Thus, it was foreseen that for those "who, as military servicemen, flee to the enemy or to foreign authorities that threaten the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy

¹⁰⁸ Kapidžić 1968, 24.

¹⁰⁹ Slipičević 1957, 87-88.

¹¹⁰ Friz 1931, 71-72.

with war or who, during the war or threat of war or during internal turmoil, takes up arms against the Monarchy or against her allies, or who helps spying, or are in any other way available to the opposing army or who commit the crime of high treason, will be obliged for their deed to compensate the caused damage to the provincial budget." To secure the compensation for the provincial budget, personal property and real estate of the accused person could have been taken if based on trustworthy facts the suspicion was confirmed that a crime had been committed. The district court decided on the confiscation on the suggestion of the state attorney at the meeting of three judges and the conclusion was supposed to be published in the Official gazette.¹¹¹

In the beginning of 1918 in Western states and in Italy there was a parole "victory by all means". In the Monarchy people only spoke about "peace by all means". The pacifistic manifestations met an ideal climate in the industrial areas of the Monarchy, where there was winter, famine and disease, and where the administration was powerless in the face of smuggling and corruption.¹¹² The position of the Central powers worsened, and the morale of the people in the background diminished. The expectation of a positive outcome of the war became unrealistic. The consequence was the dissolution of the army, especially where national and social ideas were accepted by the soldiers at the front, which manifested itself through revolts, desertion and the formation of gangs made up from deserters and soldiers who overstayed their allowed leave. In the last war year the number of desertions, and rebellions in the South-Slavic regions significantly increased. The first uprisings and revolts in Bosnia and Herzegovina happened on 10 February 1918 in Mostar, among the soldiers from Dalmatia of the 22nd infantry regiment, and soon in Čapljina and Konjic.¹¹³ The rebellions and the breach of discipline had political, social and military causes. The national aims, strengthened by the propaganda of Entente forces, brought into question the existing legal system in the state. The spreading of Bolshevik ideas by the returnees intensified the bitterness against the state, especially among the soldiers who accepted the Bolshevik propaganda, which was not left without consequences. If the returnee established that back home misery

¹¹¹ The order of the k.u.k Common ministry of finances from 24 October 1917 on the response for the damage caused through treason, approved in a decision from 18 October 1917, *Glasnik zakona i naredbi*, 343-346.

¹¹² Pust 1980, 286

¹¹³ Plaschka et al. 1974, 148-156.

and poverty reigned, or that his family life had been destroyed, his dissatisfaction grew, and this influenced his decision not to return back to the army after his leave, and to desert. Due to this cases of desertion multiplied, and the deserters were met with sympathetic attitudes from the population which aided them and hid them from the authorities.¹¹⁴ Further signs of breach of conduct was the increased number of desertions and exceeding of allowed leave. Accusations of trade with falsified documents were frequently heard of. The documents were sold at a price from 30 to 80 crones. The numerous controls, hired detectives and military patrols were of no help since the patrols often showed solidarity with the deserters. The awards announced for the capture of deserters did not help much because the deserters were protected and hidden by the population. Because of this emergency measures were undertaken through the formation of special control stations. Beside that, soldiers went for leave in an organized fashion in larger transport groups, under the supervision of trustworthy petty officers and under the strict control of papers, other propaganda materials and illegal possession of firearms.¹¹⁵

The diet of population during 1918 became a much more important factor which brought into question the legal system in the country. The delegation of the Council for the nourishment of peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted on 10 March 1918 in Vienna to Emperor Charles a Memorandum with the plea of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian population requesting that the food conditions and circumstances for the cultivation of land and sowing improve as soon as possible. In the Memorandum it was stated that for the fourth year of the war the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina with remarkable patience and dedication bore the heavy brunt of poverty and lived with a smaller diet of bread than any other people in the Monarchy, even though the great drought in the previous year destroyed crops in many parts of the land. Also, it was stated that the Hungarian government helped in these difficult circumstances, but that the help from that year could not, unfortunately, even come close to covering the most modest needs of the people, so that on average only 2 to 3 kilos of food were given per person, and when it is taken into consideration that the population of larger cities and working people had to be supplied with a complete and stronger meal, then the available food for the rest of the population was

¹¹⁴ OULK 1937, 44.

¹¹⁵ OULK 1937, 78.

significantly diminished. Due to the drought the potato yield completely failed, so that the necessity for seeds could not be covered. At the same time, the population in Herzegovina and Krajina, and the Eastern regions of Central Bosnia which were directly hit by war, did not have seeds for barley, oats, corn and millet, requesting that the cattle requisitions cease or be reduced significantly until the cultivation of land was finished, so that the difference in price between the cost of the cattle that the military command paid in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other parts of the Monarchy be settled. Concluding that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina came to the ultimate limits of their endurance and that they began dying from famine in greater numbers, the Council for nutrition requested that flour, corn and potatoes should be given to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the following four months since they suffered the most at that moment, and that necessary amounts of seeds should be acquired in time. This request was presented to the Emperor with the emphasis that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina bore all the difficulties of war with remarkable perseverance, that its soldiers fought on all battlefronts with outstanding courage and that they were still fighting for the defence of the Monarchy.¹¹⁶

