

BOSNIAN KINGDOM DURING SECOND DECADE OF THE 15th CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

After the defeat of Hungary by the Ottoman Empire, in August of 1415, the Bosnian king and a few noble men made a decision to change their political loyalty towards the Hungary. King Ostoja tried to take care of inside matters that were ruling in Bosnian Kingdom. He called for a meeting (Stanak) at which he would even out with some noble men. Even Dubrovcani wrote about this event. In one of their letters they described the events that took place in Kraljeva Sutjeska. After the occurrence in Kraljeva Sutjeska, intervention of Ottoman army was expected. One of the facts that the situation was pretty serious is that some families sought asylum from Dubrovnik's authorities in case of alarming circumstances. One of Bosnian powerful nobles dies in 1416. King Ostoja and other noblemen were fighting over his property.

Keywords: King Ostoja, Stanak, noblemen, Dubrovcani, Hungarian king, Ottoman army.

INTRODUCTION

Bosnian Kingdom at the beginning of second decade of 15th century entered in conflicts that announced interference of neighboring countries. Hungary and Ottoman Empire had special interests in Bosnian territory. To accomplish its plan Hungary called for a meeting, Budapest assembly (Budimski sabor). The most influential people of the time attended the gathering. It was believed more peaceful days are ahead after this meeting. After all peace in Bosnia meant peace in the neighboring countries too. Therefore one of the most powerful countries in Europe, Hungary, wanted to make long term peace. That was the outcome of the Budapest assembly. But this peace was short lived. Besides the Ottoman army that had great aspirations towards Bosnia, there has been inner tur-

moil too. Bosnian nobles were desiring more than what they had. Great friction took place between the families of Kosača and Hrvatinić. These inside turmoils were weakening political military and economic power of Bosnian kingdom. The victory of Ottomans in August of 1415 forced king Ostoja and duke Sandalj to change their political orientation. They are leaving the Hungarian king and are siding with Ottoman sultan. Even he came out victorious during the conflict in 1415, Herceg Hrvoje, had to accept Ostoja as a king. In August of 1415 two meetings were called for (Dinić, 1955). At one of these there has been peace improvements among Bosnian nobles, Ostoja was accepted as a legitimate king and it was ruled out that Srebrenica should be returned to Bosnian power. Dubrovcani wrote about this event to Hungarian king (Gelcich & Tallóczy, 1887).

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At the second meeting that was held at the end of August a plan has been made to execute prince Pavle Radenović and his son Petar Pavlović. The meeting took place in Kraljeva Sutjeska at one of King's estates. Some of most influential Bosnian noblemen attended except herceg Hrvoje who was staying out of conflicts of the two houses of Kosača and Pavlović. Ivan Gundulić, a delegate at a Bosnian court (Pucić, 1858). From Dubrovnik, wrote a letter addressed to Dubrovnik's authorities about this incident. It stated that the murder took place during a walk of noblemen that were present at the court of King Ostoja in Kraljeva Sutjeska. At the time king Ostoja was accompanied by his son Stjepan, duke Sandalj and his brother Vuk Hranic, županj Dragiša Dinjičić, Vukmir Zlatonosović, Pavle Klešić and prince Pavle Radenović with his son Petar Pavlovic. At one of these walks in Parena Poljana, an argument arose between duke Sandalj and prince Pavle. Vukmir Zlatonosović joined this lengthy discussions and arguments. In this dispute between Petar Pavlovic and duke Sandalj, Sandalj's men attacked Petar Pavlovic and tied him down. Prince Pavle took a chance to escape but Sandalj's men caught up with him and killed him (Kurtović, 2009). He left two sons behind, Petar and Radosav (Ivić, 1907).

In prince's company was krstjanin Vlatko Tumurlic who fled to Franciscan monastery to Ivan Gundulić, the delegate from Dubrovnik, to save his own life. After the situation calmed in Parena Poljana, Vlatko Tumurlic took Pavle's dead body and buried it in Vrhbosna. Petar Pavlovic was captured and taken to Bobovac and later to the capital of Pavlović Borač (Jorga, 1899). Brailo Tezalović was among the escorts of prince Pavle and Petar and was captured by prince Vukc Hranic, Sandalj's brother. In this incident, Pribisav Muržić was also captured (Tošić, 2003).

