

Political Ideas of Young Bosnia: Between Anarchism, Socialism, and Nationalism

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Historiography of Young Bosnia

The First World War is one of the major subjects of 20th century historiography. In his book *July 1914: The Long Debate 1918–1990*, John Langdon claims that as of 1991 more than 25,000 books and articles were written about the First World War.¹ Furthermore, since 1991, historians have shown more and more interest in the Great War.² Shots fired in Sarajevo on 28 June, 1914, connected the name of Young Bosnia with one of the seminal events of European history. It is difficult to find a survey of European history in the 20th century that does not include the name of Gavrilo Princip. News about his assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand spread quickly across all of Europe. In his memoirs, French President Raymond Poincaré reminisces about how news of the assassination promptly seized everyone's attention.³ If we take into account a widely accepted chronological boundary between the 19th and 20th centuries set by Eric Hobsbawm,⁴ we can say that the Sarajevo assassination marked the beginning of the 20th century.

Having all that in mind, it is unexpected, but still true, that not a single historical study focused on the political ideas that drove Gavrilo Princip and his conspirator friends.⁵ That is the first major characteristic of the historiography of Young

¹ J. W. Langdon, *July 1914. The Long Debate 1918–1990*, Oxford 1991, p. 51.

² J. Winter/A. Prost, *The Great War in History. Debates and Controversies—1914 to Present*, Cambridge 2005, pp. 16–17.

³ R. Poincaré, *Au service de la France IV*, Paris 1927, pp. 173–174.

⁴ E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes. The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991*, London 1994.

⁵ Vladimir Dedijer, *The Road to Sarajevo*, New York 1966, still remains the single biggest contribution to this topic. Although Dedijer's work is profound and thorough in its research, his overview on the ideology of Young Bosnia was significantly shaped by his own view on Yugoslavia. South Slav mentality and Yugoslavism for Dedijer was an explanation per se of Young Bosnian revolutionary politics. Dedijer belonged to the group of Yugoslav intellectuals that was convinced that South Slavs are outstanding in their love of freedom. These intellectuals especially emphasized episodes from the history of conflicts between the South Slavs and neighboring empires, the Ottoman's and the Habsburg's. See: A. Djilas, *The Contested Country—Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution 1919–1953*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 168–170, 248. Notwithstanding Dedijer's own pointing to numerous contemporary ideologists who influenced Young Bosnia, he claimed that the idea of the right to kill the tyrant

Bosnia and the Sarajevo assassination. Historiography about 1914 treats the Sarajevo assassination as an episode in a longer story of antagonism and conflict between Austria-Hungary and the Kingdom of Serbia. The assassination is understood mostly as the spark that took European powers into the July crisis and eventually into the Great War. Historians usually try to answer only one question: Did the Serbian government help Young Bosnians or not? With this paper, I will try to take the story of the Sarajevo assassination one step further, with the goal to examine, understand, and interpret the development and ideas of Young Bosnia's ideology. My aim is to understand Young Bosnia within the boundaries of the social, cultural, and political context of their own time. Historians of the Great War usually start their storytelling with the Sarajevo assassination, but, for Young Bosnia, 28 June is the end of a story, when students-protagonists, exposed to specific cultural, political, and intellectual influences, decided to use violence.

The second important characteristic is the fact that Young Bosnia is one of those historical topics that provoke conflicting conclusions. The story of Gavrilo Princip is an ideal type in a Weberian sense of the "terrorist or freedom fighter" dilemma. The case of the Sarajevo assassination raises this question: Were Young Bosnians just pawns or were they free-thinking and acting according to their own ideals?⁶ One month after the assassination, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia and, subsequently, this topic gained an immense amount of political importance.⁷ I will argue that these circumstances marked the next 100

was conceived under the influence of the folk epic, and that it is difficult to connect Young Bosnia with any ideology in their era. V. Dedijer, *Sarajevo 1914*, Sarajevo 1966, p. 393. One of the assassins, Cvetko Popović, decided to write his own memoir only after he concluded that Dedijer, among others, wrongly depicted ideological aspects of Young Bosnia. C. Đ. Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan 1914 - doživljaji i sećanja*, Belgrade 1969, p. 33.

⁶ The existence of radically different views today is obvious if we look only at opinions expressed on the pages of the "London Review of Books." While Mark Mazower maintains that "Princip and his fellow Bosnian students were nobody's pawns," Christopher Clark claims that assassins acted for a "shadowy Belgrade-based ultranationalist network." M. Mazower, "Once There Was a Bridge Named After Him," in: *London Review of Books*, vol. 36 (23 October 2014), pp. 36-37; C. Clark, "The First Calamity," in: *London Review of Books*, vol. 35 (29 August 2013), p. 3.

⁷ The question of interconnection between politics and historical interpretation of Young Bosnia is not a topic of this paper. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that misuse of the facts regarding the assassination started shortly after the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. In the ultimatum sent to the Kingdom of Serbia, the Austrian government claimed that the Serbian government knew about subversive activities organized against the Habsburgs. "Austrian Ultimatum to Serbia," A. Mombauer (ed.), *The Origins of the First World War—Diplomatic and Military Documents*, Manchester 2013. The letter of Hungarian Prime

years of research about Young Bosnia. Historians were mostly working in a judicial manner. This does not mean that they were trying only to establish “facts” that incriminated or vindicated the Young Bosnians. The most significant consequence regarding the political importance of this topic was that the research framework never moved beyond a formalist mindset. Researchers, until now, focused almost exclusively on events that took place in May and in June 1914 and never answered the question about who, actually, these young assassins were, their background, their ideals, what shaped their beliefs. This paper is an attempt to fill this vacant area of knowledge. It is time that researchers of Gavrilo Princip leave the courtroom.

What is Young Bosnia?

The first question that requires an answer is what is Young Bosnia? The transcript of the trial held in September 1914 and Austrian reports sent from Sarajevo to Vienna in June and July of 1914 do not mention the name of Young Bosnia.⁸ I have discovered two texts published before 1914 that were titled “Young Bosnia.” Their authors were close friends of Gavrilo Princip. Borivoje Jevtić wrote in December of 1913: “Young Bosnia will be a generation of lesser value, but it will be a special and necessary stone in the construction of a great

Minister Tisza shows that the Austrian government did everything it could to find evidence against Serbia. *István Tisza, Count Stephen Tisza, prime minister of Hungary. Letters (1914-1916)*, New York 1991, p. 7. The fact that an official Austrian investigation concluded that there is no evidence that the Serbian government knew about the assassination plans did not prevent Austrian diplomats from claiming the opposite. *Diplomatische Aktenstücke Zur Vorgeschichte Des Krieg 1914*, Vienna 1919, p. 52. Senior Austrian diplomat Friedrich von Wiesner was sent to Sarajevo in the beginning of July to collect evidence about connections of the assassins and the Serbian government. In his report to Austrian foreign minister Lepold Berchtold, Wiesner claimed, “There is nothing that can prove or raise suspicion that the Serbian government encouraged the crime or preparation of it. On the contrary, there are reasons to believe that this is completely out of the question.” *Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik. Von der Bosnischen Krise 1908 bis zum Kriegsausbruch 1914 VIII*, Vienna 1930, 10252/53. This episode is also confirmed by Leo Pfeffer, an Austrian judge from Sarajevo, who was in charge of the official inquiry. L. Pfeffer, *Istraga u Sarajevskom atentatu*, Zagreb 1938, pp. 98-99. At the same time, in Serbia, the newspaper “Piedmont” claimed that during the trial Gavrilo Princip said that he had killed the Archduke in order to “restore the Medieval Serbian Empire.” What Princip actually said was significantly different: “I’m Yugoslav and I seek unification of all South Slav in any state form, just to free ourselves from Austria.” According to the stenographic transcript of the trial: V. Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat—izvorne stenografske beleške sa glavne rasprave protiv Gavrila Principa i drugova*, Sarajevo 1954, p. 62; Dedijer, *The Road to Sarajevo*, p. 640.

⁸Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat; Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik. Von der Bosnischen Krise 1908 bis zum Kriegsausbruch 1914 VIII*, Vienna 1930. Nr. 10249, 10250, 10252, 10253.

Yugoslav cultural building.”⁹ The second text was written by Vladimir Gaćinović.¹⁰ Both Jevtić and Gaćinović understood Young Bosnia as a new generation of writers who would bring change to Bosnian society and politics. Young Bosnia never existed as an organized group, with a constitution, hierarchy, or political agenda. Bosnia and Herzegovina were filled with numerous secret student societies, but none had the name Young Bosnia. Gavrilo Princip and Ivo Andrić, for example, were members of the secret Serbo-Croat Progressive Organization based in Sarajevo.¹¹ After the First World War, change occurred and the name of Young Bosnia became connected primarily to the political activities of youth and, consequently, with the Sarajevo assassination. Borivoje Jevtić’s own understanding of what Young Bosnia was changed during the First World War and in 1921 he wrote: “Nationalist youth in Bosnia, better known under the name of Young Bosnia...”¹² In the memory of contemporaries, the political activities of youth have suppressed the literary ones.

Even though Young Bosnia is not the organization that organized the Sarajevo assassination, as is commonly perceived, I will argue that it is an appropriate expression that historians should continue to use, and I will offer a new definition: Young Bosnia is the name given to loosely connected secret student organizations based in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the eve of the First World War. Heterogeneous groups and individuals were amalgamated by a shared resentment of Austria-Hungary, a will to create a state of South Slavs, and similar intellectual role models, which included theorists of nationalism, socialism, democracy, and anarchism. From its ranks emerged Gavrilo Princip, who assassinated Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand on 28 June, 1914, in Sarajevo. Numerous secret students’ societies¹³ were trying to maintain communication through correspondence and by frequent mutual visits. Cvetko Popović, one of the assassins, was visited so many times by his friends from other Bosnian cities, from Dalmatia, and Slovenia that his father ironically joked that his son plans to start a hotel business.¹⁴ One important fact escaped the attention of previous researchers. Different student groups were also homogenized by one particular

⁹ B. Jevtić, “Mlada Bosna,” *Bosanska vila*, 30 December 1913, pp. 337-339.

¹⁰ V. Gaćinović, “Mlada Bosna,” *Spomenica Vladimira Gaćinovića*, Sarajevo 1921, pp. 32-34.

¹¹ D. Gajević, *Jugoslovenstvo između stvarnosti i iluzija. Ideja jugoslovenstva u književnosti početkom XX veka*, Belgrade 1985, p. 194.

¹² B. Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat—sećanja i utisci*, Sarajevo 1921, p. 3.