In the beginning of March 1918 the county office in Zvornik reported to the regional organs in Tuzla that lately the numbers of desertion cases and unauthorized overstay of allowed leave by military conscripts increased. It was stated that many individuals overstayed their leave without proper authorization for a matter of several months, and that they were again brought to their units only after the gendarmerie undertook certain measures. After the population was made aware on several occasions about the difficult consequences of hiding such persons, the deserters found a different way to escape returning to the front. In the forests on Majeвица they found refuge and hid during the day, and during the night they would receive food from their supporters. In that way, the gendarmerie caught 18 deserters from 13 January to 27 February, apprehending them to the Military command in Tuzla. Even though deserters were sent to quarantine in Doboј, they all soon appeared in their hometowns.¹¹⁷ The regional office in Tuzla reported that certain deserters escaped from the quarantine in Doboј on three or four occasions. Since the quarantine was closed due to the

¹¹⁶ ABiH, Priv. Reg. 90/1918. Memorandum der Deputation des Ernährungsrates aus BH überreicht am 10. mart 1918.

¹¹⁷ ABiH, ZVS, 1918, No. 3.651/ BH Präs. Deserteure, Umtriebe. The county office in Zvornik to the Regional organs in Tuzla, Zvornik, 9 March 1918.

outbreak of epidemic disease, the deserters were sent to Tuzla before being allowed back to their units. One of the reasons for the unauthorized overstay was that the soldier did not receive food for his trip during the leave which lasted for four or more days. According to the information of the High command, during January 360 individuals were sent to their units, and in February 420. The greatest number of deserters was recorded among the Muslims, somewhat less among the Orthodox Christians, and the least amount among the Catholics. From that it can be concluded that this problem was not politically motivated. The breach of law was recorded only in individual circumstances.¹¹⁸ One command of the "Streifskorps" was sent to Bosanski Petrovac and Bosanska Gradiška each. This remained without significant effect as was shown by the number of apprehended deserters. During May 1918 in Bosanski Novi and Dobrljin 392 were imprisoned, in Banja Luka 95 on 25 June, and on the same day in Tuzla 77 deserters, and in Brčko 44. The total number of imprisoned in Brčko until April amounted to over 400 persons. It was even reported that one petty officer in the uniform of a lieutenant took leadership of the rebels.¹¹⁹

The most important difficulty was presented by the linking of deserters and soldiers who overstayed their allowed leave into armed groups, the "green cadre", becoming an important source of unrest and a true threat to the security in the background. The populace, without enough supplies, caught in national and socialist propaganda, was disturbed by the fact that it was constantly persecuted. Apart from this, all those who intended to desert or overstay their allowed leave, or were simply tired of war, knew that they would find a good reception and support among the "green cadre".¹²⁰

The formation of such groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina multiplied. The proof for this was one complaint of the Provincial government of Bosnia and Herzegovina about these groups in North-Western parts of Bosnia, where they committed numerous criminal attacks and thefts of cattle, confronting the gendarmerie with arms. The largest number of attacks was recorded from the territory of Montenegro and Serbia, from where numerous incursions into border areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina were undertaken. Often these were purely

¹¹⁸ ABiH, ZVS, 1918, No. 3.651/ BH Präs. The regional organs of Tuzla to the presidency of the Provincial government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo, 17 March 1918.

¹¹⁹ ABH, ZMF, 1918, Priv. Reg. No. 264.

¹²⁰ Klein 1964, 8.

bandit groups. Also, the committee units became important. Their goals were mostly of political nature. The Provincial government in Bosnia and Herzegovina ordered that the gendarmerie stations should be strengthened and that punishment expeditions should be sent to the affected areas. Soon, the deserters formed gangs which began gaining significance and more and more resembling the "green cadre" in Croatia and Slavonia. The accompanying activity was smuggling of arms and weapons from the army to the background.¹²¹ The formation of gangs from the deserters also had political consequences. The security situation in the background diminished the authority of the government and the army, which in turn had as a consequence the weakening of links with the Monarchy and the creation of the fertile ground for the spreading of national and socialist ideas. In a report directed to the High military command on 24 June 1918, General Sarkotić gave a general impression about mood in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the events that influenced the disturbance of public peace and order. Various combinations linked to the South-Slavic issue and especially the future destiny of the country, as well as the bad supply conditions, influenced the increased dissatisfaction of the population.

During 1917 the greatest number of Bosnian and Herzegovinian units was engaged at the Italian front where they played an important role in the autumn offensive of the Central powers. In the composition of the 50th infantry division, the 1st Bosnian-Herzegovinian regiment moved in the direction of Volarje, where they penetrated the Italian positions in three places, moving deep into the background of their units. Soon they occupied all the important positions held by the Italians. The result of the 12th Isonzo battle was that in four days the front of a 160 km was broken, two Italian armies were destroyed and 60.000 soldiers were captured with 500 guns. The Italian army saved itself by retreating.¹²² After the 4th battalion of the 3rd Bosnian-Herzegovinian regiment made a raid over the bridge across Tagliamento, allowing the penetration of numerous Austro-Hungarian and German divisions, and the conquest of Italian positions all up to Piava.

In the beginning of 1918, war fatigue, poor supplying of the military, and the bad health conditions caused a great number of death cases and illnesses among the soldiers, especially in the reserve units. It was concluded that

¹²¹ ABiH, ZMF, 1918, No. 510 / Präs. BH. General in command in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Dalmatia to the High command, Sarajevo 8 June 1918.