When the situation completely calmed, Dubrovnik's delegate, paid a visit to duke Sandalj. On this occasion Sandalj told him: *Can you believe that this, by the mercy of God, I do and follow the way of justice just the way you, the Dubrovnik's elite, do aka. Behead those who commit treason in Dubrovnik. This is the way I deal with other loyal Bosnians.* (DAD, Lett. di Lev. VII). He stated that he did this to bring justice and that it was a matter of sins of Pavlovic family (Pucić, 1858). Followed these events, they started to divide the lands of Pavle Radenovic. Olovo went into hands of Vukmir Zlatonosović.

Duke Sandalj was accusing prince Pavle for mistakes in relations with Hungarian king. With this behavior, him and his son caused a lot of wrongdoing to Bosnian Kingdom (Lett. di Lev. VII). He declared friendship

to Ivan Gundulić and people of Dubrovnik. He used this opportunity to ask of him to recommend him to Dubrovnik's authorities (Pucić, 1858). This murder presented a political account of opponents at the time in Bosnian Kingdom (Tošić, 2003).

Petar and Radosav, Pavle's sons, wanted to revenge their father. They called for help from Ottoman army against the main figures in this incident, duke Sandalj and king Ostoja. The army of Ottoman sultan answered their call and entered Bosnian Kingdom. This forced large number of population to seek help from Dubrovnik in moving to safer regions. On October 3rd 1415, Dubrovčani allowed Ljubiša Bogdaničić and Vukosav Poznanović to, in case of danger, move to Dubrovnik. This is what they wrote: *you see and hear what is happening among Bosnian elite, and want to be love peace and harmony* (Pucić, 1858).

Some time later, on December 5th, they permitted prince Miliša Nikolić asylum in Ston or Rât or some other island. They wrote: because you fear Ottoman army (Pucić, 1858). Duke Sandalj was also threatened by the Ottomans. He also turned to Dubrovnik for help in the safety of his family and him. In November of 1415, Dubrovčani allowed Sandalj to buy 50 older grains for his money (DAD, Cons. Rog.I).

Armed with Ottoman army, sons of Pavle Radenović, Petar and Radosav were endangering even Dubrovnik's territory. On February 8th 1416, Dubrovčani took security measures of Ston, and people who were coming from Bosnia were allowed to take refuge at Rât. In February 1416, they complained to Radosav Pavlović who was together with Ottomans at borders of the Republic disturbing and robbing its people. They did the same with his older brother in March 1416, when mayor Đurađ and Stjepan Miloradović along with Ottomans were doing the attacks towards Dubrovnik.

Dubrovčani sent a letter to prince Petar in which they're informing him of threats from mayor Djuradj towards people of Dubrovnik (Stojanović, 1929). By this time, the Plavović family, with the help of Ottomans have been ruling the region of Konavla. This region will be stumbling stone between the Pavlović and Kosača families. The Ottoman army reached the borders of Dubrovnik causing Dubrovnik's authorities on March 21st 1416 to send out ships from the islands to ease the escape for those who were running away from the Ottomans. They decided to choose a representative among the people from Slano region and send him to the commanders of Ottoman and Vlaška army. Besides the conquests of Hum region, Ottoman army also conquered part of Podrinje and northern Bosnia, and the city of Vrhbosna with all its counties have fallen.

At this time, Sultan Mehmed I, names Isak-beg as military commander. Ottoman commander's duty was to keep track of Bosnian king's and noblemen whereabouts (Klaić, 1882). By this time, some nobles started accepting Ottoman rulings in Bosnia. Among the first ones to do so were duke Sandalj and Pavlović brothers who "guard their lands by the mercy of God and great Sultan Mehmet-beg and his commander Izak" (Miklosich, 1858).

