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## **THE IMPACT OF THE CREATION OF THE ISLAMIC CALIPHATE IN TERRORIST CIRCLES OF BALKAN ISLAMISTS**

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*Abstract:* Happenings on the Middle East have undoubtedly left remarkable mark among the Muslims who live on the territory of Balkan. The events in Syria and Iraq, and the crisis in other Middle Eastern countries pose a significant threat to the Balkan countries. For better understanding of the political, social, economic and security processes in the Middle East, it is necessary at least to analyze all the processes that led to the creation of a unified Arab state, its ideology and aims. This work will try to answer some really important questions about ISIS and the idea of spreading the territory of a Great Muslim Country with an attention on Balkan countries.

*Key words:* Islamic caliphate, terrorism, Arab Spring, Wahhabis.

### **INTRODUCTION**

For better understanding of the political, social, economic and security processes in the Middle East, it is necessary at least to analyze all the processes that led to the creation of a unified Arab state, and also the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the early twentieth century, especially during and after the First World War. Powers like Great Britain and France did everything to crush the Ottoman Empire and expand the zone of its interests in the territory which is rich in oil and other raw materials. The United Kingdom, in particular, had fears that the Ottoman Empire could cut oil supplies from Persia (today's Iran), and encouraged the Arab tribes rulers to oppose the Turks and the Ottoman Empire as the only serious military force on the field at the moment. At the same time, everything was done to prevent Germans in their intentions to be in alliance with the Arab tribes and to turn an entire religion – Islam, against it (Mohs, 2008, p. 181).

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Hussein Ibn Ali was Emir (ruler) of Mecca from 1908-1917. The international community has accepted his self-proclamation as the King of Hejaz, namely, the territories that were under the control of the family Hashemites. Hussein Ibn Ali was the leader of the rebellion against the Ottoman Empire, and the leader of Arab nationalism. He decided to be in an alliance with Great Britain, which was the objective of combating the influence of the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East. This alliance was preceded by an intense exchange of letters between Hussein Ibn Ali and Sir Henry MakMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt, in which Hussein Ibn Ali promised a large territory for his kingdom. It included what is now called the Arab East (Syria, Palestine, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula). A possible reason why the British have decided on this pledge, is the important role Thomas Edward Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, played in the Arab world. In his book, *Sir Thomas Lawrence*, one of the best British intelligence officers of all time, said: “We can observe the emergence of a new important factor in the East that we need, a force that is present and which exceeds the Turks in the number and also in mental abilities. It is about Arabs, a large component of the Ottoman Empire” (Lawrence, 1997). Arab nationalists have also supported Hussein Ibn Ali, and they were convinced that with him and with the help of the British, they will be able to free themselves from the Turkish occupation. All had their own interests. Emir Hussein Ibn Ali managed to organize a revolt against the Ottoman Empire, which has provided him with a leading position. Arab nationalists had no intention of forming a new government, thereby limiting its influence and power, while Great Britain wanted to control Emir Hussein Ibn Ali and Arabs together.

On June 10, 1916, Emir Hussein Ibn Ali declared war for independence against the Ottoman Empire symbolically firing a shot to its barracks in Mecca, which has marked the beginning of the great Arab rebellion (Mufti, 1996, p. 20). However, too old to fight, he left the command of the army to his third son, Prince Fajzulu. Limited temporal Arab forces, mainly composed of Bedouins, took out guerrilla operations against Turkish forces attacking garrisons in the cities and the fortified places, as well as key communication such were roads and railways. During the Arab-Ottoman conflict two secret agreements indicate that the United Kingdom multiple times betrayed their Arab allies.

The United Kingdom and France participated in the negotiations in late 1915, but in March 1916, Sykes-Picot signed an agreement under which they shared among themselves all of Arab territories that were occupied by the Ottomans (Sicker, 2001, p. 26). The second agreement, known as the Balfour Declaration (which was signed on November 2, 1917), is actually a letter of Sir Arthur James Balfour, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Great Britain, sent to the British Baron Walter Rothchild, who was the leader of the British-Jewish community. It highlights the following: “The Government of His Majesty looks approvingly on the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine ...” (Yapp, 1987, p. 290).

Despite initial successes, such was the occupation of the strategically important city - the port of Aqaba in the Red Sea in 1917, the Arabs were not aware of the difficult political situation in which they found themselves.

As the revolt against the Ottoman Empire progressed, the Turks began with the killing of Arab activists and intellectuals in Damascus and Beirut. However, in October 1918, Lawrence of Arabia and the army of Prince Fajzela occupied Damascus. As a result the Turkish forces had to withdraw, and the great victory and liberation was celebrated throughout Syria. During that time, Hussein Ibn Ali, a self-proclaimed king of the Arabs, was preparing to take his throne. However, the idea of uniting the Arabs experienced another betrayal, and this time from unexpected side. Hussein Ibn Ali, to whom the British had promised the title of Caliph, was betrayed because they also promised the same title of Caliph to the Saudis, other Arab tribes, whose leaders wanted that title and position only for themselves. Sykes-Picot agreement has left a large mark in the Middle East. Not only that it has enabled the creation of the Jews state, but thanks to the provisions of this agreement were created the present states with its borders, as is the case with Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. In the framework of the Paris Peace Conference which was held on January 3, 1919, a contract was signed between the Prince Fajzo and Haiman Weissman, outstanding Russian Jew, who later became President of the World Zionist movement. This agreement defines the return of Jews in a greater extent to Palestine, their deserved motherland (Friedman, 2000, p. 171). Regardless of the agreement between the Arabs, and the desire to create the Arab kingdom, the Western powers had other intentions with the former Ottoman territories inhabited by Arabs. First, the conquest and domination over the oil-rich territories. In July 1920, the French occupying forces already defeated the army of Prince Fajzo and occupied Damascus. It also meant the end of the idea of creating the Arab Caliphate. In 1923 French have connected the territory of today's Syria and Lebanon, and declared a state (Tucker, 2014, p. 686). Again, the Arab tribes came under foreign domination, and for the first time the Arab population was divided according to the newly-created state that did not exist even during Ottomans. Dreams of Arab nationalists of Arab unity and vision of Emir Hussein Ibn Ali about the unique kingdom under the leadership of the Arab Caliph, the successor of Prophet Muhammad, remained unfulfilled. Emir Hussein Ibn Ali, wanted to create a unified Arab state based on Islam and Islamic law. Arab nations who fought against Turkey, had not only aimed to liberate the territory, but religious and political goal - the restoration of the Caliphate. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632, almost all the caliphs were from the Arab world. With Ottoman conquest, the Turks took over this title from Arabs, so in 1451, Mehmed II 'the Conqueror' added next to the title 'Sultan' - the title 'Caliph' (Karpát, 2000, p. 84). After Mehmed II, another thirty-one Kalif was from Turkey, and then the function of Caliph, therefore, "Islamic caliphate" was extinguished

