

Jure KRIŠTO

ENCOUNTER OF CIVILIZATIONS: BEGINNINGS OF THE POLITICAL LIFE OF CROATS IN HERZEGOVINA DURING THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MONARCHY

Summary

After short and concise description of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Turkish reign, the author observes the political organization of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the date when Austro-Hungarian Monarchy took charge in BiH till the First World War. With a goal of enlightening that problem he examines the wider context in which BiH became the battle-field of different political, national, economic, religious, class and other interests. In relation to that it is firstly concluded that the arrival of Monarchy in this underdeveloped province brought the liberalistic idea which enabled organizing of different forms of social, economic and cultural life. In the Croatian corpus that was used by the Franciscans who intruded themselves as the unavoidable factor of social organizing, which was later manifested in the political plan. But, political life in BiH was under the strong influence of Hungarians who considered this country as their sphere of interest. The most convenient for them was that the tradition of religious identification was being continued instead of national identification, because they were afraid of the strong Croatian side in BiH who advocated integration with other Croatian countries. On the other side Serbs worked on the integration of BiH and Serbia. In that way Muslims were in absurd situation, especially those who had all the privileges and who waited vainly for the return of the Ottoman Empire.

Key words: *Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, Croats, Serbs, Muslims, Hungarians, interests, politics, Franciscans, Stadler.*