During the conflicts between Pavlovićs and Kosačas, herceg Hrvoje was staying aside. He was busy with taking back Split under his control. At the end of 1415, he was taking military actions too. He entered into conflicts with princes of Krch, with the help of Ottoman army. After the conflicts they(princes) were forced to ask Mlečani to mediate with commander Hrvoje (Ljubić, 1880). During the strong conflicts in Bosnian Kingdom between the Pavlović and Kosača, commander Hrvoje dies in April of 1416 (Šišić, 1902). During his lifetime he remained undefeated and in power, managing to get revenge on the enemies.

The powerful commander Hrvoje was succeeded by his son Balša who was only his father's shadow. Bosnian king Stjepan Ostoja, Dubrovčani, Splićani and Mlečani took great interest in his estates and wealth. King Ostoja benefited the most divorcing his wife Kujava and marrying Hrvoje's widow Jelena. In October 1416, Dubrovčani wrote to king Sigismund: that king Ostoja after he divorced his first wife, married Jelena, Hrvoje's widow, who after the marriage to king, gave as a gift the city of Omiš to her brother, prince Ivan Cetinjski (Gelcich & Tallóczy, 1887). Thanks to this relationship, Ostoja expanded his estates in the west, taking over the city of Jajce. King tried to reconcile with Hrvoje's successors too, securing the support of his former opponents. He tried to restore his reputation that has fallen in the recent years. Ostoja didn't have much luck in these efforts taking into consideration inside conflicts that shook the region. His marriage to Jelena gave new reasons for incident last in Bosnia. The Pavlović brothers who were at the borders with Dubrovnik's Republic were especially disturbed.

These inner turmoils caused more damaged to Bosnia than Hungarian and Ottoman armies. Dubrovčani in these matters were remaining neutral. However, atrocities in Bosnia meant danger in Dubrovnik too. During the 1415 and 1416 a lot of population from Bosnia ran away to Dubrovnik, so many poor fugitives were a burden to the Republic. In November of 1416, an order was issued for those who were beggars to be banished from the territory of Dubrovnik. Dubrovčani accepted Ostoja as a legitimate king so on

February 7th 1416, they paid the taxes in the amount of 500 perper, and later on November 20th 1416 paid off the remaining balance. Even though they accepted Ostoja as a King of Bosnia, that didn't mean his position was stable at the throne. At that time, in the years of 1415 and 1416, Bosnian nobles quarreled to the point of physical disappearance. Dubrovčani wrote to the Hungarian queen Barbara: *that Bosnia is completely left in ruins and that nobles are preparing mutual destruction* (Klaić, 1882).

New conflicts in Bosnia forced sultan Mehmed I to intervene. This intervention went in his favor because Bosnian king and its elite were his allies by now. His goal was to reconcile the Pavlović and Kosača families, therefore he sent two of his messengers to Bosnia calling for a meeting (Dinić, 1955). This was supposed to bring reconciliation between the two. The noblemen accused king Ostoja as a main cause of all evil that has happened. It was decided that he be arrested because he transgressed against "god's faith". Dragiša Dinjičić was accused for the murder in Parena Poljana. Feeling endangered king Ostoja and commander Dinjičić escaped one evening prior to this. His son Stjepan Ostojić was also against him, insulted with the fact he divorced his mother Kujava and married Hrvoje's widow Jelena. Ottomans were helping Tvrtko II. Some time later Dubrovčani wrote to king Sigismundu: *for now there's no army in either Bosnia nor Raška because the Ottoman sultan had to retrieve to Solun against his own brother "the false Mustafa"* (Fajfrić, 2008).

At the beginning of 1417 Bosnian kingdom experienced new inside conflicts. The feuded families were preparing for ongoing conflicts. After escaping the noblemen's arrest, King Ostoja took refuge in Southwest parts of Bosnia where he had his allies, the Radivojević. Further Ottoman conquests forced Bosnian population to seek safer territories. A large number of them found safe haven in Ston with the permission of Dubrovnik's authorities (Lett. di Lev. VII).