¹³ Societies were secret because after 1908 any kind of student organization was forbidden by Austrian authorities.

¹⁴ Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan* 1914, p. 28.

political manifesto, and, as one of the few surviving letters of Gavrilo Princip shows, it was a manifesto that he supported.¹⁵ The story of this manifesto illustrates all the difficulties of defining Young Bosnia, not only because it is hard to trace all connections between obscure secret societies that left only a few pieces of evidence of their existence, but also because students from Bosnia and Herzegovina collaborated with their likeminded counterparts in other lands inside Austria-Hungary. This particular pamphlet was written in 1912 in Belgrade by Dimitrije Mitrinović, one of the most prominent young intellectuals from Herzegovina, when he, as a student at Zagreb University, with his Croatian colleagues decided to visit the Kingdom of Serbia. Afterward, the pamphlet was spread across Austria-Hungary thanks to copies made in Dalmatia by Oscar Tartaglia.¹⁶

Sources

Research of secret societies carries the problem of often limited sources. This applies in the case of Young Bosnia. In several letters, it is possible to find evidence that members of Young Bosnia were deliberately destroying their correspondence, so that in case of their arrest Austrian authorities would not find out everything about their activities. An additional problem is that three main conspirators—Gavrilo Princip, Trifko Grabež, and Nedeljko Čabrinović—did not survive the First World War, so they did not have the opportunity to write memoirs or to be interviewed, as was the destiny for those who survived the Great War.

Despite the deficiencies, historians are confronted with significant source material. Many Young Bosnians were writing short stories, poetry, or journalistic reports about art, politics, and literature. I consider their texts published before the assassination to be the most important source for understanding the Young Bosnian generation of student youth. Borivoje Jevtić, Dragoslav Ljubibratić, Dobrosav Jevdjević, Oskar Tartaglia, Ratko Parežanin, Cvetko Popović, and Ivo Kranjčević¹⁷, participants in the Sarajevo assassination or close friends of the

¹⁵ D. Ljubibratić, *Gavrilo Princip*, Gradac, 175-176-177 (2010), p. 141.

¹⁶ P. Palavestra (ed.), *Jovan Skerlić u srpskoj književnosti 1877-1977*, Belgrade 1980, p. 173; Gajević, *Jugoslovenstvo između stvarnosti i iluzija*, pp. 118, 189, 194; M. Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije 1790—1918*, vol. 2, Belgrade 1989, p. 544.

¹⁷ Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat*; I. Kranjčević, *Uspomene jednog učesnika u Sarajevskom atentatu, Sarajevo 1954*; R. Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip u Beogradu*, Belgrade 2013; O. Tartaglia, *Veleizdajnik—moje uspomene iz borbe protiv crno-žutog orla*, Zagreb 1928; D. Ljubibratić, *Gavrilo Princip*, Belgrade 1959; D. Ljubibratić, *Vladimir Gaćinović*, Belgrade

assassins, have all written memoirs. These valuable sources vividly depict the atmosphere and the intellectual and political climate in which Young Bosnian political ideas and beliefs were developed. All of the surviving letters written by Young Bosnians were published by Vojislav Bogićević in 1954.¹⁸ Texts written by Dimitrije Mitrinović, Vladimir Gaćinović, and Pero Slijepčević, arguably the most important intellectuals among Young Bosnians, have all been published separately.¹⁹ Vojislav Bogićević has also published an original and credible transcript of the trial held in September 1914.²⁰ Austrian lawyer Rudolph Sistler, who had defended some of the assassins, and chief investigator Leo Pfeffer have written valuable testimonies.²¹

A worthy source for Princip's personality was written by Dr. Martin Pappenheim. During several visits to Theresienstadt prison, where Princip was jailed, Pappenheim talked with Princip on several occasions. He even asked the then seriously ill Princip to write down answers to a few of his questions. Pappenheim published his notes in 1926.²² Another type of source that is available to researchers today are the so-called *Spomenice* (Memorial books), dedicated to Danilo Ilić and Vladimir Gaćinović. These memorial books were published after the First World War by close friends of the late Ilić and Gaćinović. They are very important because they include texts written for small-circulation journals published and edited by Young Bosnians, some of which are not possible to find today in any library or archive.²³ Meticulous readers will

1961; D. Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici—Vidovdan 1914*, Rome 1953; Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan 1914*.

18 V. Bogićević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna—pisma i prilozii*, Sarajevo 1954.

19 V. Gaćinović, *Ogledi i pisma*, Todor Kruševac (ed.), Sarajevo 1956; P. Slijepčević, *Sabrana dela I–VIII*, Banja Luka, Belgrade 2013; D. Mitrinović, *Sabrana dela I–III*, Sarajevo 1990. Dimitrije Mitrinović's private papers are located in Bradford University, UK.

20 Bogićević has discovered that in the interwar period in Europe several texts of the transcript were published and not a single one was completely credible. Publishers have not resisted the temptation to change the original text. Bogićević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*. For a better understanding of court documents see: C. Verhoeven, Court Files, in: M. Dobson/B. Ziemann (eds.), *Reading Primary Sources. The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth and Twentieth Century History*, London 2009.

21 R. Zisler, *Kako sam Branio Principa i drugove 1914. godine*, Ljubljana 1937; Pfeffer, *Istraga u Sarajevskom*.

22 M. Pappenheim, *Gavrilo Princip's Bekenntnisse. Ein geschichtlicher Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte des Attentates von Sarajevo, Vienna 1926*. On the second page, Pappenheim added: *Zwei Manuskripte Princip's; Aufzeichnungen seines Gefängnispsychiaters Dr. Pappenheim aus Gesprächen von Feber bis Juni 1916 über das Attentat, Princip's Leben und seine politischen und sozialen Anschauungen*. English translation was published in 1927 in *Current History*. Numerous other publications and translations followed.

23 *Spomenica Danila Ilića*, Sarajevo 1922; *Spomenica Vladimira Gaćinovića*, Sarajevo 1921.

notice an absence of archival sources. That Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Archive of Sarajevo, the Archive of Serbia, and especially the Archive of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, hold numerous documents about Young Bosnia. However, everything relevant for research of the political ideas of Young Bosnia has already been published in the above mentioned editions of sources.²⁴

Social History of Young Bosnia

Methodologically, this paper is conceived as a mixture of a history of ideas and intellectual history.²⁵ It is focused on the development of political ideas of Young Bosnia that will be examined and interpreted. Following on the ideas of Quentin Skinner and Dominic LaCapra, I will try to find a proper historical context(s) in which I can interpret historical texts. As Skinner postulates, “We need to make it one of our principal tasks to situate the texts we study within such intellectual contexts as enables us to make sense of what their authors were doing in writing them.”²⁶ In order to have a better understanding of the soil where the ideas of nationalism, anarchism, and political violence enrooted, before we continue with the history of ideas, it is pertinent to devote time to understanding the political and social state of affairs in Bosnia in Herzegovina. I would agree with Samuel Moyn and Darrin McMahon who claimed that “social historians charged—frequently with good reason—that intellectual history had lost itself in flights of idealistic abstraction and underestimated the importance of material factors in shaping the human past.”²⁷

When the Austrian state prosecutor asked Princip why he shot the archduke, Princip replied, “People suffer because they are so poor and because they are

²⁴ Any future research of Gavrilo Princip will be easier thanks to the new thousand page edition of sources about Young Bosnia. M. Ković, *Gavrilo Princip. Dokumenti i sećanja*, Novi Sad 2014.

²⁵ I am following Peter Gordon’s idea about distinctions between the two approaches. P. Gordon, “What is Intellectual History?” Available at: http://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/history/files/what_is_intell_history_pgordon_mar2012.pdf.

²⁶ Q. Skinner, *Visions of Politics—Vol. 1 Regarding Method*, Cambridge 2002, p. 3. See also: D. LaCapra, “Rethinking Intellectual History and Reading Texts,” in: *History and Theory*, vol. 19 (1980), p. 250. Q. Skinner, “Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas,” in: *History and theory*, vol. 8 (1969), pp. 48-49; Q. Skinner, “The rise of, challenge to and prospects for a Collingwoodian approach to the history of political thought,” in: D. Castiglione/I. Hampsher-Monk (eds.), *The History of Political Thought in National Context*, Cambridge 2001, pp. 177, 180, 188.

²⁷ D.M. McMahon/S. Moyn, “Introduction. Interim Intellectual” History, in: D.M. McMahon/S. Moyn (eds.), *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, Oxford 2014, p. 5.

treated as cattle. I am the son of a peasant. I know how people live. That is why I wanted revenge, and I am not sorry.”²⁸ Young Bosnians did not come from wealthy Serb families. Several researchers have noted this. They came from the bottom half of the social ladder.²⁹ One of the assassins wrote in his memoir that if someone wants to understand why the assassination happened, it is necessary to consider not only politics, but also the economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.³⁰

When Austrian troops entered Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878, they occupied territory of the Ottoman Empire, where Ottoman feudal laws were in place. That practically meant that the majority of land was in hands of Muslim landowners, and that Christians, predominantly Orthodox Christians, were serfs. They were obliged to pay taxes not only to the state but also to the landowners. One of the serf families was the Princip family. According to the census from 1910, Orthodox Christians, comprising 43.5% of the population, controlled 6% of land, while Muslims, comprising 32% of the population, controlled 91.1% of the land.³¹ Austrian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina lasted from 1878 to 1918, and for four decades the agrarian question was never high on the political agenda of Austrian governors. The logic and motivation behind the maintenance of this obsolete system were political. In the eyes of the Habsburg government, it was important not to alienate Muslim landlords—a backbone of the new Bosnian nation that Austrians tried to introduce³²—which is what would certainly happen if any kind of agrarian reform was introduced. Since the vicinity of Bosnia and Herzegovina was close to the independent Kingdom of Serbia, Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina were considered to be the least loyal population. This was also a factor in (not) resolving the problematic agrarian question.³³ Possibilities for finding a job in Austrian civil administration were also slim for the local Orthodox population. In the time of the Bosnian crisis, only around a quarter of the positions were filled with natives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, mostly with the loyal Catholic population. This did not go unnoticed and the young

²⁸ Bogićević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 72.

²⁹ M. Kašanin, *Tri književna naraštaja, Letopis matice srpske*, Novi Sad 1929, pp. 161-166; Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije*, p. 527; M. Žanin Čalić, *Istorija Jugoslavije u 20 veku*, Belgrade 2013, p. 73 (Originally published as: M. J. Calic, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens im 20. Jahrhundert*).

³⁰ Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan* 1914, p. 11.