by the decision of the Parliament of Turkey on March 3, 1924. The founder of the modern Turkish state, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, regarding of extinguishing Caliphate, pronounced the following words: “The idea of a Khalifa, which represents a super religious leader of all the people who are adherents of Islam, is the idea taken from fiction, not from reality“ (Nigosian, 2004, p. 39). Regardless to the fact that Caliphate was formally extinguished, the idea has never ceased to be actual, especially in religious circles of Islamists. At the beginning of 21st century, it was not surprising the fact that Islamic fundamentalists entirely had the same position, the same attitudes, ideas and intentions, as those hundreds of years ago. The terrorist organization of Islamic fundamentalists took up large areas of today’s Iraq, the Levant (ISIL) and Nigeria (Boko Haram), proclaiming the establishment of the caliphate. At the same time, a call was made to all like-minded people around the world to come to the newly declared caliphate to help build an Islamic state, as well as, to do the same on the territory in which they live.<sup>2</sup> The Islamic Caliphate has its stronghold in the Balkans. For more than twenty years, in the wider Balkan area there are places and territories which have all the attributes of a caliphate. In BiH, parts of Serbia (Kosovo and Metohija, Raska), Macedonia, Montenegro and northern parts of Greece, operate communities of Islamic fundamentalists which are known as Wahhabis. Life in these communities is defined by the rules and principles of radical Islam, and members of this order are often a threat to local Muslim communities and frequently come into conflict with them. For instance, such example is Maoche village in Bosnia in which members of the state security services can be accessed only in heavily armed vehicles, along with the constant tension of the outbreak of the conflict. Upper Maocha, near Srebrenik, is the seat of Wahhabi communities, and residents are almost a decade under investigation by police and intelligence agencies due to suspicion that they are related to terrorism. Recently, in the village appeared symbols of the Caliphate and the so-called “Islamic state” whose leader is Abu al-Baghdadi, notorious terrorists from the Middle East.<sup>3</sup> Is this event actually a sign to other Islamic fundamentalists to create a caliphate on the territory of the Balkans? Islamic fundamentalists publicly announced their plans on social networks. They constantly published their aims within their circles, as well as the violent methods that they want to apply in the exercise of its goals. Disturbing news that appeared at the moment of writing this monograph brought great concern, both in professional circles as well as in the general public. The militant group - ISIL acting on the territory of Iraq and the Levant, has published on the social network Twitter its plans. According to them, the Islamic state would be

<sup>2</sup> “Halifa ebu Bekr Al-Bagdadadi invite all muslims in Islamic Halifate“, <http://vijestiummeta.com/halifa-ebu-bekr-al-bagdadadi-poziva-sve-muslimane-u-islamski-halifat/> Accessed 03.02.2015.

<sup>3</sup> „Flag of ISIL in Upper Maocha“, <http://www.nezavisne.com/novosti/bih/Zastava-ISIL-a-u-Gornjoj-Maoci-287291.html>, (accessed 03.02.2015)

stretched across the Middle East, large parts of Africa and western Asia, while the northern border would be stretched to the northern borders of Austria and Hungary. Spain would be under the Caliphate, as well. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant has also announced that it abolishes the regional benchmark from its name and establishes an Islamic state led by the caliph, which must be connected to all Muslims of the world and show full devotion. “He (al-Baghdadi) is Imam and Caliph of all Muslims,” said the spokesman of ISIL’s, Abu Muhammad al-Adnan, in a statement posted on the internet on the first day of Ramadan. ISIL plans to take control over all the Balkan countries - including Greece, Romania and Bulgaria, and to extend its rule up to Austria, which seems to be the plan based on the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire before II World War.



Caliphate according to the map published by members of the terrorist group ISIL and their intention to take shown territories including the Balkan countries in five years period.

### THE ISLAMIC FACTOR IN BALKANS

The Balkan Peninsula is primarily physical-geographical term, while Balkan has a dominant geopolitical, political-geographic and geostrategic definition. The Balkans is different from the Balkan Peninsula in territorial, qualitative and structural sense. The northern border of Balkans coincides with the northern border of Romania and the former “second” Yugoslavia. It is composed of Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and the European part of the Turkey and countries incurred

from the disintegration of Yugoslavia - Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia (Stepić, 2012, p. 9-34).

Accordingly, the Balkans is a political and geographical term, but also synonymous for geopolitics and is used in other areas of the world, similar in ethno-political fragmentation, mutual confrontations and the importance of geographical location for the interests of the great powers (Brzezinski, 2001, p. 117-118). Western European and Central European stereotyped interests focus of this space, considers it its periphery that is prone to chaos, national and religious, border and social antagonisms, and the transitional zone of the Eurasian unstable state-territorial structure, open to external influences and profiling of priority interests of the world's centers of power (Sretenović, 2010, p. 53-75).

Immediately after the end of the war on the territory of "other" Yugoslavia, a new term for this territory is used, "Western Balkans". The reasons for its introduction are given major geopolitical changes that occurred after the collapse of the bloc division which found its origin in the framework of the Balkan geopolitical node. Today, the concept of "Western Balkans" represents the region composed of newly formed, but so far non-integrated countries of the former Yugoslavia. From the corpus of these countries are excluded members of EU - Slovenia and later Croatia, and then Albania was attached. So, it is about four poor and neglected states from "ex Yugoslav space" - Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina, which were like Albania, faced with numerous political, economic, social, ethnic, religious and security problems, and are unable to successfully solve them independently (Gajić, 2012, p. 83-99). Even in the years after the end of the bloody conflicts, "Western Balkans" still represents a specific area due to its political, economic and security features. Obviously, this is all about a non-defined political space in which in the recent past armed conflicts took place, and political and security situation is still not stable. In terms of security, all states of the "Western Balkans" work the system of connected vessels. Simply, they are faced with the same or similar security challenges and threats. Ethnic and religious tensions, extremism, terrorism, organized crime and corruption are typical security concerns of these states (Mijalkovski, 2011, p. 398-399).

However, their specificity compared to other Balkan and European countries shows constant present security risks and threats that are based on traditional antagonisms of indigenous Christian and Muslim population from this region. Also, the growing security threats of a growing global presence of Wahhabis Islamism. Therefore, in terms of security, for all Western Balkan States, and also for Bulgaria, demographic factor plays an important role, respectively significant and influential Muslim population, which is settled in some parts of this territory and since the end of the last century, massively accepts the ideology of radical Arab form of Islam – Wahhabism.