King Stjepan Ostoja benefited greatly from these inner turmoils, helping him keep the throne. He was originating the conflicts among one another. In the last conflict he was helping Pavlović brothers, who in return, were accepting his reign. This helped him to regain his reputation back. Dubrovčani accepted him as a legitimate king, payed him "svetodmitarski" taxes in the amount of 2000 perper (Cons. Rog. I). In the year of 1417 king Ostoja reconciled with Petar Pavlović, even he was one of the key advocates for the murder of his father Pavle.

During these conflicts, Dubrovčani would bow down to one then to another, sending gifts to Ostoja, Tvrtko II, then to Jelena and Kujava. Later on king Ostoja fled close Dubrovnik. On April 20th 1417 Dubrovnik's authorities issued an order to the commander of Ston to inform them of King Ostoja's and his wife Jelena whereabouts. If he was to find out that the King is in the neretva region or in Bišća, let the commander send two ships for the fish to kings table and a few liters of good wine, while the government will give other gifts to the King and Queen (Jorga, 1899).

METHODS

This research study by the name of Bosnian Kingdom During the Second Decade of the 15th Century represents novelty in terms of content. During the research I used existing scientific expertise literature that deals with problematic complex but with a shift and emphasis on a critical review of the replenishment of historical gaps and highlighting the events above. I used different scientific research methods from the chronological spatial, then descriptive, explicative and comparative. These methods have ultimately enabled the reconstruction of the historical reality based on unpublished and published sources and literature.

RESULTS

The Bosnian kingdom in the middle of the second decade of the 15th century has been intimidated by internal disagreements and conflicts, therefore some noble families were threatened with physical extermination. This led to a clash that happened in Kraljeva Sutjeska at a royal estate. This was also a political breakthrough for the opposition. In addition, some noblemen were interested in the rich estates. They tried to gain benefit by having possession of these lands. By taking over these properties would show the other noble families who the real master of the region is. By establishing their power in these areas, among other things, they could have established customs and other economic and financial relations.

King Ostoja himself sought to establish strong central government during the course of his reign. By establishing a strong central government he would show other nobles that he is the one who makes decisions in the Kingdom. This is why he himself often came into conflicts with the disobedient noble families. The situation in Bosnia during the second decade of the 15th century reveals some new details that were happening

in the Balkans. If you only look at the writing of duke Sandalj to Dubrovčani "I do it in Bosnia the way you do in Dubrovnik" it will give a clear picture not only of Bosnia but its neighbors as well. The murder that took place in Kraljevska Sutjeska was also motivated by the desire of the nobles for better situation in Bosnia. It was believed that the murder of the Pavlović family would resolve everything and that relations inside the kingdom and relations with the neighbors would stabilize.

According to the events that took place in Bosnian Dubrovčani were reserved. They believed that the trouble might knock on their border as well. If we take into account that after these unfortunate events many seek the help of Dubrovnik. Help was also sought by the most prominent nobles merely to take refuge in their city for their own safety. Sometimes there's a feeling that Dubrovčani were often reserved towards Bosnia. They expected change of government in Bosnia. They often avoided signing contracts if the government did not stabilize. Apart from that, The Republic did not like destruction of Bosnia. Often these atrocities from Bosnia passed on to the territory of The Republic. They would often, even if the conditions at their borders were calm, warn some nobles of possible dangers that could arise. They would also write letters to some noblemen, warning them of certain events that disturb The Republic. Frequent invasions of the Hungarian and Ottoman armies in the first two decades of the 15th century resulted in the devastation of The Kingdom. Besides that, it often came to the movement of the population itself. Thus, the population sought safer causing the weakening of economic power of both Bosnia and its neighbors. The Ottoman army, apart from resigning the population, wanted to see what the king was doing and what his military and political power was like. How much was there the influence of the Ottoman army is the fact that some noblemen in the second decade of the 15th century begin to pay taxes to the sultan.

DISCUSSION

Historians have different opinions about the events that took place during August 1415. Dr. sci. Emir Filipović argues that the Lašva battle (Lašvanska bitka), better known in history as a Dobož Battle, marked a key milestone with the influence of the Hungaria in Bosnia. After this battle, Hungary's influence weakened while the influence of the Ottomans was strengthened.