³¹ S. Vervae, *Centar i periferija u Austro-Ugarskoj. Dinamika izgradnje nacionalnih identiteta u Bosni i Hercegovini od 1878 do 1918 na primjeru književnih tekstova*, Zagreb-Sarajevo 2013, pp. 64-65; Žanin Čalić, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, p. 58.

³² See: T. Kraljačić, *Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini 1882–1903*, Sarajevo 1987.

³³ A. Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815–1918*, London 1989, p. 245.

intelligentsia started to believe that there was no chance for improvement under Austrian rule.³⁴

In an already underdeveloped land such as Bosnia, continuation of Ottoman feudal politics created a vicious cycle of poverty for numerous families. The Austrian government had not only continued the Ottoman agrarian policies, it had also, during decades of occupation, increased governmental taxation almost five times.³⁵ Therewith, the population of Bosnia was obliged to pay for maintenance of the entire Austrian administration in Bosnia.³⁶ Several members of Young Bosnia pointed to the serf position of their families as an important factor in the radicalization of youth.³⁷ Borivoje Jevtić has written that members of Young Bosnia, “peasant and serf by origin,” were recruited from “desperate classes.”³⁸ German historian Marie-Janine Calic claims that the serf system was one of the first things the Young Bosnians wanted to destroy.³⁹ I will argue that, similar to Western Europe in this period,⁴⁰ extreme poverty created fertile ground for ideas of political violence. When he contemplated the social background of the assassins, Borivoje Jevtić made an allusion to Dostoyevsky; he claimed that assassins came from the “humiliated and insulted.” He added that “in that kind of atmosphere, Bosnian youth were ready for everything and they did not need to think twice when opportunity arose.”⁴¹ In his text “Young Bosnia,” Jevtić wrote something that appears as a message for future historians of Young Bosnia: “It won’t be futile to criticize our minds and analyze our hearts, when what is inside of us becomes a subject of research, in the context of the soil where we grew up.”⁴²

I will argue that several structural factors were crucial in shaping Young Bosnia. The first one was their social background and the second one was the fact that they represented the first generation of peasant sons who had the opportunity to pursue higher education. Literacy levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina were extremely low. In 1910, 88% of the population was illiterate.⁴³ Even though elementary education was obligatory, only 18% of children went to school.

34 R. Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism—The Habsburg “Civilizing Mission” in Bosnia 1878—1914*, Oxford 2007, p. 171; Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, pp. 58-59.

35 Sked, *The Decline and Fall*, p. 245.

36 Žanin Čalić, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, p. 58.

37 Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat*, pp. 8-9; Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, pp. 35-36.

38 Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 9.

39 Žanin Čalić, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, p. 21.

40 J. Merriman, *The Dynamite Club—How a Bombing in Fin de Siècle Paris Ignited the Age of Modern Terror*, New York 2009, p. 215.

41 Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 23-24.

42 Jevtić, *Mlada Bosna*, p. 337.

43 Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism*, p. 184.

Higher education was reserved for children who came from the small number of wealthier families.⁴⁴ Roughly in the time of the Bosnian crisis in 1908 the situation was beginning to change. New scholarships were created by Serbian societies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and they aimed particularly for children from peasant families.⁴⁵

The Austrian administration was aware of the importance of education. When the gymnasium in Mostar was opened, senior Austrian official Isidor Benko stated that schools should create good and loyal subjects.⁴⁶ He could not have made a more fallacious prognosis. The most important ideologists of Young Bosnia, Dimitrije Mitrinović and Vladimir Gaćinović, and the first Bosnian assassin, Bogdan Žerajić,⁴⁷ all came from the Mostar gymnasium. After the Bosnian crisis, incidents in the schools occurred with increasing frequency and that resulted in the creation of a “disciplinary rulebook” with 152 rules for conduct in schools. Every kind of student association was banned and numerous books and journals, mostly about literature and politics, were forbidden. It was obligatory that poetry or prose written by students must be read by the school-headmasters.⁴⁸

Education brought structural change to Bosnian political life. When the first generation of new scholarship holders came home from the universities, they brought with them new books and new ideas. Vladimir Gaćinović testified that Bosnian students were spending their nights accompanied by numerous books about politics and history. He claimed, “When our peasants come home [after graduation] they are different. They criticize, they are much less obedient, and they create the basis for a democratic movement.”⁴⁹ It does not come as a surprise that during the trial in September of 1914, the Austrian state prosecutor claimed that Princip’s soul was “corrupted with bad books.”⁵⁰

It is noticeable that members of Young Bosnia who started to study outside Bosnia and Herzegovina were mostly studying social sciences: sociology, law, literature, and history. Students from Bosnia were fascinated with books about philosophy and literature, and especially about politics and history. As Belgian

44 Kranjčević, *Uspomene jednog učesnika*, p. 19.

45 Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism*, pp. 160, 162; V. Masleša, *Mlada Bosna*, Sarajevo 1990, p. 104.

46 M. Papić, *Školstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini za vreme Austro—Ugarske okupacije 1878—1918*, Sarajevo 1972, p. 111.

47 On 15 June, 1910, Žerajić attempted the assassination of General Marijan Varešanin, after firing five shots on Varešanin, Žerajić committed suicide.

48 M. Papić, *Školstvo u Bosni*, p. 167; Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije*, p. 526.

49 Gaćinović, *Ogledi i pisma*, pp. 81-83.

50 Bogićević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 9.

historian Stijn Vervaeet noticed, they have admired those aspects of Western culture they did not know from their autocratic and feudal homeland.⁵¹ Borivoje Jevtić received a letter from a friend who was studying in Switzerland: “The air is so much different here than in Austria.”⁵² One of the consequences of their education was the development of a specific cult of the book. Young Bosnians started to believe that books contained solutions for their problems and dilemmas. Books became the most prized possessions and knowledge of European politics and literature became a necessity for every youngster who aspired to be respected in Young Bosnian circles. A close friend of Princip and future Nobel Prize winner, Ivo Andrić, testified about this. Andrić noted how much Young Bosnians appreciated cheap editions published in Munich, Vienna, and Leipzig such as Reclam’s *Universal Bibliothek*,⁵³ and added, “In our dilapidated and moist Bosnian houses, we were reading and losing our eyesight with fuming petroleum lamps.”⁵⁴ The relevance of this specific attitude toward books and reading is, perhaps, not evident at first. Affection for reading does not have an intrinsic connection with the topic of the political ideas of Young Bosnia, but it is crucial for understanding Gavrilo Princip and his friends due to the readiness of students from Bosnia to use knowledge gathered from various books in their actions. Books were read with the notion that it is possible to use the ideas offered in them.⁵⁵

Formative Years of Young Bosnia

In an influential article,⁵⁶ Pieter Judson asked whether Austria-Hungary could be understood as an empire in the formal sense. Judson argued that after 1867 the Habsburg Monarchy had little in common with other European empires.

⁵¹ Vervaeet, *Centar i periferija*, p. 332.

⁵² Bogičević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna*, p. 76.

⁵³ P. Palavestra, *Književnost Mlade Bosne*, Belgrade 1994, p. 220.

⁵⁴ Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, pp. 29, 200. In Theresienstadt, Gavrilo Princip told Martin Papenheim that hardest part of being in prison is that he cannot read anything.

⁵⁵ The influence of reading about the history of ancient Rome is a good example of this. Young Bosnian Drago Radović proposed that students should be ready to sacrifice themselves as Gaius Mucius Scaevola, a figure from early Roman history famous for his bravery and attempt to kill the Etruscan king. Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, p. 14. When students in one school in Herzegovina organized a protest against the school’s director, inspired by Roman history, they moved from the city to a nearby hill. They refused to come back until their requests were accepted. They have called their actions “*Secessio plebis*,” inspired by events from Roman history. Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 55.

⁵⁶ P. Judson, “L’Autriche-Hongrie e’tait-elle un empire?,” in: *Annales. Histoire, Sciences sociales* vol. 63 (2008), pp. 563–596.

However, research of Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina by Robin Okey, Stijn Vervaeet, and Clemens Ruthner showed that historians have good reason to look upon Austrian rule as colonial and imperial. Robin Okey wrote that Austria ruled over Bosnia and Herzegovina completely along the line of the French idea of a “civilizing mission,” with a strong feeling of Western superiority.⁵⁷ Vervaeet stressed that Austria-Hungary continuously emphasized its civilizing mission, and from the point of view of the Austrian government, Bosnia and Herzegovina was the Orient where modern civilization was yet to be installed. He added that that type of Austrian rule shaped Serbian nationalism, and—on the example of Petar Kočić—he claims that Serbian nationalism was self-defined as anti-colonial and anti-autocratic.⁵⁸

Clemens Ruthner maintained that in Austria-Hungary Bosnia and Herzegovina was stigmatized as “the other within Europe” and that proper context for understanding Austrian rule is given by its characteristics of European imperialism and colonialism.⁵⁹ It is not only that several contemporary researchers argued that Bosnia and Herzegovina was a colony, what is even more important is that Young Bosnians themselves were convinced of this. Borivoje Jevtić compared Bosnia with India.⁶⁰ Another close friend of Princip wrote that Austria had built a beautiful town hall in Sarajevo to show to the rest of Europe, but that no one knew that behind the new town hall Austrian police had hundreds of cells for disobedient citizens.⁶¹ An unknown author wrote in 1910 in the pages of *Zora* (The Dawn), one of the most influential journals among South Slav students in Austria - Hungary:

Austria-Hungary had to use imperialism in order to keep herself among sisters, other Great Powers. But Austria-Hungary does not have her own Morocco, or Persia, or India where she could create colonies, so she turned to the Balkans, where she could colonize and exploit South Slavs.⁶²

⁵⁷ Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism*, p. vii.

⁵⁸ Vervaeet, *Centar i periferija*, pp. 21, 22, 75, 76, 288, 289, 299.

⁵⁹ C. Ruthner, *Habsburg's Little Orient—A Postcolonial Reading of Austrian and German Cultural Narratives on Bosnia and Herzegovina 1878-1918*, pp. 1-7. Available at: www.kakanien.ac.at.

⁶⁰ Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 18.

⁶¹ Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, p. 79.

⁶² S. “Jugoslovenstvo i socijalna demokratija,” *Zora*, 1/3 (1910), pp. 139-140.