¹²² Ö. St. A., KA-W, Nachlass Otto Wiesinger, No. 11. Der Anteil des bh IR 1 am Siege von Karfreit, 14-15.

sanitary measures should be undertaken emergently. The commission cited the circumstances which should be taken into consideration, and these were that the Bosnian and Herzegovinian population was at the lowest level of undernourishment, and that a large portion of the people suffered from tuberculosis. The general lack of life supplies did not allow the improvement of dietary conditions. The lack of shoes, clothes and underwear, prevented the implementation of the minimal sanitary measures. The aid workers and soldiers who performed guard service were under great strain, and from them the building engineering divisions were created. They were often burdened with heavier tasks than the troops which were at the front. The Bosnian and Herzegovinian populace was especially subject to all kinds of diseases due to the long lasting of war, which was linked with the portrayed situation. A particular problem was the returning fever of which 3 to 4 soldiers died per day, so a request was sent that these units be given the necessary medical staff.¹²³

The supplying of the military on the front worsened every day. From 9 January 1918 the daily portion of salt was decreased to 1 gr, and from 6 March for the formations in the background and development troops one day in the week was without meat, and from 1 August 1918 this was extended to the second day as well. At the same time, the portion of meat was decreased to 100 gr. Not even such diminished portions could be ensured at all times. Often the portion of bread was only 350 gr for the fighting troops, and for the development troops 200 gr, only 71 gr of vegetables, 250 gr of meat, and food for livestock was only 1 kg per day.¹²⁴

Beside the social situation, an important place in the complex of factors which complicated the circumstances in the Monarchy was played by the propaganda activities of the Entente forces. According to the project of its International commission for propaganda, on the Congress of the peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, held in Rome from 8 to 10 April 1918, decisions were reached concerning the spreading of propaganda among the Austro-Hungarian troops. It was supposed to be implemented through proclamations, brochures and images, which would be thrown out of airplanes; by newspapers, revues and brochures which would be published in German, Hungarian, Czech, Polish and Serbo-Croatian language; by the sending of pacifists and defeatists

¹²³ ABiH, ZMF, 1918, No. 187/ Präs BH, 8.3. 1918.

¹²⁴ Ö. St. A., KA-W, Ms, Carnegie Stiftung, 2, 46.

who were able to influence the public; as well as by aiding various committees in Paris and London and the nationalistic agitation in the Habsburg Monarchy. The Yugoslav section of the Committee had to propagate the ethnic and linguistic unity of Yugoslavs, the Corfu declaration and the creation of the Yugoslav state, to write about the high treason trials, about Yugoslav sacrifices in order to satisfy German ambitions, about the crimes committed by the Austro-Hungarian government...¹²⁵ In the Yugoslav vanguard propaganda units, the scouts were armed with carabines and big knives, such as the ones used by the Bosnian-Herzegovinian units for fighting in trenches and caverns. They carried tromblones, in which they placed mines with leaflets; they had megaphones which they used to agitate with words and songs. Instead of printed flyers, they often threw written messages into trenches, especially if they wanted them to be written by Austro-Hungarian officers and soldiers who surrendered. The strongest propaganda means was the fact that Austro-Hungarian soldiers in trenches knew that the soldiers on the Italian side received better food.¹²⁶

During August of 1918, moderate desertions were noticed among the Bosnian and Herzegovinian soldiers, exclusively of Orthodox Christians. The reason for this was dissatisfaction with the situation on the front rather than propaganda of the opponents. First of all, the soldiers were facing real famine. The food that the soldiers got was not sufficient and the meat was often useless for eating. Daily, soldiers received from 300 gr to 500 gr bread, and frequently, for breakfast and supper, only coffee. Officers were well supplied which caused great discontent among soldiers. The lately appointed Hungarian officers who did not speak the language of the soldiers influenced the growth of discontent. Almost two years of forbidden leave contributed to the bad mood among the soldiers. Before each offensive, they had been promised allowed leave, only when they got to the reserve positions and submitted their requests, were they told that their requests were declined with the explanation that the ban on leave was in force. The news from home about the amount of aliment for families which had not been paid regularly or was stopped being paid completely additionally influenced the discontent of soldiers. Tobacco was not delivered regularly and the soldiers neither got new underwear nor aids for washing of the ones they possessed.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Hrabak 1980, 166-167.

¹²⁶ Hrabak 1980, 181.

¹²⁷ Ö. St. A., KA-W, KM, AOK, Op. 111.625. The Police direction to the Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 28 August 1918.

From the statements of Bosnian and Herzegovinian soldiers about the “green cadre”, it can be concluded that the “green cadre” represented an organization of deserters, those who overstayed their allowed leave and who hid in the forests and lived from thefts and robberies. This organization functioned only during the summer months. In autumn they returned to their units to spend the winter in warmth. The groups were made of 10-15 people who spent together one week and then departed. The trade with falsified documents – permit for leave was a generally known issue. One soldier reported that he had heard two others arranging to steal the permits for leave from the comrades who were sleeping at the time.¹²⁸