The Doboj battle also produced a crisis in the Bosnian Kingdom and was the key to shaping further political reality in the country. Soon after these events in the kingdom, new complications followed. In August 1415, after the meeting of the Bosnian nobles not far from the ruling complex in Sutjeska, a politically motivated murder took place, execution of prince Pavle Radenović, who was indicted as one of the main culprits for recent events in Bosnia. After a short argument his head was cut off by the prince Vuk Hranić, and the king Ostoja took his son, Petar to Bobovac where he was supposed to be blinded. The Dubrovnik delegate and eyewitness of these unfortunate events testified that even queen Kujava was worried about her fate at that time. These events were the scale of many years of bloody conflicts between families of Kosača and Pavlović (Filipović, 2017).

Prof. dr Pavo Živković states that the prince Pavle and his son Petar were not with the king Ostoja, and thus they were not even on the side of the king of Hungary. King Ostoja and duke Sandalj were most dismayed by the scrutiny of the support Pavlović gave to the anti-king Tvrtko II whom they were trying to bring to the throne of Bosnia. For some time Tvrtko II resided in their territory. One document from mid August 1415 confirms this. An incident with the Dubrovnik's cattle occurred, which was stolen by Petar Pavlović men. The people of Dubrovnik threatened to complain to the king Tvrtko II at the time. From this comes a conclusion that a legitimate king for Pavle and Petar was Tvrtko II not king Ostoja. The event that took place at the end of August 1415 was a political murder and represented two different camps in Bosnia, one supporters of Tvrtko II and supporters of legitimate king Ostoja (Živković, 1981).

Prof. dr Esad Kurtović thinks that the absenteeism and passivity of herceg Hrvoje at a meeting in Sutjeska, in addition, he himself approved to punish the Pavlović who did not want to return under the influence of the Hungarian king. The main creator for the return of the influence of King Sigismund was duke Sandalj. From his writings to the Dubrovnik MP, Ivan Gundulić, it can be noticed that the relations of the Bosnian noblemen Pavlović and Kosača were brought into the attitude of hostility since the killing of prince Pavle. This hostility was also from earlier times in the mismatched, divergent and controversial policy. Pavlovići, according to duke Sandalj, did not want

to accept this outcome and experienced a political defeat. Prince Pavle Radenović paid with his life (Kurtović, 2009).

CONCLUSION

After the Doboj Battle, the king tried to tackle the inner conditions that were then ruling in the devastated Bosnian kingdom. Given that there were frequent conflicts in the kingdom that had been devastated by other powerful medieval states Bosnian king tried to strengthen the central government and yet show that he is the true master in Bosnia. He decided to deal with disobedient bosnian nobles. He called for a Bosnian meeting in which a premeditated clash with the prince Pavle Radenović had already been planned. The meeting was attended by the most influential nobles, except Hrvoje. The impression is that after the Doboj Battle (Dobojska bitka), herceg Hrvoje has remained aside for everything that will happen in Bosnia. He waited for the opportunity to restore the former power and glory he had at the beginning of the 15th century. Just the murder that took place proves that king Ostoja and the great duke Sandalj had great aspirations to the possessions Radenović held. Yet some of these possessions have been saved thanks to the son of Pavle Radenović. In order to avenge his father's death he invited the Ottoman army to Bosnia. A great fear spread through the Kingdom. People as well as some noblemen asked for help from Dubrovnik in case of danger. They were not very happy to accept the population that was seeking their protection. They themselves were waiting for a replacement at the Bosnian court. Even though they waited for this shift to happen, they did not miss the opportunity to be groveling to King Ostoja. They issued orders to some commanders to especially fish for king Ostoja. However, they did not miss the opportunity to grovel the fugitive king Tvrtko II either. During the difficult times, herceg Hrvoje dies for Bosnia. He marked two decades of his being. He even sometimes acted as king of Bosnia. He was one of the reputable nobles who will be remembered in Bosnian history. Ostoja's rule was marked by large historic events in the mid-second decade of the 15th century that were sometimes fatal for both him and the Kingdom. Yet in all those times, he was one of the few kings, in Bosnia, who opposed the arbitrariness of the nobles.

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