In this period, colonies were fertile ground for anarchism.⁶³ I will argue that a third factor was the feeling of Young Bosnians that Austria-Hungary had specific rules for its South Slav subjects. Mitrinović wrote in 1908, "In this time of democracy and liberalism, those who are modern, in this *okkupation gebiet* of ours, felt the absurdity of this anachronistic regime."⁶⁴ The fourth factor that shaped Young Bosnia was the fact that their formative years coincided with the time when one political crisis was coming after another. Austria-Hungary was a multinational empire with numerous minorities. In response to the prospect of numerous Serbs living inside the empire, relations with the Kingdom of Serbia affected both the foreign and internal policies of the empire. The Austrian ultimatum sent to Serbia on 23 July, 1914, was the fourth ultimatum that Austria-Hungary had sent to the Kingdom of Serbia in a span of just six years. In 1906, the so called "Pig War," a customs war between Serbia and Austria-Hungary started. Then the Bosnian crisis erupted in 1908 after the Austrian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and this crisis almost ended up in war in the spring of 1909. The Balkan wars of 1912-1913 represented a long crisis of very high intensity.

Contrary to the existing international treaties, Austria-Hungary decided to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina in October 1908. Annexation triggered widespread discontent among Serbs, who started to believe that war between Serbia and Austria was surely going to come.⁶⁵ Borivoje Jevtić wrote, "Annexation, 1908, represents a boundary: separating two generations and two epochs."⁶⁶ The Bosnian crisis marked the beginning of the process that created grounds for accepting political violence as a legitimate means of struggle. During the period between 1908 and 1914, Young Bosnians accepted the idea that there is no rule or law that Austria-Hungary is not ready to break in order to accomplish its goals. Events that followed, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in other parts of Austria-Hungary, further embedded this idea in Young Bosnian politics. The Bosnian crisis was still not over when the so-called "high treason process"⁶⁷ was initiated against Serb politicians in neighboring Croatia, and, in December

⁶³ B. Anderson, Preface, in: S. Hirsch/L.V.D. Wald (eds.), *Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial and Postcolonial World 1870 – 1940*, Boston 2010.

⁶⁴ D. Mitrinović, "Nacionalno tlo i modernost", *Bosanska vila*, 20 July 1908, pp. 20, 306.

⁶⁵ A.J.P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918. A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary*, Chicago 1976, pp. 216-218, 228, 232, 262.

⁶⁶ Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 5.

⁶⁷ During the "high treason process" of 1909, the Austrian government, without any significant evidence, accused and eventually sentenced 53 prominent Serbs, members of a Croat-Serb political coalition.

1909 in Vienna, the Friedjung trial⁶⁸ started. What soon became evident was that the Austrian government deliberately used falsified documents to fuel anti-Serb sentiments in the public opinion. Croat Ivo Kranjčević, who helped Young Bosnians on 28 June, wrote that the youth saw that Austria, who created an image of itself as exemplifying the rule of law, used falsified documents against opponents.⁶⁹

In 1910, the first assassination in Sarajevo occurred. On the day the Bosnian parliament opened, Bogdan Žerajić fired five times at the Austrian governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina, general Marijan Varešanin, and then he committed suicide. An assassination on the day when the parliament opened was symbolic. Young Bosnians called Austrian rule “fake parliamentarism.” Suffrage was limited and those who had the right to vote were choosing only part of the members of parliament, while others were appointed by the governor. The Government, appointed by the emperor was not accountable to parliament; Vienna could veto every decision. Political parties were allowed but their work was made pointless with strict censorship and with nonexistent freedom of speech.⁷⁰ Young Bosnians believed that this kind of parliamentarism was only a ploy for hiding oppressive behavior.⁷¹ One newspaper article depicts elections. The journalist was Gavrilo Princip.

Around eight police officers came to the polling station. Apart from their main role of watching the “wild” people, they had another one: to threaten and force people to vote for the government candidate (Vukan K)... They have used all kinds of tricks; they threatened with so many things. When a person would enter the room where the voting was happening, police officer Vojinović would welcome him and suggest that he vote for Vukan K. ⁷²

Having this in mind, it does not come as a surprise that Young Bosnians translated and published a text written by the Austrian anarchist Pierre Ramus

⁶⁸ The trial started after members of a Croat-Serb coalition accused Austrian historian Heinrich Friedjung of calumny. Based on documents given to him by the Austrian Foreign Ministry, Friedjung made numerous accusations about the Kingdom of Serbia and the Croat-Serb coalition. See: H. Friedjung, “Österreich—Ungarn und Serbien,” in: *Neue Freie Presse*, 25 March 1909, p. 2. It soon became obvious that the documents Friedjung used as proof were forged in the Austrian embassy in Belgrade.

⁶⁹ Kranjčević, *Uspomene jednog učesnika*, p. 15.

⁷⁰ Ruthner, *Habsburg's Little Orient*, pp. 50-52.

⁷¹ Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 77.

⁷² Bogičević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna*, p. 326.

called “Fake parliamentarism.”⁷³ In a program that Gavrilo Princip supported, Dimitrije Mitrinović wrote:

We consider any kind of parliamentary struggle, in a country without real parliamentarism, to be futile. We ask that the executive branch of government should be subordinated to the will of popular sovereignty and possibility that the people’s will come to be expressed in a democratically elected parliament.⁷⁴

The years that represented the point of no return, when stability was destroyed, were 1912-1913. February 18, 1912, was the day when Young Bosnians organized a protest against the dissolution of the Croatian parliament. Then 17 years old, Princip confronted the police and ended up in bruises.⁷⁵ In April, Dimitrije Mitrinović wrote his program in Belgrade and in June Croat Luka Jukić, who had participated in the February protests and tried to assassinate the commissar of Croatia, Slavko Cuvaj, made the acquaintance of Princip.⁷⁶ The Balkan wars created a boiling atmosphere in Bosnia and Herzegovina. No one expected that small Balkan countries would defeat the Ottoman Empire. The reputation of the Kingdom of Serbia was rising, and with it the Yugoslav idea grew more and more popular.⁷⁷ Oscar Tartaglia wrote, “It was clear to everyone that after Turkey it is time to settle bills with Austria-Hungary.”⁷⁸ The Austrian government was becoming increasingly aware that the South Slav question could be extremely dangerous for the Habsburg Monarchy.⁷⁹

Dissatisfied students were becoming more and more vocal in their criticism of the government, and the Austrian police were becoming more and more resolute about crushing any opposition. It seems that these two trends fueled each other. The most common reasons for arrest were charges of high treason and insult of his majesty.⁸⁰ Just singing Serbian songs or collecting money for the Serbian Red

⁷³ P. Ramus, “Laž parlamentarizma,” in: *Spomenica Danila Ilića*, p. 38. Pierre Ramus was a pen name of Rudolf Großmann, an Austrian theoretician of anarchism.

⁷⁴ Bogičević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna*, pp. 296-299.

⁷⁵ Ljubibratić, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 140.

⁷⁶ Gajević, *Jugoslovenstvo između stvarnosti i iluzija*, p. 189

⁷⁷ J. Horvat, *Pobuna omladine 1911-1914*, Zagreb 2006, p. 211.

⁷⁸ O. Tartaglia, *Veleizdajnik—moje uspomene iz borbe protiv crno-žutog orla*, Zagreb 1928, p. 71.

⁷⁹ J. Pleterski, “The Southern Slav Question,” in: M. Cornwall (ed.), *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary, A Multi-National Experiment in Early Twentieth Century Europe*, Exeter 2006, pp. 119-120.

⁸⁰ N. Bartulović, *Od revolucionarne omladine do ORJUNE—istorijat jugoslovenskog omladinskog pokreta*, Split 1925, p. 24.

Cross was enough to get arrested.⁸¹ Princip left the Sarajevo gymnasium for Belgrade because he believed that he was on the list for expulsion.⁸² He was one of the few members of Young Bosnia who were not arrested prior to the Sarajevo assassination. He decided to continue his education in Belgrade in 1912. A few weeks after he went to Serbia, the majority of his friends were arrested.⁸³ Princip's friend Miloš Pjanić was sentenced because he was spreading Mitrinović's program.⁸⁴ In a short time, the prisons in Bosnia and Herzegovina were filled with high school students.⁸⁵ Young Bosnia's friends from Vojvodina, Croatia, and Dalmatia experienced a similar fate. In Novi Sad, well-known youth activist Vasa Stajić was arrested.⁸⁶ In Dalmatia Tin Ujević and Milostislav Bartulica were sentenced to four months in prison because of their pamphlet *We Are Learning Cyrillic*.⁸⁷ Cvetko Popović testified that prison was the place where the most belligerent students met each other.⁸⁸ Nedeljko Čabrinović was expelled from Sarajevo because he had organized a strike.⁸⁹

Because of his conflict with professors in school, Trifko Grabež was thrown out of school and was sentenced to 15 days in jail.⁹⁰ Vaso Čubrilović was thrown out of the Tuzla gymnasium because he demonstratively left school when the Austrian anthem was played.⁹¹ The crisis reached its peak in 1913, when the governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina, General Oskar Potiorek, introduced "extraordinary measures." All Serbian societies were outlawed.⁹² The reaction of the students was quick: On the following morning in the center of Sarajevo, the majority of inscriptions and signs in German and Hungarian had been removed.⁹³ Marie Janine Calic noticed that socioeconomic changes in Austria-Hungary gave birth to new, educated, national elites that wanted significant

⁸¹ V. Čorović, *Odnosi Srbije i Austro-Ugarske u 20. Veku*, Belgrade 1992, p. 579.

⁸² Kranjčević, *Uspomene jednog učesnika*, p. 40.

⁸³ Ljubibratić, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 147.

⁸⁴ Pfeffer, *Istraga u Sarajevskom*, p. 67; Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan 1914*, p. 25.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁸⁶ Bartulović, *Od revolucionarne omladine*, p. 31.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁸⁸ Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan 1914*, p. 25.

⁸⁹ Tartaglia, *Veleizdajnik*, p. 54; Pfeffer, *Istraga u Sarajevskom*, p. 42; Bogićević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 41.

⁹⁰ Pfeffer, *Istraga u Sarajevskom*, pp. 58 - 59.

⁹¹ Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan 1914*, p. 39.

⁹² Čorović, *Odnosi Srbije i Austro*, p. 580. Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 14.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

autonomy and that the monarchy never seriously contemplated allowing them to participate in political life on equal terms.⁹⁴



Figure 1. Photo of dead Bogdan Žerajić. Žerajić attempted to assassinate governor of Bosnia, General Marjan Varešanin in 1910, on the day when Bosnian parliament started to operate. After firing five bullets towards the general, Žerajić committed suicide. The Photograph was taken by Austrian police. Source: Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

New generation

Princip and his friends were convinced that their generation had a duty to bring change. In his essay “Problem of Generations” Karl Mannheim stressed the importance of “participation in the common destiny” for the construction of different generations.⁹⁵ A distinct social background, an electrified political situation, and the education of youth from a serf background had specific consequences. I will argue that the best way to understand Young Bosnia is to observe it as a new generation. Mannheim’s ideas are applicable for Young Bosnia. He added that “generations as reality” are defined by the class position of an individual in any given economic and power structure. His ideas are important because they elucidate similarities between spatially separated individuals who are exposed to similar social and intellectual symptoms and who

⁹⁴ Žanin Čalić, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, p. 53.