Based on this summary about the organization of “green cadre”, made up of deserters and those who overstayed the allowed leave, it was suggested to undertake necessary measures and to pay attention to the evidence of leave, to always control people on the stations, to search in detail and conduct raids as well as to authorise the financial guards and gendarmerie to check military documents.¹²⁹ The general situation in the background created opportunities for the outbreak of unrest and circumstances which endangered the public peace and order, and when they spread to front, they significantly influenced discipline in military formations. The Provincial government for Bosnia and Herzegovina passed an Announcement about court, criminal and administrative persecution of those who helped military fugitives and those who overstayed their allowed military leave. Providing help, hiding or not reporting about military fugitives and those who overstayed their leave, as well as any other kind of helping those people was implied in the strictest court and criminal persecution. Apart from these measures, the families of military fugitives and also those who did not report the ones who had committed a punishable deed were deprived of the support. If there was founded suspicion that certain individuals, families or even whole municipalities helped the military fugitives and those who overstayed their allowed leave, hiding them or not reporting them to the authorities were punished with noticeable administrative penalties.¹³⁰ In fear that deserters

¹²⁸ Ö. St. A., KA-W, KM, AOK Op. 108.961, Resümme über die Organisation des “Zeleni Kader” aus Deserteurten und Urlaubsüberschreitern, The commanding General in BHD to the k. u. k. Ministry of war, Sarajevo, 5 July 1918.

¹²⁹ Ö. St. A., KA-W, KM, AOK Op. 108.961, “Zeleni Kader.” The High army command to the k. u. k. Ministry of war, Baden 15 July 1918, transcript.

¹³⁰ ABiH, ZMF, No. 802. Bekämpfung des Deserteurenwesens, Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Publication of the order from 19 May 1918 about the judicial, penal and administrative prosecution.

might connect with population, General Sarkotić introduced court-martial in bordering areas, in counties of Foča, Gacko, Bileća, Trebinje, Nevesinje and Stolac. All weapon certificates were proclaimed invalid and all arms should be submitted to police organs within eight days. Illegal possession of arms was severely punished. Also, threatening public security was harshly punished, the violation of military discipline in units, murder, public violence, destroying of housings and property as well as robbery if the value of the stolen items did not exceed 1,000 crones. The court-martial could have been established because of desertion without asking for a permission of higher organs, on the basis of an independent situation evaluation.¹³¹ Military forces stationed in the country were engaged for the immediate suppression of robbery in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In mid August, the High military command undertook measures to suppress desertion and soldiers were to be acquainted with the consequences for desertion and outstay of allowed leave.¹³² Also, all troop commands were ordered to stop the payment of aliments for families of deserters and to search for a suitable way to suppress help for deserters, chasing the fugitives.¹³³

At the beginning of September 1918, the High command in Sarajevo announced the order which anticipated court and criminal persecutions and denial of help for the families of deserters. A telegram was sent by the Provincial government for Bosnia and Herzegovina to the county offices in Prijedor, Bosanska Dubica, Bosanska Gradiška, Prnjavor and Banja Luka, announcing court-martial in these places. This order implied the death sentence for the act of high treason, killing, arson, robbery, adding outlaws and theft.¹³⁴ In order to improve the control of military officers on their travels and for female workforce on military positions, special passes were introduced. For military officers who travelled, as travel documents served opened warrants with the inscribed final destination and permission to leave.

¹³¹ Ö. St. A., KA-W, KM, AOK, Op. 108.900. Standes-Recht in BH.

¹³² ABiH, ZMF, 1918, No. 802/ Präs. BH. Bekämpfung des Deserteur-unwesens, The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, Sarajevo, 20 September 1918.

¹³³ ABiH, ZMF, 1918, No. 802/ Präs. BH. Deserteure und Urlaubüberschreiter, Bedrohung der öffentlichen und der Sicherheit des durch ihr Unwesen.

¹³⁴ ABiH, ZMF, 1918, No. 802/ Präs. BH. Transcription of the telegram issued by the Provincial government for Bosnia and Herzegovina from 8 September 1918 to the county offices in Prijedor, Bosanska Dubica, Bosanska Gradiška, Prnjavor, county court in Banja Luka and county organs in Banja Luka, Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, 8 September 1918.

Tickets had to be clipped whereby the travel warrant should be shown on the request of military and civil controls. Every unauthorised change in the text of the travel document was strictly prohibited and every sale or giving it as a gift was punished and apprehension to the court-martial. Along with the permission for leave and the travel warrant the female workforce at the army also had to show their identification card with a photograph.¹³⁵ During 1918 the k. u. k Ministry of war issued several instructions for the functioning of the official control for the travelling of military officers and the directives for watch patrols. The aim of these small departments was to prevent acts of sabotage, agitation and to capture and conduct deserters and war prisoners, to control travel documents of military officers and especially permissions for leave. These units were supposed to ensure order on the railway and postal stations, as well as in the trains, especially during the return of war prisoners from the Eastern front. The rules of the military service, way of conduct in cases of all felonies towards the offenders, were determined in the instructions, defining the command and organizational functioning of these patrols. The rights and obligations of the members of these units were determined, along with their right to use fire-arms, the stations of the control organs, the way of controlling the valid travel documents, as well as the measures of their personal defence. Measures of cooperation with military and civil organs were also determined, the conduct in case of entering houses and shops of citizens in pursuit of felons. Also, the rules established the way of conduct in the internal service of these organs, the activities of command of road control in informing, apprehending and punishing of those who were arrested. In the end, the material rights of the patrol members were also defined. They received daily a ration of bread and tobacco, as well as a salary of 6 crones for the officers and aspiring officers, 5 for petty officers and 3 for soldiers. On their travels, the officers were accompanied by their batmen. Particular attention was to be paid to cases of agitation of socialist or revolutionary ideas among the populace. For the detained deserters rewards were handed out.¹³⁶ The traveling supervision units had the same range of activities

¹³⁵ ABiH, ZVS, 1918, No. 12.791. Belehrung für reisende Militär-(Landwehr-, Landsturm-) Personen und weibliche Hilfskräfte bei militärischen Stellen; Behandlung von mil. Ausweispapieren, The Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Common ministry of finances, Sarajevo, 15 October 1918.