Proportionally to its large population and share within the total population, the Muslims affect the internal and external socio-political developments in the Balkan countries and the creation of the geopolitical environment. Thus, in geopolitical terminology, all significant aspects of Muslim presence and social influence in the Balkans often determine the generic term of “Islamic factor”. Considered as a geopolitical phenomenon, the Islamic factor in the Balkans is determined by the historical, demographic, civilization, religious, cultural, social, geographical, political, economical, security and other significant aspects of social life of the local Muslims, which substantially affects the creation of internal and external socio-political milieu of each Balkan state. The same case is in the Balkan as a whole. The local Muslims, mostly Albanians and Bosnians, as well as other smaller Muslim communities, are the heritage of Islamisation which was led by Ottomans. They were implementing this process on the local, mainly autochthonous Christian population. Therefore, the Islamic factor did not exist in this area until Turkish invasions, and all that was left of it after the Turkey withdrawal is also a consequence of centuries of Ottoman domination.

In this significant and turbulent Balkan geopolitical area the Islamic factor is very important, not only from the point of creating opportunities within the state of West Balkan countries, but also their susceptibility to external political, economic, civilization, security and other trends. In the current global and regional geopolitical landscape, the Islamic factor participates in the creation of the geopolitical situation of the Western Balkan countries, and the entire Balkan region, affecting the character of all its physical-geographical and socio-geographical factors.

Therefore, Islamic geopolitical factor influences and represents one of the main questions in articulating geopolitical discourse of external centers of power in the Balkans, and on the other hand, the basis for the creation of geopolitical code of each Western Balkan country from which they, in the current geopolitical landscape, design and implement their objective as a possible geopolitical goal (Kilibarda, 2008, pp. 19-23).

As such, the Islamic factor in the Balkans for centuries influenced the change of state borders of the local indigenous peoples, and the structure of their homogeneous ethno-religious territorial entities, particularly Serbian national being. In proportion to the number and representation of the Muslim population in the total population of each Western Balkan country, the Islamic factor is affecting their demographic picture, flows to political events at local, national and international level. Depending on the level of education and industrial development in the areas where Muslims live, it affects the overall economic development of the Balkan countries.

Since the Muslims who live on Balkan area are in constant contact and permeation of various cultures and civilizations, the Islamic factor may be cohesive or destabilizing civilization factor. Despite its frequent use in negative

connotations, it can certainly be a strong and productive civilization link in the establishment and maintenance of international cooperation between the (post) Christian Balkan countries and the countries of the Islamic civilization. Still, looking in the context of traditionally frequent Balkan conflicts, based on many centuries of religious antagonisms of Muslim and Christian populations, which was often assisted and influenced of external power centers, the Islamic factor is a destabilizing factor in civilization, and it is the most widely used determinant in a geopolitical practice.

In accordance with the geopolitical (geopolitical and geo-economic) importance of the Balkans, and the fact that the Balkan history was marked by ethnic and religious extremism of the local Muslim population, the Islamic factor, as a destabilizing factor, proved to be an extremely convenient object of manipulation and misuse by external centers of power. Using its conflict potential, or managing the crises that in certain moments activate, the power centers establish their influence and control in this area, in order to achieve their own geopolitical (geo-economic and geostrategic) interest.

Geo-economic importance of this region lays in the fact that important international land, air and fairway corridors link western and central Europe with the Near and Middle East. Also, it was the projected significant competitive, mutually exclusive, energy corridors which are the subject of controversy of great powers. In geopolitical terms, this space represents a geo- buffer zone and on the other hand, the corridor for a breakthrough and making influential achievements of the great powers, both in the direction from east to west and vice versa, as well as in the direction from north to south and *vice versa*.

Although the Islamic factor was a subject of manipulation for the great powers for nearly a century and a half, such a phenomenon exists nowadays, and is still in their contemporary geopolitical combinations, primarily between the major Western powers and Islamic centers of power. The period of the Yugoslav crisis at the end of the last century as well as the post-conflict period on the beginning of a new, indicates that the Western powers use manipulation and misuse, or use threat of its conflict potential seeking to: exercise influence over domestic and foreign policy of certain Western Balkan countries; extort unacceptable political, military and territorial concessions; compromising their security and defense systems (pointing their weakness); overthrow the government unsuitable for the state regimes; provoke an armed rebellion; create conditions for military intervention or aggression; then they are making conditions for engagement of international forces under their auspices; and so on. Therefore, during and after the Yugoslav crisis, the radicalization of Balkan Islam, carried on the breaking wave of Wahhabism, served to the Western powers as a manipulative tool suitable for the destabilization of the Balkan situation and the realization of own interests in this area (Trifunovic, Stojakovic, 2011). On the other hand, within manipulation of Islamic factor, Islamic

centers of power act in the direction of further territorial fragmentation of existing state continent of autochthonous Christian (majority) Orthodox population, and based on that fact, the creation of religious homogeneous and territorially compact Muslim areas within Europe, with the prediction of further spread of Islam from that space to its interior.

Analyzing the performance of geopolitical Western powers and Islamic centers of power to this area during that period, it is noted that ethnic component of the national identity of Balkan Muslims, and also of their extremism, principally subject to public manipulation and misuse of the Western powers. Referring to international law, especially the human rights provisions and freedoms, including the right of peoples to self-determination, the Western powers, independently, operate within the European and Euro-Atlantic military-political alliances, or within international institutions, publicly favored ethno-separatist aspiration of Bosnians and Albanians. Thus seems encouraging for Muslim extremism in the Balkans in order to achieve its geopolitical interests. On the other hand, the Western powers concealed, covert actions, or noninterference, support the religious component of the national identity of Balkan Muslims and spread radical Islam among them, primarily with not obstructing spreading impact of the Balkan Muslims by radical power centers of Islamic civilization.

In regards of Islamic centers of power, the religious component of the national identity of Bosnians and Albanians is a subject to their public and secret manipulation. In the geopolitical approach towards this area, Islamic centers can rely on civilization aspect of the Islamic factor, i.e. the Islamic identity of the local Muslims and their sense of civilization connection with the originally non-Muslims. Also, and perhaps most importantly, they rely on the sacred right of all Muslims of the world that they live in one country which provide the “divine” legitimacy of their actions on this area.

### **BALKAN ATTACKED BY RADICAL ISLAM - WAHHABISM**

At the beginning of the new millennium, in conditions when they have already successfully accomplished indoctrination of part of the indigenous Muslim population and alignment of the interests of the Western powers and the various religious and political Islamic centers of power, radical Islamists and their militant organizations achieved successful penetration into the rest of the indigenous population of the Muslim religion in the Balkans. It is the target group, or object of attack of five million people. The massification of followers of Wahhabism is definitely part of the plan of Islamists in the Balkans, and it increasingly provides the conditions for realization of their long-term goals in this area.

The ultimate aim of radical Islamists, at the global level, is arranging the entire world society under Sharia law and create a unique community of Muslims – Ume.<sup>4</sup> The radicalization of the Balkan traditional Islam through indoctrination and gaining new supporters and empowering Islamist groups and organizations, the separation and connection of the Balkan Muslim territory, in order to achieve the “Green Route” and Sharia-established a unified Islamic state in the Balkans, called “Balkanistan” represent milestones, as a part of a global set aim of radical of Islamists. That state would include Albania, the greater part of the territory of Macedonia and Montenegro, the north-western part of Greece, southern and south-western part of Serbia and BiH (Mijalkovski, 2010, p. 68).