⁹⁵ K. Mannheim, “The Problem of Generations,” in: Paul Kecskemeti (ed.), *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, London 1952, pp. 276 - 320.

do not even need to know each other. We need to keep in mind that some participants in the Sarajevo assassination met each other only after their arrest. Before Mannheim, Wilhelm Dilthey dealt with the generational idea. He concluded that “determining circumstances” existed and shaped different individuals into some kind of unity.⁹⁶ Dilthey believed that generations are formed with their heritage, that they have a date of birth and that they are molded by education. He maintained that generations have generational experience, generational language, and that their creation is marked by the stagnation of previous generations. Heritage for Young Bosnia was the serf position of their parents. It was the stagnation of the previous generation in the same time: the struggle of their parents’ generation through petitions and cooperation with the government that had no results. The generational experience of Young Bosnia consisted of the Bosnian crisis, high treason trials, numerous arrests, and “extraordinary measures.” They were not simply more educated than their fathers; it was a special kind of education. Borivoje Jevtić wrote about the distinctions between two generations:

Difference between *fathers and sons*,⁹⁷ difference between those who believed they were naughty because they had a Serbian flag and celebrated their patron saint and those who were educated about books written by Russian revolutionaries, especially by Herzen and Kropotkin.⁹⁸

The generational language of Young Bosnia was characteristic. Favorite phrases that occur so many times in their letters and texts were *gesture, act, élan, and action*, while *phrase* and *word without action* were used as symbols of everything detrimental. Miloš Vidaković quoted Giuseppe Mazzini: “Thunder comes after lightning in such a way your words should be followed by action.”⁹⁹ Austrian authorities had noticed that new students was different than before. One official report stated that “a new generation matured and it became the enemy of the legitimate state to the core of their beliefs.”¹⁰⁰ One of the Austrian officials in Sarajevo stated that it was evident that the youth were becoming the biggest

⁹⁶ W. Dilthey, *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung. Lessing, Goethe, Novalis, Hölderlin*, Berlin 1922, pp. 188, 268-272, 290;

⁹⁷ It is an allusion to Ivan Turgenev’s novel *Fathers and Sons*.

⁹⁸ Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 9.

⁹⁹ Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 51.

¹⁰⁰ Dj. Mikić, *Austrougarska ratna politika u Bosni i Hercegovini 1914 -1918*, Banja Luka 2011, pp. 231-232.

opposition and that a fear of children, “Angst vor Kinder,” existed.¹⁰¹ A confidential police report from 1912 stated that the youth is “emancipated from the influence of the elderly.”¹⁰² Youth generations were convinced that South Slav politicians were “spineless.”¹⁰³ After the Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Serbian bishop in Sarajevo was obliged to pray for the Habsburg family. When this was done for the first time, a high ranking official of the Austrian Joint Imperial Ministry of Finance was present. He noted:

When Bishop Letica raised his arms and prayed for the Emperor, all Serbs present kneeled down, except a group of young students that were lined according to their years, and they simply remained standing. They were little kids from the Sarajevo gymnasium.¹⁰⁴

Gavrilo Princip said to Dr. Martin Papenheim in 1916:

Our older generations are mostly conservative, but among the people there is a strong will for national liberation. Older generations did not agree with younger ones)...(they were talking about freedom that we should win legally from Austria. We did not believe in that kind of freedom.¹⁰⁵

The new generation of youth from Bosnia and Herzegovina was defined by several characteristics. If Young Bosnia had a motto, it would have been *action*. Surviving letters and texts are filled with the ideal of action. Deed, act, initiative are words that constantly reappear. Contemporaries testified that the youth considered action the highest ideal. It did not matter what kind of action was in question, “someone volunteered for the Balkan wars, some were writing for newspapers, and a few were discussing in secret circles.” It was only important to act.¹⁰⁶ Miloš Vidaković wrote, “We need to educate posterity that will become with us the generation of action and creation,”¹⁰⁷ while Vladimir Gaćinović claimed:

¹⁰¹ Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije*, p. 681.

¹⁰² Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism*, p. 202.

¹⁰³ Horvat, *Pobuna omladine*, p. 97.

¹⁰⁴ P. Palavestra, *Jovan Skerlić u srpskoj književnosti 1877-1977*, Belgrade 1980, p. 175.

¹⁰⁵ Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 198.

¹⁰⁶ B. Čubrilović, “Naciojonalistička omladina u Bosni i Sarajevski atentat,” *Nova Evropa*, 1 June 1925, p. 487.

¹⁰⁷ Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 51.

*We, the youngest ones, we must start to create new history.*¹⁰⁸ In our icy society, we must bring sun, we must shake those who are tired and resigned. We must start a deadly war against pessimism, dispiritedness, languor, we, messengers of new generations and a new people. We have faith that is stronger than life and love stronger than death; we will win.¹⁰⁹

The nationalism of Young Bosnia was different in two ways from the nationalism propagated by their fathers. The first difference was that the Serbian national idea was incorporated into the Yugoslav idea. Pages of *Bosanska vila* (Bosnian fairy), the most prominent Serbian periodical in Bosnia and Herzegovina, brought the first pro-Yugoslav articles when Dimitrije Mitrinović started to write for the publication in 1908. In his program, Mitrinović wrote that it is an “ethno-psychological fact” that Serbs and Croats are the same people with two names.¹¹⁰ An influential professor at Belgrade University, Jovan Skerlić, noticed that what used to be popular only among philologists and historians is now an axiom for youth.¹¹¹ This is a good place to point out how applicable Miroslav Hroch’s ideas about the three phases of nationalism are.¹¹² Bosnia and Herzegovina prior to 1914 were already in phase B, where, after a nation is “discovered” by historians and philologists, a middle class of intellectuals took over the national idea and instigated national agitation. The goal of Young Bosnia was to introduce the Yugoslav national idea to the entire population. Mitrinović was aware that the “ethno-psychological fact” is not enough, South Slavs should also be “spiritually unified.” In his program he wrote, “The central and basic goal of our club is to propagate a philosophy of nationalism together with democratic political ideas, all that having the purpose to strengthen the Serbo-Croat national soul.”¹¹³ Mitrinović believed that it was necessary to spread consciousness about the existence of the nation and its right for an independent existence. As Anthony Smith noted, this was precisely one of the main tasks of nationalistic intelligentsia, to mobilize a passive community.¹¹⁴

Nationalism was one of the main characteristics of the Young Bosnian ideology, and, in this regard, Young Bosnia was going along mainstream lines of the

¹⁰⁸ Italic is in original text.

¹⁰⁹ V. Gaćinović, “Onima koji dolaze,” in: *Spomenica Vladimira Gaćinovića*, pp. 30-31.

¹¹⁰ Bogićević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna*, pp. 296-299.

¹¹¹ J. Skerlić, “Novi omladinski listovi i naš novi naraštaj,” *Srpski književni glasnik*, 30/3 (1930), pp. 222-223.

¹¹² M. Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, Cambridge 1985, pp. 23-24.

¹¹³ Bogićević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna*, pp. 296-299; Gajević, *Jugoslovenstvo između stvarnosti i iluzija*, p. 118.

¹¹⁴ A. Smith, *National Identity*, London/New York 1991, pp. 64-65.

national idea in 19th century Europe, with the notion that nations deserve recognition, respect, and that they request autonomy or independence.¹¹⁵ While their fathers were fighting for the right to use a Serbian name, to have independent schools and churches, all of which was in question after the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878, especially during Benjamin Kallays rule, Young Bosnians were fighting for full independence. Mitrinović wrote, “A central dogma of our club is that a national culture is not possible without a national society, and national society is not possible without a national state.”¹¹⁶ Danilo Ilić claimed during his trial that if Germans managed to live in a single national state, why would not the same be possible for Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.¹¹⁷



Figure 2. Vladimir Gaćinović, arguably the single most important ideologist of Young Bosnia.
Source: Sarajevo City Archive

The Political Agenda of Young Bosnia

The goal of Young Bosnia was to create a national state. Gavrilo Princip claimed this during his trial in September 1914.¹¹⁸ In 1916, Martin Pappenheim asked Princip to write down the ideals of students in Bosnia. Princip wrote, “Ideals of

¹¹⁵ G.S. Jones/G. Clayes (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth Century Political Thought*, Cambridge 2011, p. 77.

¹¹⁶ Bogičević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna*, pp. 296-299.

¹¹⁷ Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 181.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 62.

the youth: unity of South Slavs, Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, not under Austrian rule.”¹¹⁹ What is important to emphasize is that Young Bosnians never considered a national state as an ideal by itself. A national state became an ideal because they believed that South Slavs would never have freedom of speech, liberal press laws, and parliamentary democracy in Austria-Hungary. After the Great War Pero Slijepčević noticed that the Kingdom of Serbia did not attract pro-Yugoslav youth only as a state in which the same people lived, but also because its constitution and political life was so much different than in Austria.¹²⁰ Austrian politician Joseph Baernreither noticed after the Great War how much the Austrian type of rule and especially Austrian agrarian politics fueled the desire to create an independent national state: “Plainly, no one has ever stopped to consider the impression bound to be made by this on the mind of a population which knows that across the Drina and the Sava rivers there is no subasha (government official MV) to appropriate a third of the harvest every year for some aga or beg.”¹²¹

The Kingdom of Serbia became an ideal, an imagined Piedmont of the future unification of South Slavs. It was a country where peasants had their own land, a country with general suffrage, and, what was especially important for young journalists such as the Croat Vladimir Čerina, “freedom of press in Serbia is almost unlimited.”¹²² Because of its democratic characteristics, the Kingdom of Serbia started to act as a magnet for significant numbers of South Slavs in Austria-Hungary.¹²³ Young Bosnians understood nationalism as a way to fight against absolutism, and for them national state meant the creation of equal citizens who can participate in political life.¹²⁴ From the time of the French Revolution, they believed, nationalism was a phenomenon where “a people took a pen and started to write its own biography.” Jovan Mijušković understood the national idea in the 19th century as a struggle of ordinary people who are fighting with “sword and feather” for their rights. He claimed, “We, Serbs and Croats, have a right for that.”¹²⁵

¹¹⁹ Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 197.

¹²⁰ P. Slijepčević, “Omladina i Sarajevski atentat,” *Nova Evropa*, 21 July 1925, p. 545

¹²¹ J.M. Baernreither, *Fragments of a Political Diary*, London 1930, p. 27.