¹³⁶ ABiH, ZVS, 1918, No. 12.968. Instruktion für den ambulanten Reisekontrolldienst in Österreich durch Militärpersonen, 1-19; Hrabak 1980, 73.

but not the supervision over the traveling control patrols. This patrols was made up of one officer and six people of which one was the clerk who noted the minutes. Their rules of service were stricter than of the ordinary road patrols.¹³⁷ Particular rules were made for transport. The signs and consignment sheets for the commanders of transport and competent dispatchers in the stations were also established. The orders about the apprehended deserters were elaborated in detail.¹³⁸ The High command in Sarajevo suggested to the Army high command on 4 September 1918 to abolish the court-martial for offences that do not surpass 1.000 crores, and only for Sarajevo and Mostar, since in other parts of the Monarchy no death sentences were proclaimed for petty thefts, which was accepted by the k. u. k. Ministry of war in Vienna on 2 October 1918.¹³⁹ During September 1918, gendarmerie in Bosnia and Herzegovina caught 619 deserters, 2.540 military servicemen who outstayed their allowed leave, and 524 runaway war prisoners, whereas the control organs detained 2.367 fugitives and 4.757 soldiers who outstayed their allowed leave. In order to prevent the support for the deserters coming from their families, the authorities imposed obligations in the submitting of cattle and food to those households which contained soldiers who outstayed their allowed leave. The lack of food and the dangers of famine within their families proved to be the most effective measures, especially in Herzegovina so that in Ljubuški a total of 149 fugitives voluntarily reported to the regional offices.¹⁴⁰ By mid-October of 1918 discipline measures in Bosnia and Herzegovina had waned significantly. General Sarkotić feared the "green cadre" in North-Western Bosnia, so his headquarters was regrouped in the military region of Sarajevo, proclaiming war zones in various areas, including the county of Banja Luka with the district of Derventa, county Tuzla, districts Žepče and Zenica from the Travnik county, county Sarajevo without the county Fojnica, and the whole county of Mostar without the district of Ljubuški. Within these war zones stricter regulations regarding traffic were in place and passports were obligatory. The k. u. k. Ministry of war paid particular attention to the "green cadre" in Bosnia and Herzegovina, fearing that they might link with the neighbouring areas in Slavonia and Dalmatia. After the inspection, a special

¹³⁷ Ö. St. A., KA-W, MKSM, 1918, 78-1/3, Instruktion für fahrende Überwachpatrouillen.

¹³⁸ Ö. St. A., KA-W, MK SM, 78-1/3 Merkblatt für Transporte abfertigende Stellen und Transport-Kommandanten, 1-20.

¹³⁹ Ekmečić 1989, 798.

¹⁴⁰ Hrabak 1982, 215.

officer of the High military command confirmed Sarkotić's opinion that there were no connections between the various groups and that the main motive for desertion was more social than political in its nature. The attacks were mostly attacked against the wealthy individuals, while they did not undertake any kind of action or sabotage towards the organs of government.¹⁴¹

After the June offensive in the Venetian valley, the political and economic situation in the background reflected on the army. July and August of 1918 were months of famine at the front. Units had not seen a piece of meat or received an ounce of fat for days. After the harvest the situation had improved to an extent, since there was at least enough bread at that time. Nevertheless, it was often the case that complete units in the first lines desert with their equipment, hoping to receive an ounce of food more from their adversaries. In the trenches of 82nd infantry regiment one morning a deserter left a written note: "Until now none of us recoiled from the enemy, but now we cannot endure it anymore because of famine..."¹⁴² The situation was even worse regarding clothing. Sleeveless shirts were a usual garment for soldiers. Sick from malaria they had to stand almost naked in the wind, waiting for their washed clothes to dry. Uniform and shoes were made from poor materials and crumbled as if they had been made from paper. One officer of the general headquarters found a unit behind the first line dressed only in their underwear, preparing for their service. Uniforms were assigned only to those who were at the front line. Even the officers who went for leave used to loan their uniforms. The undernourished populace was exposed to diseases. In the lower Piava and in Albania, the malaria decimated the units, which were later hit by Spanish flu. Troops of 100 soldiers were the exception, while they were usually only half the size. It can only be presumed with what kind of bitterness did the soldiers, who were sent to leave from that hell, view the nouveau riche – war profiteers. This kind of body was very suspect to psychological activities. The enemy continued his propaganda which caught extra bodies in its net every day.¹⁴³

The supplying of the army had an important effect on the discipline. The soldiers lost the motive of fighting for the Monarchy that treated them in such a way. First of all, the petty and junior officers began renouncing their oath.

¹⁴¹ Hrabak 1982, 216.

¹⁴² Horstenau (O. J.), 332.

¹⁴³ Horstenau (O. J.), 574.