The achievement of this goal would create a Balkan Islamist base, as the foundation for the next one and the higher goal, and that is the Islamisation of the whole Europe.

However, in order to achieve the past targets of radical Islamists in the Balkans, we must first realize the full religious-ideological indoctrination of Balkan Muslims, which is indicated by an expert of islamistic terrorism - Yossef Bodansky: 'In the Balkans they intend to conduct the Muslim population through the radicalization in order to use them later to achieve their goals' (Drecun, 2008, p. 7). At the beginning of the new millennium, as a result of the previous indoctrination of Muslims in the Balkans, the followers of the Wahhabi ideology are the most numerous in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a country where Wahhabism first appeared and then spread. It is estimated that there are around 400.000 of them. If the number of the followers of Wahhabism in Kosovo would be half less (regardless of Albanian later acceptance of Wahhabism compared to Bosnian people, in the following period, you could quite confidently expect to equalize the number of Wahhabis in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Such expectations are a result of the trend of rapidly increasing indoctrinated Muslims among two million ethnic Albanian population of Kosovo. Wahhabism is becoming more present among Albanians in western Macedonia and among Bosnians in the so-called territory “Sandzak”. It is also in progress in the southern parts of Serbia and Montenegro, inhabited mostly by Albanian population, especially in the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja (Mijalkovski, 2001; Potežica, 2007, p. 183).

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<sup>4</sup> Wahhabis are market oriented towards achieving the above objectives of the session in the Middle East, which includes the following: the expulsion of US forces from Iraq and Saudi Arabia, the territory of special importance to the Islamic civilization due to the seat of the holy Islamic cities of Mecca and Medina; Then, the overthrow of the Saudi royal dynasty Al Saud because of the close economic and political relations with the United States; restoration of the Saudi Arabia's Islamic roots, the destruction of the Jewish state of Israel and the release of Palestinian territories by the Israeli occupation. See: “International Terrorism Since 1945 Episode 2: The Al-Qaeda Menace”, BBC, *Great Britain*, 2009, Available at: [http://www.disclose.tv/action/viewvideo/55294/intl\\_terrorism\\_since\\_1945\\_Al\\_Qaeda/](http://www.disclose.tv/action/viewvideo/55294/intl_terrorism_since_1945_Al_Qaeda/), (accessed 7.03.2015).

Massive indoctrination of indigenous Muslim population ensures successful implementation of Islamists's plans in the Balkans and Europe. Those plans are occasionally published in the public, however, they are different due to the fact that global corpus of radical Islamists is not homogeneous, it is even conflicted. At the moment there are more Islamist transnational organizations that implement their own jihadist struggle, such as "Al Qaeda" and recently formed Islamist organization "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria - ISIS", which originated from the breakaway Iraqi branch of "Al Qaeda". Their common goal is to create a unified Islamic state of all Muslims of the world, but both see themselves as key holder of such a project.

As for the "Al Qaeda" is concerned, their aims can be seen in the plan documents called "Balkan 2020" (Trifunović, 2014, p. 195-196). According to the professor. Ivan Babanovski from the Faculty of Security in Skoplje, the plan "Balkan 2020" predicts that through Islamic charities and certain political structures of Muslim and Albanian ethnic groups until 2020, the entire Balkan would be islamized and would serve as an "aircraft carrier" for the wide opening doors to the penetration of Islam into Europe. On the other hand, the "Plan 3000" is aimed in the first phase to works on creating whole-islamic country which would spread from the Atlantic to the Urals and Spain, and in the second stage, by the end of year 3000, the whole world should be Islamized, and Christians would practically be liquidated.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, in mid-2014, in the general public was published a five-year plan of the ISIS. The plan of the Islamist organization involves creating a caliphate in addition to the individual European states - Austria, Spain, Hungary and a part of Ukraine, the Middle East, North Africa and a large areas of Asia, would include the entire Balkans, together with the ex-Yugoslav states of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Croatia and Slovenia.

In terms of outlined Islamist plans, the Balkans, as the area with the influential Muslim population, especially the area of "Western Balkans", is largely a subject of the operation of the Wahhabis from the Balkan and outside, which are primarily focused on its territories inhabited by a majority or influential minority of Bosnian and Albanian population. The objectives of these plans should be achieved in phases. This includes parallel process of mass indoctrination of Balkan Muslims, with the process of the creation of unitary (Muslim) Bosnia and Herzegovina, and sovereign state of 'Kosovo', then the separation of the territory of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja from Serbia, then the annexation to the independent state of 'Kosovo' and then joining of those territories to so-called 'Great Albania'. At the same time, it is necessary to allocate the territory of Rasko-Polimska field (ie. Sandzak) from Serbia and Montenegro, and conjoin it to unitary Muslim State of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Drecun, 2008 p. 67). Towards this, in the following period

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<sup>5</sup> „Balkan će biti islamizovan do 2020“, Blic, 12. mart 2011. <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Politika/241019/Babanovski-Balkan-ce-biti-islamizovan-do-2020> (Accessed 09.04.2015.)

it is necessary to consider joint action of the Wahhabi ethno-separatist political entities of Bosnians and Albanians in the territory of the Balkan states, because their Islamic jihadist and ethno-separatist goals in this area, at this stage of operation, is currently identical (Potežica, 2008, p. 208-209). In the last phase there would be a complete Islamization of the Balkan region, and its suitable placement in the designed caliphate.

### **APPEARING ISLAMIC (WAHHABI / SALAPHISTIC) CALIPHATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ITS CAUSES**

The Islamic State 'is not an essentially new organization in the region of the Middle East, emerged as an expression of the crisis triggered by the revolutions of 2010 in the Arab world. Contrary, the IS has several roots, and the product of more than long-term and widespread crisis in the Middle East. Today the explosive growth of this organization is actually the result of pre-existing conflicts that was worsen and caused from various roots (Weiss, Hassan, 2015).

First, the "Islamic State" is the product of terrible forms of despotism that has tortured the Middle East region. It is no coincidence that its foundation, as a source of power, are concentrated in Iraq and Syria, where Saddam Hussein and Bashar al-Assad ruled for decades. During that period they killed hundreds of thousands of people, destroyed political life, and deepened sectarianism transforming it into the mechanism of polarization.

Second, the IS is a descendant of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. First of all, it was an exclusion of a huge part of Iraqi people from post-invasional political process and from formation of a new government. The government was discriminating and considered them collectively guilty for Saddam and his Baath party, which is in both cases allowed the formation of new groups, like the one Abu Musab al Zarqawi founded firstly, whose activities are carried out with the aim of making contact with the discriminated parts of Iraqi society and positioning among them. Who was Musab al Zarqawi from which, after a certain time, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took over an Islamist organization in Iraq? (Weiss, Hassan, 2015).