¹²² V. Čerina, *Pjesme, proza, članci, eseji i zapisi*, Split 1977, p. 402. He added: “In Serbia socialists and anarchists are more numerous than our conservatives, and girls there are more emancipated than here in Austria.”

¹²³ Pleterski, *The Southern Slav Question*, p. 128.

¹²⁴ Redakcioni odbor, “Naša riječ,” *Zora*, 3/1-2 (1912).

¹²⁵ J. Mijušković, “Naš nacionalizam,” *Zora*, 1/9 (1910), pp. 377-380.

The possible creation of Yugoslavia was not only the realization of the dream that South Slavs should live in a single state because they are “one nation with three names.” The Yugoslav idea was partly the consequence of a thinking that could be described as *realpolitik*. Creation of a considerable state that would stretch from the Slovenian Alps to Macedonia was desired also because it was believed that a larger state would secure a safer future. The words of Austrian Marxist Karl Renner who claimed, “It is a miserable destiny to be a small nation or a small state,” made an impression on the South Slavs.¹²⁶ Jovan Skerlić, who had an enormous influence on Young Bosnia, asked himself why Serbs and Croats would not unite, and instead of “small and irrelevant nations” they could become one strong nation.¹²⁷ Yugoslavia was not only the best possible solution to achieve equality, it was big enough to secure a safe future. In the first number of the new periodical *Jugoslavija* (Yugoslavia) in May 1914 it was written:

Surrounded with an iron ring of great nations, culturally stronger and politically organized, we should, even if there would not be any of these existent conditions, create a strong homogenized unity, even then we should unite to preserve our endangered existence.¹²⁸

Young Bosnians believed that revolution was the only way to achieve their goals. Albert Hirschman claimed that members of a state (or any other organization) have two types of reactions when they are dissatisfied. *Voice* was the reaction if an individual tried to fix the situation, and *exit* was reaction where an individual declines to try to fix the problems.¹²⁹ Young Bosnians never had any idea to fix Austria-Hungary. The goal was to achieve complete liberation. They believed it would come after a revolution. Mitrinović wrote that struggle within the institutions of Austria-Hungary was pointless.¹³⁰ Young Bosnians believed that the Austrian constitution served only to placate the unsatisfied and that any change was impossible. In 1911, Veljko Milićević published an article called “Anti-parliamentarism.” He wrote: “The so called constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the same as a broken clock. It is called a clock, but that is just a name, it does not move and it will trick you if look at it.”¹³¹

¹²⁶ E. Redžić, *Austromarksizam i jugoslavensko pitanje*, Belgrade 1977, p. 73.

¹²⁷ Gajević, *Jugoslovenstvo između stvarnosti i iluzija*, pp. 88-89.

¹²⁸ Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan 1914*, p. 34.

¹²⁹ A. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty. Response to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*, Cambridge 1970.

¹³⁰ Bogičević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna*, pp. 296-300.

¹³¹ V. Milićević, “Antiparlamentarizam,” *Zora*, 2/4-5 (1911), pp. 147-150.

Austria-Hungary was considered to be a rotten state,¹³² and the plan was to “destroy everything that is rotten and decayed.”¹³³ “To destroy Austria, to fight with her to the end, with all means)...that was our manifesto, that was our only politics.”¹³⁴ What is important to point out is that Archduke Franz Ferdinand did not become the target because of his own character or politics; he became the target as heir to the Habsburg throne. We can say that Franz Ferdinand was not the target, but the crown prince was. Princip said during the investigation that he wanted to kill Ferdinand because he was the incarnation of power in Austria-Hungary.¹³⁵ Before the assassination, Princip told his friends that any assassin should not kill men, instead, he claimed that assassins should kill ideas.¹³⁶ Franz Ferdinand represented the idea of Austria-Hungary. This was not only characteristic of Young Bosnia. From the first assassination on the life of Russian czar Alexander II in 1866, to the assassinations in Sarajevo in 1910 and in Zagreb in 1912, it was common for assassins to claim that they were aiming at a representative of power and not the personality of their target.¹³⁷

The Library of Young Bosnia

Young Bosnians wanted freedom, which for them was embedded in the national state. Their goal was to learn and to follow examples of other nations in their struggle for liberty. They considered it necessary to learn from others *how to do* revolution. Young Bosnians did not want anything that already existed in contemporary politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina, they did not want anything from their fathers. The story about the political ideas of Young Bosnia is the story of the transfer of contemporary European politics into a specific cultural and political region, as Bosnia and Herzegovina were in the beginning of the 20th century. A new generation of revolutionaries wanted to learn from others, while crossing the boundaries of time and geography. Benedict Anderson has commented on these phenomena. He showed that citizens of Cuba and the Philippines read about politics and history because they wanted to “learn how to

¹³² Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, pp. 104-105.

¹³³ Horvat, *Pobuna omladine*, pp. 125-126.

¹³⁴ Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 32.

¹³⁵ Pfeffer, *Istraga u Sarajevskom*, p. 27.

¹³⁶ Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, p. 26.

¹³⁷ C. Verhoeven, *The Odd Man Karakozov. Imperial Russia, Modernity, and the Birth of Terrorism*, London 2009, p. 178; Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 77; Horvat, *Pobuna omladine*, p. 262.

“do” revolution, anti-colonialism, and anti-imperialism.”¹³⁸ Whenever Young Bosnians traveled outside Bosnia, they were collecting books. Vladimir Gaćinović described in the following way what Danilo Ilić did in Switzerland: “He gathered some Russian and French literature about national and workers movements in Europe and he returned afterwards.”¹³⁹ One of the most prominent leaders of the youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Drago Ljubibratić, testified about how popular it was to read about the revolutionary struggles of other European nations. Young Bosnians regarded revolutionaries as heroes.¹⁴⁰ Gavriilo Princip was proud because his friends had called him *Gavroche*, the boy character from *Les Misérables*, who died on the barricades in Paris.¹⁴¹

The biggest role models for national liberations were the German and Italian unifications. Princip claimed precisely the same during his trial.¹⁴² Giuseppe Mazzini, without doubt, represented the most important figure that shaped Young Bosnian nationalism. Princip said during his trial, “Serbia as a free part of South Slavs has a moral duty to help in the unification of South Slavs, like Piedmont did in Italy.”¹⁴³ Vasilj Popović wrote two articles titled “Resurrection of Italy.” These articles were not only historical. The Italian experience was considered to be an example and a lesson. Popović wrote that the Italian unification demonstrated to all “those who are not free and unified” that before Resurrection comes Golgotha. Italian unification was not easy, but there was Mazzini, “eternal conspirator,” whose name was connected with “all kinds of plots.”¹⁴⁴ When the prosecutor asked Čabrinović about their plans for unification, he replied: “It is not possible to do it legally... I think that we can do that with politics similar to those of Mazzini in Italy.”¹⁴⁵ The Sarajevo assassins learned Italian patriotic songs, and their periodicals published entire documents, such as Mazzini’s *Oath of Young Italy*.¹⁴⁶ Young Bosnians were not interested in reading about Great Power relations and the unification of Italy. They claimed that every request of the Balkan nations will be seen as “a dangerous Russian scheme” and that the national idea is still not a base for international law.¹⁴⁷ Young Bosnians

¹³⁸ B. Anderson, *Under Three Flags. Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*, London 2005, p. 2.

¹³⁹ V. Gaćinović, “Danilo Ilić,” in: *Spomenica Danila Ilića*, pp. 80-81.

¹⁴⁰ D. Ljubibratić, “Bogdan Žerajić,” in: *Gradac*, 175-177 (2010), p. 125.

¹⁴¹ Ljubibratić, *Gavriilo Princip*, p. 138.

¹⁴² Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 83.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁴⁴ V. Popović, “Vaskrs Italije,” *Zora*, 2/6-7 (1911), pp. 245-257.

¹⁴⁵ Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 32.

¹⁴⁶ Macinijeva zakletva “Mlade Italije,” *Zora*, 3/4 (1912), p. 145.

¹⁴⁷ J. Mijušković, “Naš nacionalizam,” in: *Zora*, 1/9 (1910), p. 378; R. Jovanović, “Evropa i Balkanska nezavisnost u XIX veku i sada,” in: *Zora*, 2/4-5 (1911), p. 156.

were interested in individual contributions, secret work, and conspiracy actions. Italian unification offered a new means of fighting, assassinations as a revenge.¹⁴⁸

Apart from Mazzini, the biggest influence on the nationalism of Young Bosnia was Johann Gottlieb Fichte.¹⁴⁹ Young Bosnians tended to look upon their actions as something similar to the activities of German students in the *Burschenschaften* (student organizations at the German universities, MV).¹⁵⁰ Vasilj Popović who wrote about Italian unification, had also written about German unification. He published an article titled "German Universities and the Struggle for Freedom and Unification of Germany." Again, it was a lesson. Young Bosnian interest in European history had a practical purpose. Popović pointed out the similarities between the German case and the South Slav one. He was especially interested in the duties of the individual toward the community. Popović had translated the *Burschenschaft* rules, which were approved by Fichte. It was written: "Fatherland is above everything: the student must hold Germany above other things and he must be a German in his words, deeds, and life," and that "the most holy duty of the German youth and student is that he must become a real German and once in his lifetime he must strive for his nation and homeland."¹⁵¹ Emphasis was on "propaganda by words and deed." Assassinations, such as when Karl Ludwig Sand killed August von Kotzebue in 1820, were especially noticed.¹⁵² For Young Bosnians, the most important event in European history was the French Revolution. It was accepted that the French Revolution changed Europe and that it bequeathed freedom and a national state as its most important legacy for posterity. Jovan Mijušković wrote that a national idea is something new, something characteristic of the 19th century.¹⁵³ The French Revolution became a symbol of the struggle against absolutism and it made king and citizens equal.¹⁵⁴ Young Bosnians claimed that "even if the national idea seems old, we can speak about it more clearly only after the French Revolution."¹⁵⁵ Bosnian

¹⁴⁸ Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, p. 71; Horvat, *Pobuna omladine*, p. 113.

¹⁴⁹ Čorović, *Odnosi Srbije i Austro*, p. 597; B. Čubrilović, "Naciononalistička omladina u Bosni i Sarajevski atentat," *Nova Evropa*, 1 June 1925, p. 487.

¹⁵⁰ J. Jovanović, "Psihologija Sarajevskoga Atentata," *Srpski književni glasnik*, 1 December 1926, p. 532; M. Triva, "Za nacionalnu individualnost," *Zora*, 1/9 (1910), p. 373.