One could not expect discipline from a hungry soldier. When the number of desertions increased, pure military formations were engaged, the so-called *Asistenz-truppen* (troops, battalions), for the suppression of unrest in the background. Felons in military units were punished by their own police departments.¹⁴⁴

During 1918 revolts and desertions became an important factor of the internal stability of the Monarchy. The military units had the task to support the organs of public security and prevent turmoil. Appropriate measures were undertaken which were grounded in the Penal military law: "Whosoever opposes his superior with arms or acts violently towards a person in service, or opposes a received official order... in war and in peace is to be punished with death by shooting. Whosoever in times of war, tacitly or offensively declines to perform an official order, is also punished with death by shooting. A soldier who, with an accomplice, acts against the existing official order, against his superiors and their orders, or if they only agree, are guilty of rebellion. For instigators and leaders of the rebellion the stipulated punishment is death by shooting." In case of rebellion, every participant who did not return after the announcement of the court-martial, was sentenced to death by shooting. If there were more participants, this sentence was to be carried out one every tenth person who was selected by a draw, whereas all the officers and petty officers, who were involved in the conspiracy, were also punished.¹⁴⁵ The emergency state and the court-martial were directed towards the quickest procedure. Basically, the verdict could be death by shooting or release from the accusation. During the execution of a death sentence, the "soul carer", doctor and executioner were supposed to be present.¹⁴⁶

The last great battle of the First World War started on 24 October 1918. The charging units of the Entente forces – the British, French and Italians – carried out the first attack in the region of *Seven provinces* in the hills between Brenta and on the Piava. The Italian plan anticipated that naval columns penetrate to the valley near Feltre and in that way disrupt the connection between Tyrol and Venice. The other, stronger column was supposed to move over the Piava, and penetrate the opposition lines near Vittorio Veneto, perform an encompassing manoeuvre and crush them. The facilitating circumstance for the Entente

¹⁴⁴ Hrabak 1982, 72.

¹⁴⁵ Plaschka et al. 1974, 31.

¹⁴⁶ Plaschka et al. 1974, 31.32.

military forces was the fact that the Austro-Hungarian army faced dissolution. The reserve units refused to go to the front line, and when after the political circumstances in Hungary Emperor Charles consented to detaching the Hungarian armed forces, their units were the first to begin abandoning the sinking ship. In the last offensive, the Entente forces numbered 51 Italian divisions, 5 British, 2 French and a Czech and American regiment. The main attack strength was made up of 22 divisions of the first, and 19 divisions of the second line (with 4 cavalry units), and 4.500 guns of all calibres.¹⁴⁷ On the opposing side, on the Western and Southern sector of the Tyrolian front was the 10th army under the command of General Krobatin. On the sector of the *Seven provinces* was the 11th army of General Scheuchenstule. The group of General Borojević held the mountain area between Brenta and Piava, the 6th army of Schönburg-Hartensten the areas on Isonzo, whereas the group of General Wurm held the region of Piava to its estuary. The Habsburg army had 57,5 divisions with 300.000 soldiers, and together with the background units it numbered around 1.500.000 individuals. The artillery was weaker than the one of the Entente by about 800 to 1.000 weapons. At 04.00 in the morning of 24 October began the artillery, and around 7.00 the infantry attack of the Entente. Even though in reality the Monarchy did not exist any more, the units of all nations offered strong resistance until the last day, not because of loyalty to the Monarchy but because the units in the front line had no other choice, resisting more due to the instinct of self-defence. At the same time, the units in the background followed the instinct of keeping alive, refusing to die in vain during the last hours of the war. Although Emperor Charles sent a proclamation to the soldiers before the battle, announcing immediate peace and return home, pleading with them to keep their discipline, this appeal never reached the soldiers in the first battle lines.¹⁴⁸ Two days before the great battle, the brigade of the Croatian home guard division refused to exchange the people of the remaining two brigades on the front line. A few hours later in the group at Bellun the 4th BH regiment deserted with the explanation that "in his manifest to the peoples of the Monarchy the Emperor forgot their homeland and thus they had no reason to continue fighting". Similar things occurred at other fronts as well. West from Brenta three Hungarian regiments revolted and refused to march towards the positions near Asiago. Since the news spread that the Emperor consented that

¹⁴⁷ Horvat 1967, 567.

¹⁴⁸ Horvat 1967, 568-569.

the Hungarian troops can return home, it was impossible to keep the soldiers in their positions. From the 24 to 27 October the decision was reached. Parts of the British 7th division suppressed the frontal forces of the Habsburg guards under the hill Montella on the Piava on 24 October, and two days later they performed a charge. The British forces of the 10th army and the French troops of the 12th army, and between them the Italians of the 8th army, defeated during the night the lines on the Piava. Until noon of 27 October the British penetrated the front which was 12 km in length, and moved 4 km deep into the defence system. This concluded the last operation on the Italian front. In the evening of 28 October, the forces of the Entente took firmly the area on the region on the left side of Piava. One last final attempt was made to force the most loyal Habsburg forces, the Tyrolian Hungers and the Imperial riflers, into counterattack. When they met the *Honvéd* units which were returning to their homelands and realized that they were supposed to bleed even further, fighting for a lost cause, they decided that the war was finished for them as well. They evaluated the situation much better than the Army high command. In the morning of 28 October the strongest artillery attack of the Entente forces began and it had fatal consequences. The men of the elite 31st infantry division began waving white flags, which spread to the other parts of the front. The French bypassed the positions of the 3rd BH regiment and attacked them from behind. In the hopeless situation they were forced to surrender. Only a small number of soldiers managed to escape, while a part of the men were killed by machinegun fire when they were trying to flee the battlefield.¹⁴⁹ The greater part of the regiment was taken into captivity. In the concentration camp in Vicenza they were visited by the Serb military attaché, the general headquarter major Nikola Hristić, expressing his wish to see these brave soldiers. As an active officer removed from politics he proudly stated that these brave Bosnians were future Yugoslavs.¹⁵⁰

The long duration of the war and the troubles that the soldier endured at the front, caused that desertion appeared even in those units which until that time performed all their tasks under the toughest conditions without objection. War fatigue and desire to return home were coupled with worry about the families of the soldiers and their uncertain future. Letters from the homeland informed the

¹⁴⁹ Ö. St. A., KA-W, NFA, Gefechts-Berichte, Pero Blašković, Schlus-Kämpfe von Piave im Oktober 1918, Wien 1936, 143-145.

¹⁵⁰ Ö. St. A., KA-W, NFA, Gefechts-Berichte, Pero Blašković, Schlus-Kämpfe von Piave im Oktober 1918, Wien 1936, 148.

soldiers on the front about the unbearable sufferings at home that their families had to endure.¹⁵¹ The Bosnian and Herzegovinian units were no exception. At the end of October 1918 there was a mass desertion of soldiers from the 4th BH regiment. After the regiment assembled on 1 November in Cortina d'Ampezzo, the populace was placed into waggons and sent on 2 November through Villach to Ljubljana, where they were placed at the disposal of the People's council of the State of the Serbs, Croats and the Slovenes. The regiment which counted 2.700 armed and equipped soldiers, three complete machinegun troops with 36 hand machineguns and 400 horses, was disarmed and the soldiers were sent to their homeland.¹⁵² As for the arms, the evaluation of the military formation or the losses in the war, statistics play an important role. From a total of 1.783,453 inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina, recorded in the 1910 census, during the war for military needs a number of 291.498 military conscripts were engaged, or 16,34% of the population. A total of 660.771 individuals were trained, while the percentage of military capable persons amounted to 40, 6%.¹⁵³

The attitude towards the Monarchy can in a certain sense be evaluated according to the losses of individual nations. In the German lands of Austria 29 soldiers were killed per 1.000 inhabitants, in the Hungarian areas or in areas with a mixed Hungarian and German population, 28 per 1.000. The war mortality was also influenced by imprisonment, work units, epidemics, etc. According to the official data of the k. u. k. Ministry of war, the losses of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian units until the end of October 1918 totalled: 10.701 killed, 51.815 wounded, 18.088 imprisoned and 21.227 missing.¹⁵⁴ However, this data differs significantly from the real image. From the mobilized Bosnian and Herzegovinian military conscripts, 38.000 lost their lives during the war. The average losses for the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina amounted to 12 % of the total number of militarily engaged persons, but some regions suffered more than others (Banja Luka, Srebrenica, Bileća, Foča, Mostar, Bugojno, Prozor...). The greatest losses in Bosnia and Herzegovina were suffered by the city of Banja Luka, which from the 1.173 persons engaged in conflict lost 534, or 45,6 %.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ ÖULK 1938, 565-573

¹⁵² Schachinger 1996, 229-238.

¹⁵³ Ö. St. A., KA-W, KM, AOK, Op. 108.916, k. u. k. Ministry of war to the Common ministry of finances, Vienna, 6 July 1918.

¹⁵⁴ Ö. St. A., KA-W, KM, AOK, Qu.M. Abt, Statistisches Bureau, Taf. VII. Verluste.

¹⁵⁵ Winkler 1921, 33.

The awarding of decorations for war achievements had a great optimistic effect on units and individuals, and was also connected to certain privileges. Soldiers were awarded medals for bravery, while the officers were decorated with medals with stripes. Medals for bravery were made out of metal, mostly bronze, rarely from silver or gold, or they were silvered or gilded.¹⁵⁶ During the First World War, the BH infantry regiments and BH hunting battalions received a total of 35.637 medals for bravery. The members of the infantry regiments were awarded 27.245 medals, and infantry hunting battalions 8.392. The soldiers from Bosnia and Herzegovina were awarded 146 gold medals for bravery, of which 57 (39%) were awarded to the soldiers of the 2nd BH infantry regiment.¹⁵⁷ The information about the decorations of the soldiers from the BH regiments formed during the war were not recorded particularly, but were inscribed into the logbook about the decorations for four BH regiments.¹⁵⁸ The decoration was accompanied by a certain financial reward which was paid monthly. The bearer of the gold medal for bravery in 1918 received 197 crores and 93 hellers, the bearer of the great silver medal of the 1st class received 3 crores and 38 hellers, the bearer of the small silver medal 2 crores and 88 hellers, while the recipient of the bronze medal received 80 hellers.¹⁵⁹

Of the BH units, the greatest number of decorations was given to the soldiers of the 1st BH regiment (7.768) and the 2nd BH regiment (6.880). Of the elite units of the k. u. k. army, Tyrolian imperial hunting regiments, the first received 7.081 medals for bravery; the second regiment 8.051, the third 5.187, and the fourth regiment 6.279 medals. From the Bosnian-Herzegovinian hunting battalions, the greatest number of medals for bravery was awarded to the 6th hunting battalion, 2.637, and then to the 3rd BH hunting battalion, 1.844.¹⁶⁰ The number of awarded medals for bravery to the Bosnian-Herzegovinian units is the best indicator of their services skills, answering the question why they were considered as the elite units of the Austro-Hungarian army.