Musab al Zarqawi was Jordanian and he was executed in June 2006 in an air raid by US forces on his shelter. For many people it was the symbol of the Iraqi insurgency. Before the invasion on Iraq in 2003, Zarqawi was in connection with the "Ansar al Islam", an extremist group that was active in the northern parts of Iraq, where Kurdish dominated. Their base was destroyed during the attack on Iraq, but Zarqawi soon after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime, emerged as the leader of the group "Tavid wave of jihad", which later changed its name to 'Al Qaeda in Iraq'.

It is well known that Zarqawi published loyalty to Osama bin Laden, who appointed him as his deputy in Iraq in October 2004. Zarqawi, whose real name

was Ahmad Fadil Nazal al Halaj, was called the prince “Al Qaeda in Iraq”. Zarqawi was the most wanted terrorist in Iraq, and he is believed to be responsible for the bloodiest incidents in the country since 2003. Initially he was an ordinary street robber, but he eventually became extremists who led the “holy war” to expel US forces from Iraq, which blackmailed his head on \$ 25 million. The terrorist Zarqawi seems to inspire a large number of militants across the Arab world to decide on the suicide attacks in which thousands of people in Iraq got killed.

Third, the IS is the result of an aggressive regional policy of Shia - Iran, which has deteriorated in recent years by treating Iraq, Lebanon and Syria for their yard, feeding (directly or indirectly) confessional divisions, the commission and the division of the backbone of ideological mobilization, and policy of revenge and retribution that has created a destructive interface.

Fourth, the IS is the result of Salafi networks in the Gulf (Saudi Arabia and other countries), which were created and developed during the 80s of last century, after the oil boom and “Afghanistan Jihad”. These networks have continued to operate and expand under different names in the last two decades.

Fifth, the IS is a descendant of the deep crisis that is deeply rooted in the way of thinking for some Islamist groups that are trying to escape from their terrible failure to meet the challenges of today concerning an insane model, (allegedly taken from the seventh century) believing that in their imaginary religious communities they can find the answer to all contemporary and future issues.

Sixth, the IS is a descendant of violence, or the environment, which is subordinate to the stunning brutality, which has allowed the growth of this disease and helped the formation of what might be called the IS-ism. Like previous Iraq, Syria today is abandoned powder keg that has become a laboratory, a training ground for violence, the daily massacres and their consequences.

Seventh, and perhaps the most important, the IS is a product of American policy in the Middle East, named the “Great Middle East”, which is aimed at, inter alia, overthrow of Shia regime in Syria and bringing to power of radical Islamists. For that purpose, the United States and its Western allies, profusely supplied this country with weapons. They trained Syrian rebels whose strength was presented in the crimes of the newly Salafist organizations “Jabat al-Nusra” with which, it turned out, leader of the Iraqi Salafists Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi maintained close relations from the beginning. US strong alliance with the Iraqi and Syrian Salafist caused a series of preterm conclusions in the sense that the US and Israel were behind the organization – ‘Islamic State’ and the formation of Sunni (salaphist) caliphate in the heart of the Middle East, with the aim of destroying of Shia Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Shiite regime in Syria, Iraq and finally Iran.

On a demonstrating the fact that the “Islamic state” is a product of US and Israeli policy in the Middle East, mostly insisted Iraqi, Iranian and Western

individual, but firstly, an independent US media, citing, inter alia, on the claims of a runaway American secret service agent of the NSA, Edward Snowden, who found refuge in the Russian Federation.<sup>6</sup> However, whatever is true, military and financial power is currently hiding behind the “Islamic state”, and it is certain that it is funded from multiple sources.

According to the *New York Times*, in 2013 Qatar has delivered 85 aircraft of weapons and food to Islamists in contrast to 37 from Saudi Arabia and even less amount of “help” from other entities such as, for example, Jordan. At the same time, although it was not as big financial sponsor as Qatar, Turkey is still used as a first-class technical base through which they were going, and most of the munitions, materials and “workforce” for foreign mercenaries in Syria. At a joint press conference with Prime Minister of Turkey - Recep Erdogan and Turkish President - Abdullah Gul, in August 2009, the ruler of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, has expressed a desire to build a pipeline through Syria to Turkey to export natural gas of his country: “We are ready for the gas pipeline from Qatar to Turkey“. Hurrying to realize this goal, Qatar began helping foreign revolt in Syria immediately after Colonel Muammar Gaddafi was killed in Libya in October 2011. Before that, Qatar has played a major role in the overthrow of the Libyan regime by delivering weapons to the rebels, supply and training. In January 2011, in the American television channel CBS “60 Minutes” show, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani said that he wants to oust the Syrian government: “In order to stop the killing ... some troops should enter into Syria”. Then in February of the same year, Prime Minister of Qatar, Hamad bin Dzasal al-Thani confirmed: “We must do whatever is necessary to help (the Syrian opposition), among other things, by giving them weapons to defend themselves.”<sup>7</sup>

Deputy of Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia’s, Prince Abdulaziz bin Abdullah al-Sud, founded the military command and control center in the Turkish city of Adana, which was a “home” for the US airbase Indzrlık, a comfortable place for forwarding “non-lethal” aid from Washington. Then appeared three Kuwaiti helpers and began to provide great support to ISIL, Safi al-Adzmi, Hadzadz el-Adzmi and Al Anisy.

The promises of the United States and Qatar that “after the victory” salafiti-jihadists would be able to transform into political players and participants of

<sup>6</sup> You can see the photograph from 2014, making a connection between John McCain and Caliph Al-Baghdadi. See: „John McCain NEVER met with Caliph Al-Baghdadi and Al-Baghdadi was NEVER a CIA or Mossad Agent and the Vatican is not the Harlot of Babylon“, portal Shoebat.com – Awareness and action, 26.08.2014. Available at: <http://shoebat.com/2014/08/26/john-mccain-never-met-caliph-al-baghdadi-al-baghdadi-never-cia-mossad-agent-vatican-harlot-babylon/>, (Accessed 7.03.2015)

<sup>7</sup> “Teheran Times: Ko je stvorio ISIL; CIA, Saudijsci ili Katar ili MOSAD?“, internet portal Novi Standard, 29.08.2014, see: [www.standard.rs](http://www.standard.rs), (Accessed 8.3.2015)

“democratic process”, proved to be unrealistic. In an interview with Al-Jazeera on 7 September 2011, the former emir of Qatar, insisted: “You will see that extremism convert to civilian life and civil society.” But, instead of terrorists being transformed into political players, the US, along with their Saudi, Qatar, Turkey and the Western allies, have created a monster with more than 50 thousand killers out of control, that control area the size of Belgium. “What began in Syria in the spring of 2011 as an ordinary rebellion of several so-called rebels - developed and turned into a brutal and bloody movement headed by salafita located in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey, that would not only overthrew the Syrian regime, but also occupied Iraq and Lebanon “- complained Lebanese politician - Aga Shaukat Jaffrey.