¹⁵¹ V. Popović, "Njemački univerziteti u radu za slobodu i ujedinjenje Njemačke," *Zora*, 2/3 (1911), pp. 114 – 119.

¹⁵² V. Popović, "Njemački univerziteti u radu za slobodu i ujedinjenje Njemačke," *Zora*, 2/4-5 (1911), pp. 178-182.

¹⁵³ J. Mijušković, "Naš nacionalizam," *Zora*, 1/9 (1910), pp. 377-378.

¹⁵⁴ Redakcioni odbor, "Naša riječ," *Zora*, 3/1 (1912), p. 2.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

students liked to quote the famous Jacobin revolutionary Saint-Just: "A Revolutionary will be calm only in his grave." The revolutions of 1848 and the French Commune were also very popular subjects for reading among Bosnian students.¹⁵⁶

Sovereignty

The first number of the influential youth periodical *Zora* (The Dawn) contained a translation of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen*. Young Bosnians accepted these ideas and understood that there are rights that cannot be taken from any man and that all men are born equal and free.¹⁵⁷ Young Bosnia embraced the idea that sovereignty lies among the people. They believed that government is not legitimate if the sovereignty does not come from the people. They were following the ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract*, which organized the relationship between the individual and the community so that the community has legitimacy based on the rights of individuals who form the community. Community had a name: *nation*.¹⁵⁸ It is easy to conclude that the editors of *Zora* were aware of *The Social Contract*.¹⁵⁹ These ideas were readily accepted by Young Bosnians because they suited their goals. These ideas were destroying the estate society and they were transforming it into a political community of citizens who are equal.¹⁶⁰

The editors of *Zora* published the *Commentary of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, written by French radical politician Léon Bourgeois. Young Bosnians were carefully reading Bourgeois' remarks about The Enlightenment, about natural rights, and about the 1789 French declaration that was written for humanity and not only for France.¹⁶¹ Vladimir Gaćinović translated part of *The Great French Revolution* by Peter Kropotkin. Gaćinović wrote that the French Revolution is "the most noble and magnificent epoch of the world's history."¹⁶² Kropotkin's article was about the significance of The Enlightenment for the destruction of the *Ancient Régime*.¹⁶³ In the first number of

156 Ljubibratić, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 138.

157 "Deklaracija prava čoveka i građanina," in: *Zora*, 1/1 (1910), pp. 39-40.

158 F. Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution*, Cambridge 2001, p. 32.

159 Redakcioni odbor, "Naša riječ," *Zora*, 3/1 (1912), p. 2.

160 K.M. Baker, "Sovereignty," in: F. Furet/M. Ozouf (eds.), *A Critical Dictionary of the French Revolution*, Cambridge 1989, pp. 844-860.

161 L. Buržo/A. Meten, "Komentar deklaracija prava čoveka i građanina 1789," *Zora*, 1/6-7 (1910), pp. 250 - 253.

162 P. Kropotkin, "Francuska revolucija," *Zora*, 1/4-5 (1910), p. 166.

163 *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

the periodical *Val* (The Wave), its editors defined their goal: "Armed with theoretical and practical knowledge and experience of the West, we will start a new fight for our great goal of spiritual freedom and national unification."¹⁶⁴ Princip had nothing more than ironic words for the "divine right" of the Habsburg rulers, and Mitrinović wrote that Young Bosnia wants to put into effect "radical and democratic ideals."¹⁶⁵

Right of Revolution

Numerous translations, and texts written by the Young Bosnians about civil rights were almost always accompanied with another topic: what an individual should do if government does not respect the rights of its subjects. What if sovereignty does not come from the people? Léon Bourgeois claimed that the deprivation of basic natural rights is a crime that is equal to murder. "To divest us from our natural rights is equally horrible as if someone would divest us from air." A translated document from the French Revolution emphasized that people should fight for their rights because "everything that came from the people, people can change and destroy)... (that is the principle of popular sovereignty."¹⁶⁶ The French Revolution brought not only ideas; it was also an example of how to fight. Gaćinović believed that those who study the French experience must understand that "all oppressed nations must survive what the French nation survived, all of them must have their own Great Revolution)... (that inevitably awaits our Slavic race and us South Slavs."¹⁶⁷ It should not come as a surprise that the assassination in Zagreb in 1912, was described as a "civic duty" and that Young Bosnians during the trial claimed that assassination is legitimate if it is against a tyrant.¹⁶⁸

In 1912, editors of *Zora* translated the article *Right to Rebel*, written by the Belgian Emile de Laveleye. He claimed that "Rebellion, use of violence against the ruler, is the last resort of oppressed people against tyranny. If we assume that people are not cattle that the ruler can treat them as he likes, then we must agree that there is a certain culmination of bad government that its subjects must not necessarily respect." Laveleye offered numerous historical examples of righteous

¹⁶⁴ "Zadaća omladine u narodnoj borbi," *Val*, 1/1 (1912), p. 4.

¹⁶⁵ Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, p. 24; D. Mitrinović, "Pred radom," *Zora*, 1/1(1910), p. 8.

¹⁶⁶ L. Buržoa/A. Meten, "Komentar Dekleracije prava čoveka i građanina 1789," *Zora*, 1/6-7 (1910), p. 253; L. Buržoa/A. Meten, "Komentar Dekleracije prava čoveka i građanina 1789," *Zora*, 1/8 (1910), p. 340.

¹⁶⁷ P. Kropotkin, "Francuska revolucija," *Zora*, 1/4-5 (1910), p. 166.

¹⁶⁸ Horvat, *Pobuna omladine*, p. 180; Bogićević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 192.

rebellions.¹⁶⁹ The topic of rebellions and revolutions attracted the Young Bosnians. It was one of the reasons why they were reading Émile Zola.¹⁷⁰ Bosnian students believed that the experience of other European nations showed that a struggle for freedom can hardly be concluded without spilling blood.¹⁷¹ The Young Bosnians showed interest in the legal aspect of rebellion and also for themes of rebellion in literature.¹⁷² Intellectual role models pushed Young Bosnia slowly but steadily toward the use of violence.

Apart from Mazzini, Peter Kropotkin was the most important individual role model for Princip and his friends. His writings were very popular, and Bosnian students believed that Kropotkin was right when he said that people should oppose despotism in an organized manner.¹⁷³ Prior to 1914, one of the most famous advocates of *propaganda of the deed* and the use of violence against tyrants was Johann Most.¹⁷⁴ Even though there is no direct link between Most and Princip, we know that Princip was reading the Viennese anarchist journal *Wohlfahrt für Alle*, where Most's ideas were commonly discussed.¹⁷⁵ During the trial, Čabrinović said that "anarchists do not respect any law and he considers it his duty to take revenge."¹⁷⁶ Danilo Ilić translated Mikhail Bakunin's text *The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State*. Bakunin's writings inspired the Young Bosnians to believe in an idealistic new world of freedom and solidarity that could be created after a revolution.¹⁷⁷

Will and Action

In understanding the political ideas of Young Bosnia, it is important not to forget that the majority of them tended to become writers. Young writers were strongly influenced by Italian futurism, and especially that of Friedrich Nietzsche and

¹⁶⁹ E. De Laveleye, "Pravo na ustanak," in: *Zora*, 3/4 (1912), pp. 172-176.

¹⁷⁰ Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 30; Tartaglia, *Veleizdajnik*, p. 13.

¹⁷¹ Bartulović, *Od revolucionarne omladine*, p. 15; Žanin Čalić, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, p. 77.

¹⁷² "Politički pregled—ozbiljnost političke situacije," in: *Zora*, 3/1 (1912), p. 36; R. Vučković, *Poetika srpske avangarde*, Belgrade 2011, p. 9.

¹⁷³ P. Kropotkin, "Zapisi revolucionara," *Zora*, 2/9 (1911), p. 400; Jones/Clayes, *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth Century Political Thought*, p. 475; Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, pp. 13, 24; Ljubibratić, *Bogdan Žerajić*, p. 125; Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 30; Čorović, *Odnosi Srbije i Austro*, p. 596.

¹⁷⁴ Jones/Clayes, *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth Century Political Thought*, p. 245.

¹⁷⁵ Ljubibratić, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 151. Danilo Ilić had translated texts written by Pierre Ramus, the editor of this anarchist journal. Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan 1914*, p. 37.

¹⁷⁶ Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 41.

¹⁷⁷ M. Bakunjin, "Pariška komuna i ideja države," in: *Spomenica Danila Ilića*, p. 23.

Henry Bergson. Futurism emphasized the importance of action.¹⁷⁸ Futurists asserted the importance of courage, heroism, and rebelliousness.¹⁷⁹ Cvetko Popović gave the name “futurists” to a group of his friends during school trips.¹⁸⁰ Futurism introduced glorification of the powerful individual as an example of activism, revolt, and strength of spirit.¹⁸¹ The influence of futurism is especially evident in the writings of Dimitrije Mitrinović.

Pero Slijepčević studied Nietzsche in Vienna.¹⁸² Serbian literary historian Radovan Vučković showed how Nietzsche and Bergson influenced Young Bosnian understanding of literary aestheticism.¹⁸³ It is possible to find mention of *Vitalism* or *Élan vital* in Young Bosnian writings.¹⁸⁴ These influences had political consequences. The influence of Nietzsche and Bergson, the ideas of life and will, were transformed into the idea that was put into service of revolutionary tendencies.¹⁸⁵ Nietzsche and Bergson were the first philosophers who understood life in categories of will.¹⁸⁶ The Young Bosnian reception of their ideas was molded with a tendency to embed activist ideas into the revolutionary nationalism of their ideology. Bosnian revolutionaries had goals that required determination and strong will. Miloš Vidaković wrote that his generation:

will fall with honor and as heroic or they will scream with the final victory)...(We must be enthusiastic, foolish, ready to fall, and to have the heroic morale of those who are sacrificing themselves for the benefit of the posterity. The goal of the new youth, intoxicated with the fight for our ideas, is radical struggle until sacrifice.¹⁸⁷

The article “The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche” was published in *Bosanska vila*. *Superhuman* had its own contrast embodied in the Christian, “domestic animal, who is living among sick masses.” It was said that man became a slave out of fear and the present morale was the morale of slaves. Nietzsche was

¹⁷⁸ G. De Tore, *Istorija avangardnih književnosti*, Sremski Karlovci 2001, pp. 50-51, 106, 115; G. Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics*, New York 1996, p. 31.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹⁸⁰ Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan 1914*, p. 41.

¹⁸¹ Vučković, *Poetika srpske avangarde*, p. 50.