During the First World War in Bosnia and Herzegovina a number of 291,498 military conscripts were mobilized, of which 51.815 were registered as wounded

¹⁵⁶ *Sarajevski list* 6, 6. 1. 1915, 1.

¹⁵⁷ Ö. St. A., KA-W, KM, AOK, Auszeichnungsgruppe. Statistik über Verleihung von Tapferkeitsmedaillen an die Heeresinfanterie bis August 1918, 443.

¹⁵⁸ Schachinger 1996, 325-326.

¹⁵⁹ Ö. St. A., KA-W, Neue Feld Acten, Truppenkörper, Kart. 750.

¹⁶⁰ Ö. St. A., KA-W, Neue Feld Acten, Truppenkörper, Kart. 262.

or sick, i.e. in average one in six.¹⁶¹ Of this number, 12.726 remained disabled, or in average one in four. From the total number of Bosnian-Herzegovinian war invalids, 5.371 were Orthodox Christians (42,20%), 4.413 Muslims (34,68%), 2.586 Catholics (20,32%), 32 Jews (0,25%) and 356 others (2,55%), which closely mirrored the confessional structure of the population.¹⁶²

Conclusion

The international disagreements caused deep crises in the relations between the blocs of great powers, leading to the direct military conflict in 1914. From the beginning of August 1914 Bosnia and Herzegovina was a direct area of warfare. The war destruction on the territory of military operations, refugees, evacuations and interning of people, brought about great disorders in the economy of the land and increased requests for contributions to the war effort. After the mobilization in 1914, the Bosnian and Herzegovinian units were sent from their peace garrisons to different fronts. During the war, the soldiers from Bosnia and Herzegovina were arranged into eight Bosnian and Herzegovinian infantry regiments and eight Bosnian and Herzegovinian hunting battalions. They were also engaged within other units of the common army, fighting on the Balkan, Eastern and South-Western front. In January of 1916 the Bosnian and Herzegovinian battalions had an important role in the conquest of Montenegro, while the Bosnian and Herzegovinian units on the Eastern front had varying degrees of success, suffering many losses during the great Russian summer offensive. In the battles on the Italian front, the Bosnian and Herzegovinian units stood out on the account of their war exploits.

During 1918 the position of the Central powers worsened, and the morale of the population in the background decreased. The consequence of this was that the army began breaking up, especially in those areas where national and socialist ideas were accepted, which resulted in revolts, desertions and the creation of groups from the deserters and soldiers who overstayed their allowed leave. The number of desertions as well as revolts on the South-Slavic territory increased substantially. The rebellions and breaking of discipline had their political, social and military causes. The national requests, strengthened by

¹⁶¹ Ö. St. A., KA - W. KM, AOK, Qu. Abt 1918, Beilage VII.

¹⁶² ABiH, ZMF, No. 5.096/ Präs. BH. Broschüre über die Kriegsinvalidenfürsorge, 23-24.

the propaganda of the Entente forces, brought into question the existing legal system in the Monarchy. The general situation in the background created conditions for unrest and activities which threatened the public order and peace. When this situation spread to the front, it also influenced the discipline in the military formations.

The protracted duration of the war and the troubles suffered by soldiers on the front caused that desertion appeared even in those units which until that time performed all their tasks under the toughest conditions without objection. War fatigue and desire to return home were coupled with worry about the families of the soldiers and their uncertain future. Letters from the homeland informed the soldiers on the front about the unbearable sufferings at home that their families had to endure. The Bosnian and Herzegovinian units were no exception.

As for the arms, the evaluation of the military formation or the losses in the war, statistics play an important role. During the First World War in Bosnia and Herzegovina a total number of 291.498 military conscripts were engaged, or 16,34% of the population. Of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian military conscripts, 38.000 persons died in uniform. Average losses for Bosnia and Herzegovina were 12% from the total number of persons engaged in the military. Of the mobilized conscripts from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 51.815 were registered as wounded or diseased, in average one in six, of which 12.726 remained invalids, in average one in four. Of the total number of war invalids, 4.414 (34,68%) were Muslims, 5.371 (42,20%) Orthodox Christians, 2.586 Catholics (20,32%), 32 Jews (0,25%) and 356 others (2,55%), which closely mirrored the confessional structure of the population.

The awarding of decorations for war achievements had a great optimistic effect on units and individuals, and was also connected to certain privileges. During the First World War, the BH infantry regiments and BH hunting battalions received a total of 35.637 medals for bravery, which is the best indicator of their military skills, answering the question why they were considered as the elite units of the Austro-Hungarian army.

After the break up of Austria-Hungary in 1918, Bosnia and Herzegovina entered the new South-Slavic state, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

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Abbreviations

ABiH	Arhiv Bosne i Hercegovine
Ö. St. A.	Österreichische Staats Archiv- Austrian State Archives
K.u.k.	kaiserlich und königlich – Imperial and royal
KM	Kriegsministerium – Ministry of War

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– Common ministry of Finances, präs. BH and general acts (ZMF)

– Kriegs-Archiv Wien (Ö. St. A)

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