Over time, the “Islamic state” has become a magnet for many Muslims around the world who flocked to the Middle East in order to join its ranks and their inspiration was a jihad.

### **THE IMPACT OF THE “ARAB SPRING” ON BALKAN MUSLIMS**

Period of the Middle East crisis, or the violent events known as the “Arabspring“, has been a great influence on the Balkan Muslims. On Balkan this period is marked by the mass departure of Muslims from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Metohija, Sandzak, Montenegro and Macedonia on the battlefields in Iraq and Syria, as well as with series of arrests of Wahhabi movement followers who wooed Balkan Muslims, for that endeavor. The exact number of Muslims on these fronts is not known, but it is assumed that it is over a thousand people. For the Balkans, this is an introduction to a new phase of action of local Jihadists. This phase is initiated, it is in progress, and for its specifics, it can be defined as the phase of “terrorist-insurgent manifestation of followers of Wahhabism “ on the Balkan.

Regarding to Kosovo, a large number of local Muslims responded to the call for holy war in Syria and Iraq. Kosovo police, on August 11th 2014, arrested forty people suspected of participation in the fighting in those countries who were supporting the Islamist organization “Islamic State” or “Jabat al Nusra” (Hasterman, 2015, p. 34). There were eight people arrested in Prishtina, seven in Gnjilan, eleven in Urosevac, five in Prizren, and in Pec and Mitrovica four people each. At least one person was arrested from NGO’s “The principle” an Islamic association, which is officially registered with the authorities in Prishtina, which recruited and sent men to war in Syria and Iraq. Among those arrested were the members of the association “The Islamic youth - Kachanik”. A few weeks before the mass arrests, from this Association exactly four people were arrested suspected of a terrorist activity.

Shortly afterwards, on 4th of September 2014, imam of a large mosque in Prishtina - Sefqet Krasnici was arrested by the Kosovo police, with charges of

inciting hatred against different religious and ethnic national elements. After the hearing he was released. Two weeks later, on 17<sup>th</sup> of September, with eleven Kosovo imams, imam Sefcet Krasnici was arrested again under suspicion of abetting the departure of young people from Kosovo to fight in the ranks of Islamist organizations “Jabat al Nusra” and “Islamic state” in Syria and Iraq. In the same action, another prominent Wahhabi leader from Kosovo, Mazlami was arrested. He was imam of the mosque, “Jenny Mahala “in Prizren.

In addition to Krasnici and Mazlami, Kosmet imams who were arrested under suspicion of provoking religious extremism and the emigration of young people from Kosovo to fight in Syria and Iraq were: Sabahudin Selimi, mullah from Viti; Enes Goga, chief imam of the Islamic community in Pec; Erol Nesimi, mullah and administrator of the portal “perkujtimi.net”; Idriz Bilibani, mullah from the Bosnian community and administrator of the portal stazomislama.com; Leonard Ruli, the self-styled Abu Beker Ruli, mullah from Prizren; Dardan Evil (Gjuka), imam from Pec, a lecturer at radio-udhezimi.com; Sefki Koraci, imam in Kachanik; Bedri Robaj, imam in improvised mosque in Dardania, in Pristina; Ekrem Obadiah, imam and lecturer at the mosque in the village of “Tavnik” in the southern part of Kosovska Mitrovica, a member of the Islamic community in that city, and the leader of the terrorist organization, “Abu Bekir Sidik”; Enis Rama, imam of the mosque, “Isa Beg” in Mitrovica; chief editor of Peace TV Shqip; Fuad Ramici, President of the Islamic Movement Bashkohu - LISBA.<sup>8</sup>

The number of Kosmet fundamentalists who took part in the fighting on the battlefields of Iraq and Syria on the side of the Islamist organization “Dzabat al Nusra” and “Islamic state”, is speculated for months, and the figures ranged to a few hundred.

Certainly, in the public is best-known a case of Kosovo-Albanian, Lavdrim Muhadzeri from Kacanik, who went to Jihad in Syria and there committed brutal crimes, which he released in late July 2014 on his Facebook profile. The photographs shows him holding a Syrian boy preparing to decapitate him with a knife, then holding the severed head in his hands and posing in front of camera. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August this year, in an interview for Dita from Tirana, Muhadzeri said that he did nothing more than members of UCK did during the war. Pristina media broadcast then that the extremist justified himself by saying that such a penalty Koran predicts. He said that the 19-year-old who was decapitated was caught as a spy, and according to the Koran, execution is planned for the one who betrays the Muslims. Muhadzeri joined extremists in late 2012, first the local association of “Principle”, which later formed an association “Islamic youth - Kachanik” where he earned the position of the Emir, the leader of the military wing of the organization. He joined to Syrian

<sup>8</sup> „Kosovska policija jutros uhapsila 12 imama“, Sandžacke novine online, 17.09.2014, <http://www.sandzacke.rs/vijesti/region/kosovska-policija-jutros-uhapsila-12-imama/>, (Accessed 8.03.2015)

mujahideen in 2012 from where he returned a year later, and then until the half of Ramadan in 2013 resided in Kosovo from where he returned to Syria.

The most famous member of the notorious Kosmet extremist organization “Islamic State”, was in the focus of the media in June 2014 because he published the photo where he sets on fire Kosovo passport. With other terrorists he set on fire the Albanian passport as well, on the grounds that all Muslims are united and that they do not need state passports because they belong to a single, Islamic state. According to Kosovo media, Muhadzeri, who called himself the leader of the Albanian fighters members within the “Islamic state”, worked prior to participation in the wars in Iraq and Syria to the US KFOR at Camp Bondsteel and for NATO in Afghanistan. During Ramadan in 2013, he participated in the activities of the Islamic Community of Kosovo, which is confirmed by a few photos. According to the Kurdish television KNNC, Muhadzeri was killed in August 2014 in a conflict with Kurdish defense forces.

As for Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the great action from the security agencies of the country, codenamed “Damascus”, on September the 3th 2014, sixteen people were arrested suspected of inciting and financing terrorist activities, and a large quantity of weapons, ammunition, military and other equipment was found. The arrested people were brought in connection with the recruitment of Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens to leave to Syria and Iraq, and participating in local conflicts on the side of radical terrorist groups and organizations. Most famous among those arrested was prominent Wahhabi preacher - Hussein Bosnic called Bilal, who is considered as one of the leaders of Wahhabis in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the operation 17 locations were raided in the Sarajevo area, Kiseljak, Zenica, Maglaj, Osve, Upper Bocinja, Upper Maoca. The suspects are associated with the financing, organizing and recruitment of Bosnia and Hercegovina citizens to leave to Syria and Iraq, as well as taking part in armed conflicts in Syria and Iraq, fighting on the side of radical terrorist groups and organizations. Bilal Hussein Bosnic was calling for months young men to join the armed groups terrorist organization “Islamic State” and thus engage in jihad in Syria. He also requested that the Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina pay fees like it was during Ottoman Empire.<sup>9</sup>

Arrested Hussein Bosnić is Wahhabi leader and fierce preacher of Wahhabism from Buzim in Bosnia and Herzegovina. His call to young men from Bosnia and Herzegovina to join the IS was recorded on the video from the public lecture which he held in front of his followers from the Cazin area in northwestern Bosnia. In an interview with *La Repubblica*, which was released by many international media, he drew attention to himself by stating that for the “Islamic State” fights fifty Italians

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<sup>9</sup> „Akcija „Damask” u BiH: 16 uhapšenih u vezi sa teroristima“, *Večernje novosti*, 3.09.2014. <http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/planeta.300.html:508474-Akcija-Damask-u-BiH-16-uhapšenih-u-vezi-sa-teroristima> (accessed 09.04.2015.)

as well, in whose recruitment he participated personally. He said: “We believe that one day the whole world will be an Islamic state. Our goal is that even the Vatican becomes a Muslim place. I might not welcome that, but that time will come.”<sup>10</sup>

In the area of Sandzak, the course of the Middle East crisis produced a large number of losses within young people from the Muslim community in Novi Pazar, Tutin and Sjenica. Thus, even in May 2013 there was a recorded case of death of two young from Pazar known in Syria as Abu Bera. Their names were Eldar Kundakovic and his comrade Abu Merdiji, whose real name is not known. They died on the 15th of May in conflicts in Syria as “martyrs” in Allah’s way as they defend “the weak and the oppressed.” Few months later, the media published the death of another person from Sandzak, Mirza Ganic, a young follower of Wahhabism from Gornje Sebecevo near Novi Pazar, who had fought in Syria. He died in January 2014. Few days before the death, he wrote on his profile on the social networking site Facebook, to his parents: “I love you my parents. I know who took care of me when I was little, I know who escorted me, even in school, with sadness and greeted with joy. Be patient, Jannah (paradise) is near. If Allah has mercy on us we’ll see you there (in Paradise). If there was no Jihad nothing would stop me to do you good in a lifetime. We don’t have a knowledge of who would die first, but be patient.”

Mirza Ganic is, as his desperate mother Sadi said, recruited in Novi Pazar mosque and taken to the Syrian war hell. He often posted messages from Syria through internet portals and on his Facebook profile criticizing Muslims in Sandzak, as they don’t go in larger numbers in the Syrian Jihad. He made serious threats to an NGO activist - Aida Corovic, Serbian Deputy Prime Minister - Rasim Ljajic and Minister of Internal Affairs - Fahrudin Radoncic.

Events in the Middle East did not only encourage radicalization of Sandzak’s youth and their departure to the battlefields in Iraq and Syria. They also influenced the encouragement of extremist activity of political and religious subjects in the Sandzak who saw their chance in the general events atmosphere in the Middle East to destabilize local circumstances. In fact, on 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2014, SDA, led by Sulejman Ugljanin and Meshihata IVZ of Sandzak, whose leader is Mufti - Muamer Zulorlić, organized a gathering on the streets of Novi Pazar. It was organized under a name “Visitation to Hajet”. This gathering is supposedly aimed to mark historical events of 70 years ago, when the Chetniks and Partisans shot seventy Bosniaks in Novi Pazar. A spokesman for SDA, Edin Gudžević, said that the Partisans and the Chetniks shot on Hadzet 2,000 respectable Bosnians and that this city is treated by SDA Sandzak, as a symbol of the suffering of Bosniaks. “Hajj is Shehid cemetery,

<sup>10</sup> „Ko je Bilal Bosnić, vođa vehabija u BiH?”, portal Nezavisne novine, 3.09.2014. Available at: <http://www.nezavisne.com/novosti/hronika/Ko-je-Bilal-Bosnic-vodja-vehabija-u-BiH-261130.html>, (accessed 8.03.2015)

a sacred place where every Bosniak has its ancestors. Hadzet should become a place which Bosniak pilgrims should visit before going on the hajj to Mecca “- said Gudzevic.<sup>11</sup> However, what had far greater message than motive of gathering itself is a folklore of participants of the meeting led by Mufti Muamer Zukorlić personally with seniority of IVZ Sandzak.

Participants of the conference were dressed in green uniforms that were reminiscent of those worn by members of the Nazi “13. SS Mountain Division Handzar “ in whose ranks participated massively Sandzak Muslims during the Second World War, making horrible crimes against the Serbian population. Shown folklore exuded completely a military atmosphere, uniforms, fezzes, berets, belts, emblems, military flags, military echelons, that is military ancestry of young Sandzak who marched the streets of Novi Pazar. The message was clear - Sandzak Bosniaks are organized and this organization can always get its military character. Only the weapons were missing.

Shortly afterwards, a webpage “Army of Sandzak” appeared on the social network Facebook, with posted photos from the recent “Visitation at Hadzet” in Novi Pazar, and signed with the Liberation Army of Sandzak. The site opens with message - “We want Sandzak to be a Republic ... Sandzak tigers join us - let’s show everyone who the Sandzak sons are.” There is a message as well - “And my life for my Sandzak”. The so-called “army” supported the Mufti of Sandzak IVZ, Muamer Zukorlic, with the words: “They surrounded him from all sides to break him, and his reaction to all of that is silence, in an attempt to point out their weakness. Allah, help Sandzak Mufti, help him in Hajra and save him from enemies and covert friends, ‘Amen!’<sup>12</sup>

On the same page there was a message to Chetniks sent by the Wahhabi Sheikh from BiH Abdulmalik Basic: “If you want to play with fire, dare to jeopardize Novi Pazar.” Touch it, you are touching the Ummah of Muslims in the iris of the eye. It is no coincidence Pazar, right now, is ready to be a fuse. There are most proud of Bosnians here, Muslims, who we have and who won’t bow to anyone. If there were conflicts we all will be with them. But if the conflict starts we all are with them. For verbal battles answer verbally and for actual battles, we will provide real support. Not only Bosniaks of Bosnia and the Balkans, the Albanians of Kosovo, Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro, and the Turks, but all living Ummah. I say alive, because we aren’t counting on the one who aren’t and they aren’t needed. Allah is Able to revive them. Time of threats from Chetnik creatures, who do not know

<sup>11</sup> „Približavanje Ugljanina i Zukorlića? SDA poziva u „Pohod na Hadzet““, Sandžačke novine online, 3.09.2014. See: <http://www.sandzaklive.rs/index.php/novi-pazar-sda/2589-priblizavanje-ugljanina-i-zukorlica-sda-sandzaka-poziva-u-pohod-na-hadzet>, (Accessed 8.03.2015)

<sup>12</sup> „Armija Republike Sandžaka na Facebooku“, portal MONDO, 15.09.2014. See: <http://mondo.rs/a/727866/Info/Drustvo/Armija-Republike-Sandzaka-na-Facebooku.html>, (Accessed 8.03.2015).

hygiene, internal nor external, has passed. Aren't they taking a lesson from Gaza and Sham itself? They shouldn't bother those who do not bother them. I swear we won't sit idly on humiliation, and certainly not, God forbid, on the killing of Muslims. I swear on the One that could only be sworn On, that river Drina won't be green, but red and Priboj won't be Priboj but Breakthrough."<sup>13</sup>

In the background of ongoings in the Middle East, where only a few months ago was declared the creation of the Islamic caliphate by the Salafist organization "Islamic State", the case of events "Visitation to Hadžet" in Novi Pazar, pointed to the strong link between political, religious and extreme fundamentalist entities in Sandzak with the clear aim of joint action - dividing Ras-Polimaska area (the so-called Sandzak) from Serbia and Montenegro. In addition, just before the "Visitation of the Hadžet" in Novi Pazar, reis of the Islamic Community of Montenegro - Rifat Fejzic, accused Mufti-Sandzak, led by Mufti Muamer Zukorlic, to support Wahhabism and religious extremists in Montenegro. Condemning Zukorlic's role in the spread of Wahhabism in Montenegro, Fejzic said: "The Islamic Community in Serbia permanently supported marginal and radical groups in Montenegro and all those who were in disagreement with the local Islamic community."<sup>14</sup> It is concluded that Mufti Muamer Zukorlić is using radical Salafists in Montenegro, and that he wants to steal Muslim believers from the institutional IVZ of Montenegro, rounded to the territorial integrity of Sandzak, which lies partly in Serbia and in Montenegro, to destabilize the area, and secede of the Serbian state and Montenegro, and the so-called merger of Sandzak in future to the independent Muslim of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a reminder IVZ Sandzak, headed by Mufti Muamer Zukorlić, is an integral part of the IVZ Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Extracting of so-called Sandzak from Serbia, and its annexation to the independent Muslim Bosnia and Herzegovina through previously obtaining autonomy, it is also the goal of the SDA Sandzak. Sulejman Ugljanin, SDA leader and creator of the Declaration of Sandzak Muslim National Council, who organized militaristic gathering "Visitation to Hadzet" in Novi Pazar in September 2014, in the same month advocated the organization of Sandzak based on the model of South Tyrol. He had publicly explained and confirmed that during the meeting of the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia at the meeting held on 2nd October 2014. (Lansford, 2015). He said it was just an idea to help the prosperity

<sup>13</sup> „Poruka mudžahida četnicima: Dirnete li u Novi Pazar, Drina neće biti zelena nego krvava!, Sandžačke novine online, 3.09.2014. See: <http://www.sandzacke.rs/vijesti/region/poruka-mudzahida-cetnicima-dirnete-li-u-novi-pazar-drina-neece-biti-zelena-nego-crvena/>, (Accessed 8.03.2015)

<sup>14</sup> „Zukorlić podržava vehabizam i verske ekstremiste u Crnoj Gori!“, <http://www.time.rs/c/f582b77e42/zukorlic-podrzava-i-huska-vehabije-u-crnoj-gori.html> (Accessed 09.04.2015)

of the country.<sup>15</sup> His statement provoked a storm of sharp response from the leaders of the Serbian political scene. Actual Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic, upon the initiative of Ugljanin said in the media: 'Some politicians from Pazar might pay more attention to whether they behave responsibly, seriously, and whether they act in the interests of their people or not ... Does he (Sulejman Ugljanin) know a single place in South Tyrol, I do not see that they are close to secession. I think people in the Raska region or Sandžak have the same rights as people in South Tyrol ... In Serbia, there is only three municipalities with majority of Bosniak population. What would be Ugljanin's answer to some irresponsible people who talk about the 61 municipalities and two cities in the Republika Srpska? It's a little more than three, but I will not let anyone talk about it, because it is not responsible and serious policy.'<sup>16</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Middle Eastern happenings have undoubtedly left their mark among the Balkan Muslims, there was an escalation on the political scene, which was imbued with the separatist ideas in Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, through the simultaneous process of growing salafist fundamentalism. The events in Syria and Iraq and the crisis in other Middle Eastern countries pose a significant threat to the Balkan countries. On the one hand, radicalization of Balkan Muslims was done by amassing support the radical Islamists in the Middle East provide to their local Muslims by going and participating in the battlefields. On the other hand, upon the return of a large number of Balkan hardened jihadists in Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Albania, these returnees will be a great potential danger to the security of the state, and of the Balkans, and Europe in general. They are dangerous brainwashed people who are willing to do anything. They do not have almost anything with Islam, in Syria and Iraq they served as cannon fodder, but they are not aware of that. Currently, they are mostly hurting their parents and families who suffer because of their departure, mainly disapproving such their actions. However, the question is what will happen when they start to inflict physical harm to others in the communities in which they live. Unfortunately, it is one inevitability that follows, and it is only a matter of time.

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<sup>15</sup> „Ugljanin: Južni Tirol je samo ideja za boljitak“, Blic, 2.10.2014. <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Politika/499400/Ugljanin-Juzni-Tirol-je-samo-ideja-za-boljitak> (Accessed 09.04.2015)

<sup>16</sup> „Vučić: Sandžački političari da pripaze“, Vesti online, 25.09.2014. See: <http://www.vesti-online.com/Vesti/Srbija/436164/Vucic-Sandzacki-politricari-da-pripaze?mobile=false>, (Accessed 8.03.2015)

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Darko TRIFUNOVIĆ

**UTICAJ STVARANJA ISLAMSKEG KALIFATA U TERORISTIČKIM  
KRUGOVIMA BALKANSKIH ISLAMISTA**

*Apstrakt:* Dešavanja na Bliskom istoku nesumljivo su ostavila trag među Muslimanima na Balkanu. Kriza u Siriji, Iraku i drugim zemljama Bliskog istoka predstavlja značajnu opasnost za balkanske zemlje. Za bolje razumevanje političkih, socijalnih, ekonomskih i bezbednosnih procesa na Bliskom istoku, neophodno je analizirati sve procese koji su doveli do stvaranja jedinstvene arapske države, njene ideologije i ciljeva. Ovaj rad će pokušati da odgovori na neka važna pitanja o ISIS-u i ideje širenja teritorije velike muslimanske države sa posebnim osvrtom na zemlje Balkana.

*Ključne reči:* Islamski kalifat, terorizam, Arapsko proleće, vehabije.

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