¹⁸² Č. Nikolić, *Biografija Pera Slijepčevića*, Belgrade/Banja Luka 2013, p. 35.

¹⁸³ Predrag Palavestra, *Jovan Skerlić u srpskoj književnosti 1877-1977*: zbornik radova, Belgrade 1980, pp. 88-89.

¹⁸⁴ Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, p. 22; Gaćinović, *Onima koji dolaze*, p. 30.

¹⁸⁵ Vučković, *Poetika srpske avangarde*, p. 82.

¹⁸⁶ A. François/R. “Lapidus, Life and Will in Nietzsche and Bergson,” in: *SubStance*, 36/3 (2007), pp. 100-101.

¹⁸⁷ Palavestra, *Književnost Mlade Bosne*, p. 137.

offering a solution.¹⁸⁸ Young Bosnians were writing about “slave morale” and “unwakened forces.”¹⁸⁹ *Bosanska vila* published parts from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.¹⁹⁰ Young Bosnians started to write Will with a capital W.¹⁹¹ Young Bosnian literary writings are filled with themes of will and strength.¹⁹² Sometimes it is fascinating how Austrian state censors failed to notice the content of some articles written by Young Bosnians. The tactics of the Bosnian students was to publish in literary periodicals and never to use the name of Austria. Borivoje Jevtić wrote in the summer of 1913:

The edifice of Your Majesty and Your glory is on a wobbly foundation)...(We feel how big our wings are and we are ready to lift in the sunny air)...(our happiness will come. We are not gladiators who, when they are knocked on the ground, stay there, gladiators that do not resurrect. You should know, we rise from the blood rejuvenated and fearless.¹⁹³

Any philosophy that stressed the importance of action by the individual matched perfectly the needs of the Young Bosnians. They were writing that without individual enthusiasm even the French Revolution would never have succeeded.¹⁹⁴ Gavrilo Princip wrote to the sister of his friend: “We need a lot of strength in order to live, and this strength is given to us by action.”¹⁹⁵

Violence, Martyrdom, and Assassination

The attractiveness of violence and the idea of martyrdom among the Young Bosnians were instigated by the literature they were reading. Similar to the Russian conspirators and assassins, the Young Bosnians discussed and wrote about assassinations in European history.¹⁹⁶ What I would like to point out is that the Young Bosnians incorporated fictional and non-fictional models discovered in literature into their own reality. This applies for both assassination and martyrdom. Nikolay Chernyshevsky’s novel *What Is to Be Done?* was one of the

188 M. Uskoković, “Filozofija Fridriha Ničea,” *Bosanska vila*, 30 May 1914, p. 148.

189 Gaćinović, *Mlada Bosna*; M. Gaćinović, “Krik očajnika,” in: *Spomenica Vladimira Gaćinovića*, pp. 33, 35.

190 F. Niče, “O čitanju i pisanju,” *Bosanska vila*, 15 November 1908, p. 442.

191 D. Mitrinović, “Estetičke kontemplacije,” *Bosanska vila*, 30 March 1913, p. 92.

192 See: B. Jevtić, “Kula života,” *Bosanska vila*, 30 July 1913, p. 189.

193 B. Jevtić, “Predosećanja,” *Bosanska vila*, 30 July 1913, p. 189.

194 Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije*, p. 532.

195 Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, p. 66.

196 Verhoeven, *The Odd Man Karakozov*, pp. 57-58; Bogičević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna*, p. 280.

most popular books among the Young Bosnians.¹⁹⁷ Vladimir Gaćinović wrote: "With great love we were reading *What Is to Be Done?*, we only stopped to admire the fascinating ascetic figure of Rahmetov."¹⁹⁸ "Because of Rahmetov we strongly loved Young Russia," added Gaćinović.¹⁹⁹ Young Russia was a manifesto written by Petr Grigorevich Zaichnevskii. He wrote that he had studied the history of Western Europe and that in Russia it was necessary to spill even more blood than the Jacobins did during the French Revolution. Zaichnevskii wrote that the only future is "Revolution, revolution, bloody and implacable, that will radically change everything, all foundations of contemporary society and that will destroy supporters of the present order."²⁰⁰

Miloš Vidaković wrote that the goal of the new youth is to start "a radical struggle to the end."²⁰¹ Chernyshevsky's character Rahmetov was a role model. He did not drink, he did not need any rest, he was not interested in women, and he slept on nails.²⁰² He was an "exemplar of reputation."²⁰³ Asceticism and violence were also inspired by Sergey Nechayev. He believed that "The revolutionary knows only one science—destruction)... (During days and nights he may have only one thought, one purpose: merciless destruction."²⁰⁴ Nechayev's influence is easily noticeable in Gaćinović' article "Onima koji dolaze" (For those who are coming).²⁰⁵

Through the Russian literature Bosnian students learned about police methods of investigation and about jails.²⁰⁶ The Young Bosnian self-image resembles the plots of some novels. When today we read descriptions of their meetings, it is difficult to escape this impression. When Gaćinović described the life of Bogdan Žerajić he wrote, "He always used to withdraw to his poor apartment, far away from roar and noise of our small town, in tiny ruinous streets, where a man of

¹⁹⁷ Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, p. 24; K. Krajšumović, "U prvom razredu Preparandije 1908," in: *Spomenica Danila Ilića*, p. 82; Ljubibratić, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 151.

¹⁹⁸ Gaćinović, *Ogledi i pisma*, p. 91. See also: Verhoeven, *The Odd Man Karakozov*, pp. 39-66, for importance of Rahmetov's character.

¹⁹⁹ Gaćinović, *Ogledi i pisma*, p. 91.

²⁰⁰ Verhoeven, *The Odd Man Karakozov*, p. 94; P.G. "Zaičnevskii/Mlada Rusija," in: L. Perović (ed.), *Planirana revolucija*, Belgrade 1988, p. 162.

²⁰¹ Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 51.

²⁰² A. M. Drozd, *Chernyshevskii's What Is to Be Done? A Reevaluation*, Chicago 2001, pp. 113, 120.

²⁰³ Ćorović, *Odnosi Srbije i Austro*, p. 622.

²⁰⁴ Jones/Clayes, *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth Century Political Thought*, p. 241.

²⁰⁵ Gaćinović, *Onima koji dolaze*; Bogičević (ed.), *Mlada Bosna*.

²⁰⁶ I. Kranjčević, *Uspomene jednog učesnika*, pp. 15-16; P. Kropotkin, "Zapisi revolucionara," *Zora*, 3/3 (1912), pp. 116-117.

Dostoyevsky and Maxim Gorki lived.”²⁰⁷ Young Bosnian meetings and discussions became clandestine, after the instructions they found in Russian literature.²⁰⁸ In small circles, organized by Russian instructions,²⁰⁹ Young Bosnians read about assassinations in Russia, about the “Heroism of Sophia Perovskaya” who participated in the assassination of Tzar Alexander II of Russia in 1881.²¹⁰ The night before the assassination, Princip read his favorite, Peter Kropotkin.²¹¹ Books offered lessons. Drago Ljubibratić testified:

We were reading works of Russian authors that were filled with revolutionary characters. That motivated us to read about Russian terrorism, assassinations, and revolutionary struggle. Nothing sounded as magical for us as the words “revolution,” “assassination,” and “strike.”²¹²

Trifko Grabež insisted that Franz Ferdinand, as an enemy, “must be destroyed.”²¹³ The prosecutor asked Princip how he planned to unite South Slavs. Princip replied, “With terror.” When he was asked what that meant, he added “That means to kill those on the top, those who are a nuisance and who do harm.”²¹⁴ The night before the assassination, Čabrinović read Sergey Stepnyak-Kravchinsky’s *Underground Russia*, which was extremely popular among the Young Bosnians.²¹⁵ Čabrinović said during the trial, “Christ said if someone throws a rock at you, one should throw bread at him,” and added that after much suffering he believes that if someone throws a rock at you, you should throw two rocks at him.²¹⁶ He defined his position:

I support radical anarchism, with the idea to destroy the present system with terrorism and to introduce a different, more liberal system. I hate all representatives of this so-called

²⁰⁷ Gaćinović, *Onima koji dolaze*, p. 32.

²⁰⁸ B. Jeftić, “Vladimir Gaćinović u Sarajevu,” in: *Spomenica Vladimira Gaćinovića*, p. 101.

²⁰⁹ Jevtić, *Sarajevski atentat*, pp. 6-7.

²¹⁰ S. Kaluđerović, “Danilo Ilić u revolucionarnom pokretu,” in: *Spomenica Danila Ilića*, p. 93.

²¹¹ Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 82; Parežanin, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 197.

²¹² Ljubibratić, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 138.

²¹³ Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 90.

²¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 62.

²¹⁵ Bogičević (ed.), *Sarajevski atentat*, p. 159; Popović, *Sarajevski Vidovdan 1914*, p. 37. Numerous sources confirmed extraordinary popularity of Stepnyak in Bosnia and Herzegovina. See: K. Krajšumović, “U prvom razredu Preparandije 1908,” in: *Spomenica Danila Ilića*, p. 82; Ljubibratić, *Gavrilo Princip*, p. 151; Jevđević, *Sarajevski zaverenici*, p. 13; Pfeffer, *Istraga u Sarajevskom*, p. 124.

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 354.

constitutional system, not as personalities, but as representatives of the government that oppresses all people.²¹⁷

One hundred years after the Sarajevo assassination and the outbreak of the First World War, Young Bosnia remains an open chapter for historians. After 1966 and the publication of Vladimir Dedijer's *The Road to Sarajevo*, no fundamental work on Young Bosnia has been published. This paper attempted to elucidate who were the major role models and what were the intellectual influences on Young Bosnia. I have tried to explain that the assassination in Sarajevo was not accidental. Political violence was a consequence of the influence of intellectual role models, whose ideas were interpreted in a specific political, economic, and cultural context of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the years prior to the Great War.



Figure 3. Franz Ferdinand's automobile seconds before the assassination. Judging by the position of the mosque on the right, we can conclude that at this moment the automobile was just 10 to 20 meters away from Moritz Schiler's shop, where Gavrilo Princip was standing with his gun. The timing of the photo is corroborated by two facts: we can see that the automobile is going away from the Town Hall along the right bank of Miljacka river towards western parts of the city and we can see an officer who was standing on the left side skirt of the car with the purpose to protect Franz Ferdinand with his body. Franz Ferdinand drove with a bodyguard and he traveled in this direction only once, just prior to his assassination. Source: Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

²¹⁷ Pfeffer, *Istraga u Sarajevskom*, p. 41.



Figure 4. Gavrilo Princip (pictured here in the middle). The photograph was taken during the trial in September of 1914. Source: Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina