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978-1-108-06099-8 - Through Bosnia and the Herzegovina on Foot during the
Insurrection: August and September 1875: With an Historical Review of Bosnia, and a
Glimpse at the Croats, Slavonians, and the Ancient Republic of Ragusa

Arthur John Evans

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Through Bosnia and the Herzegovina on Foot during the Insurrection, August and September 1875

Remembered chiefly for his archaeological discoveries in Crete, Sir Arthur John Evans (1851–1941) was also highly respected as an expert on the Balkans, an area then little known. Evans describes 'a land and people among the most interesting in Europe', and in 1875 he was visiting for the third time. This trip found him witnessing the outbreak of the revolt that saw Austria-Hungary take control of Bosnia. Here, however, Evans explores Bosnia's rich heritage with detailed ethnographic and anthropological observations, alongside descriptive impressions of its people and natural beauty. He returned in 1877 as a correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*, which resulted in his *Illyrian Letters* (also reissued in this series). First published in 1876 and reprinted the following year, the present work offers background not only to the revolt in that country, but also to the later deadly conflicts that would shake all of Europe.

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ARTHUR JOHN EVANS



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BOSNIA AND THE HERZEGÓVINA

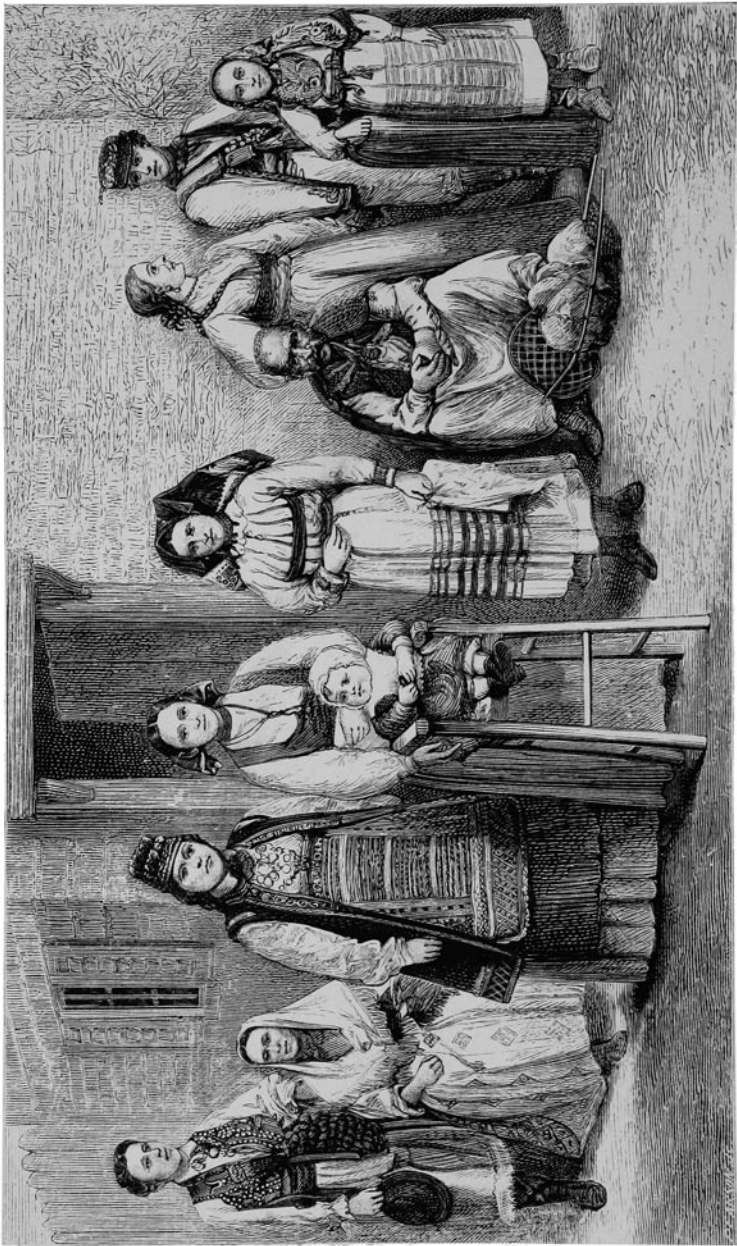
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THROUGH

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AND THE

H E R Z E G Ó V I N A

ON FOOT

DURING THE INSURRECTION, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 1875

WITH AN

HISTORICAL REVIEW OF BOSNIA

AND

A GLIMPSE AT THE CROATS, SLAVONIANS, AND THE
ANCIENT REPUBLIC OF RAGUSA

BY ARTHUR J. EVANS, B.A., F.S.A.

*WITH A MAP AND FIFTY-EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS AND SKETCHES BY THE AUTHOR*

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1876

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PREFACE.



THE TOUR described in this book was not in the slightest degree due to the Insurrection in Bosnia and the Herzegovina. It was planned before the outbreak, and was first suggested by the interest which previous visits to other South-Slavonic lands had led me to take in the branch of that race still under the Sultan's dominion, and owing to a special curiosity to see a race of Slavonic Mahometans. My desire of visiting Bosnia was further whetted by a day spent a few years ago beyond the Bosnian border, and by the interesting problems suggested by the history and present state of Illyria. While I and my brother, Lewis Evans, who accompanied me throughout, were preparing for our journey, the Insurrection in the Herzegovina broke out, so that it was undertaken rather in spite of than by reason of that event. During our walk through Bosnia that country also burst into insurrection; and as we heard many accounts from trustworthy sources as to the origin of the outbreak, both in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, I have ventured to give some particulars in the story of our itinerary.

We were armed with an autograph letter from the

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Vali Pashà, or Governor-General of Bosnia and Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish forces, and owing to this were able to accomplish our tour without serious molestation, though it must be confessed that we underwent some risks. With a few short breaks we made our way through the country on foot, which is perhaps a novelty in Turkish travel. Our only impedimenta consisted of the knapsack and sleeping gear on our backs, so that we were entirely independent; and being able to use our legs and arms and sleep out in the forest, we were able to surmount mountains and penetrate into districts which, I think I may say, have never been described, and it is possible never visited, by an 'European' before.

If this book should do anything to interest Englishmen in a land and people among the most interesting in Europe, and to open people's eyes to the evils of the government under which the Bosniacs suffer, its object will have been fully attained. Those who may be inclined to 'try Bosnia' will meet with many hardships. They must be prepared to sleep out in the open air, in the forest, or on the mountain-side. They will have now and then to put up with indifferent food, or supply their own commissariat. They will nowhere meet with mountains so fine as the Alps of Switzerland or Tyrol, and they will be disappointed if they search for æsthetic embellishments in the towns. But those who are curious as to some of the most absorbing political problems of modern Europe; those who delight in out-of-the-way revelations of antiquity, and who perceive the high his-

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toric and ethnologic interest which attaches to the Southern Slaves ; and lastly, those who take pleasure in picturesque costumes and stupendous forest scenery ; will be amply rewarded by a visit to Bosnia. There is much beautiful mountain scenery as well, and the member of the Alpine Club who has a taste for the jagged outlines of the Dolomites and the Julian Alps, in spite of a certain amount of attendant limestone nakedness, may find some peaks worthy of his attention towards the Montenegrine frontier. It would not be difficult to mention routes of greater natural attractions than that we followed, and I may observe that the falls of the Pliva, which we did not see, must be reckoned among the most beautiful waterfalls in Europe

The first two chapters, written mostly while delayed in Croatia, refer rather to the borderland of Bosnia, and may not be of general interest, dealing much in costumes and antiquities. The last, which describes the old Republic of Ragusa, may serve to show that the Southern Slaves are capable of the highest culture and civilisation. In the Historical Review of Bosnia I have attempted to elucidate and emphasise a most important aspect of Bosnian history—the connection, namely, between that till lately almost unknown land, and the Protestant Reformation of Europe, and the debt which even civilised England owes to that now unhappy country.

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*Key to the Pronunciation of the Serbo-Croatian Orthography,
adopted for Illyrian Names in this Book.*

Serbo-Croatian Letters		Approximate Sound,
ž	=	French <i>j</i> .
lj	=	Italian <i>gl</i> .
nj	=	Italian <i>gn</i> .
ć	=	like English <i>ch</i> .
c	=	<i>ts</i> .
č	=	German <i>tsch</i> .
dž	=	like <i>dsch</i> .
š	=	like English <i>sh</i> .

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TOMB OF CATHARINE, LAST LAWFUL QUEEN OF BOSNIA.

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HISTORICAL REVIEW OF BOSNIA.

‘Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.’

ABOUT the middle of the fifth century, when Britain was passing definitely into the hands of the English, and when on the Continent the hordes of Attila were dealing the most tremendous blow that had yet fallen on the Roman Empire, Slavonic tribes overran Mæsia, Thrace, Macedonia, and Illyricum, and pushed on to the Adriatic shores. From this period the final settlement of the Slaves in the area of what is now known as Turkey-in-Europe may be safely dated.¹ Their first ravages over, the Slaves, who from their communal family-organisation were little capable of formidable combination, appear to have easily accepted Roman suzerainty. The new settlers were soon among the most trusted troops of the Eastern Emperor, and at the beginning of the sixth century the Slavonic colony of Dardania gives Eastern Rome one of its most renowned Emperors and its greatest general. The Slave Upravda, the son of Istok, is better known as the Emperor Justinian, and Veličar as Belisarius.

Thus were first cemented those peculiar relations between the Slaves and Byzantium which are still of supreme importance in considering ‘the Eastern Question.’ The Byzantine government saw itself so capable of dealing with the Slaves, that when the Avar nomads, at the beginning of the seventh century, devastated Illyricum, massacring alike Slavonic settler and Roman provincial, and sacking even the coast cities of Dalmatia, Heraclius, as a masterstroke of policy, called in two new Slavonic tribes from beyond the Danube as a counterpoise

¹ This is not the place to discuss the question of earlier Slavonic immigrations.

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to the Avars; and the corner of the Balkan peninsula between the Save, the Morava, and the Adriatic, was divided among the Sclavonic tribes, the Serbs, and the Croats, who still throughout this area form the bulk of the population.

The account given of this settlement by Constantine Porphyrogenitus¹ is so mixed up with mythical elements that we can only accept the general outlines. As might be expected from the analogy of our own history of the conquest of Britain, the Sclavonic sagas, which seem to form the basis of the Byzantine version, bring into the field certain leaders with eponymic names,² but the old family life of the Slaves asserts itself even in these legends, and we read that the Croats were led to the conquest of the Avars by a family of brothers and sisters.

The Croatian settlement seems to have been the earlier. The Croats came from the countries beyond the Carpathians, and colonized the countries now known as Austrian and Turkish Croatia, and the northern part of Dalmatia. The Save formed a rough boundary to the Croatian nationality on the north, the Verbas on the east, and to the south the Cetina.

The Serbs, then inhabiting a part of what is now Galicia, hastened to imitate the example of the Croats, and took for their share the lands to the east and south of that occupied by their brother race. They occupied the whole, or nearly the whole, of the area now occupied by Free Serbia, Bosnia, Herzégovina, Montenegro, Old Serbia, and the northern half of Albania, and stretched themselves along the Adriatic coasts from the neighbourhood of Spalato, where the river Cetina runs into the sea, to Durazzo, then still Dyrrhachium. Thus, with the exception of the barren corner called the Kraina, or

¹ *De Administrando Imperio*, capp. xxx., xxxi., xxxii.

² Chorvat, one of the supposed Croatian leaders, is evidently the eponymus of the whole race of Croats, whose own name for themselves, Charvati or Hrvati, seems to signify 'mountaineers,' and to be connected with the name of the *Carpathian* mountains, and the Carpi of Roman historians. Hilferding points out that of the names of Chorvat's four brothers, as given by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, two are equivalent in meaning to 'Delay' or 'Tarrying,' and Chorvat's two sisters bear the Sclavonic names of 'Joy' and 'Sorrow.' The names are perhaps allegorical of the gradual character of their conquests, and of defeats sustained as well as victories won.

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Turkish Croatia, the whole of what is now known as Bosnia, with which we have particularly to deal, belongs to the Serbian branch of the Slaves.

For long the history of what later became the Bosnian kingdom is indistinguishable from that of the rest of the Serbs. The whole Illyrian triangle was divided into a great number of small independent districts, somewhat answering to the Teutonic '*Gaus*,' called *Župa*. *Župa* means 'bond'¹ or confederation, and each *Župa* was simply a confederation of village communities, whose union was represented by a magistrate or governor, called a *Župan*. The *Župans* in turn seem to have chosen a Grand *Župan*, who may be looked on as the President of the Serbian Federation. We know little about the early *Županships* of the Bosnian area, but a few of the petty commonwealths of the Serbian coastland, and what later on became the Herzegóvina, are mentioned by the Byzantine Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who wrote about 950. Here and there we read of a '*Ban*' (translated, in Diocleas, by the Latin word '*Dux*'), who was rather higher than an ordinary *Župan*.

These Serbian '*Archons*,' as the Byzantine historians speak of them, acknowledged the suzerainty of the Eastern Empire, and even, in some cases (though doubtless to a less extent than the Croats), accepted Byzantine dignities. Thus a *Ban* of *Zachlunia* accepted the titles of Proconsul and Patrician. Later on, when Czar Simeon erected the new Bulgarian Empire, Serbia was forced for a while to bow to the dominion of the conqueror of Leo Phocas. In the tenth century the Serbs shake off the Bulgarian yoke, and we now begin to hear of four Grand *Župans*, whose jurisdictions answer to Serbia proper, Rascia, Dioclea, and Bosnia. The power of the lesser *Župans* was during this period being diminished for the benefit of these greater potentates, who in Bosnia are generally known as *Bans*. '*The Bans*,' says the contemporary Serbian historian,² '*ruled each of them in his own province, and subjugated the Župans,*

¹ This seems to me far more probable than the poetic derivation of *Župa* from the same word in the sense of 'sunny land.'

² Presbyteri Diocleatis, *Regnum Slavorum* (in Lucius, *De Regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae, libri sex*. Amst: 1676: p. 291.)

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receiving from them the taxes which beforetime had been paid to the King,' *i.e.* the sole Grand Župan.

During the ninth and tenth centuries, while Bosnian-Serbian history is still so obscure, that of the Croats had achieved some prominence. The settlement of the Croats had, as we have seen, somewhat preceded the Serbian. They bordered on the coast-cities of Dalmatia, where Roman nationality and something of Roman civilization still lingered. Their relations with Byzantium were more defined, and they had also for a moment entered into the system of the renovated Empire of the West. Thus the Croats were earlier imbued with Christianity than the Serbs, and external influences were earlier at work to give their too acephalous government greater unity than their inland neighbours, still under the full sway of Slavonic communism, could attain to. In the year 914 a Croatian Grand Župan, Tomislav, who, in virtue of his relations to the Byzantine government and the Roman population of the Dalmatian cities, had assumed the title of 'Consul,' begins to be known to foreign princes as 'King of the Croats.' The successor of Tomislav is said to have conquered the neighbouring Serbian Banat, which from the principal river within its confines begins about this time to be known as Bcsona, or Bosnia, and henceforth, down to the final subjugation of the Croatian-Dalmatian kingdom by the Magyars, Bosnia is a dependency of a Croatian crown.¹ It became a constitutional principle in Croatia that, when the king died childless, a new king should be elected by the seven Bans of the crown-lands, one of whom was the Ban of Bosnia.²

¹ It must, however, be borne in mind that during the eleventh century the Byzantine Government, after Basil's conquest of the Bulgarians, succeeded in rendering its authority something more than nominal throughout those parts, and introduced Governors, Protospathars, and Generals into Croatia. From about the year 1018 to 1076 the diadem of the Croatian Prince was received from Byzantium. According to the Presbyter of Dioclea, Basil subdued the whole of Bosnia, Rascia, and Dalmatia, including what is now Herzegovina. This subjection, however, was only temporary.

² See *Coder Diplomaticus Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, p. 188 (u Zagrebu, 1874). Sub Anno 1100 The seven Bans appear in the following order:—1, the Ban of Croatia; 2, the Ban of Bosnia; 3, of Slavonia; 4, of Posega; 5, Podravia; 6, Albania; 7, Syrmia.

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At the beginning of the twelfth century the Magyars overthrew the kingdom of the Croats, and in 1141 Geiza II. of Hungary completed the conquest of Bosnia, or, as it is generally known in the Hungarian annals, of Rama, from the little river of that name, flowing into the Narenta.¹ The Hungarian dominion does not seem to have been much more than a vague suzerainty at this time. When Manuel Comnenus reduced Hungary to temporary subjection, we learn from his historian Cinnamus a few facts tending to show the comparative independence of Bosnia, and its isolation from the rest of Serbia. ‘The Drina,’ says he, ‘divides Bosthna from the rest of Serbia, For Bosthna is not subject to the Grand Zupan of Serbia, but the people were at that time under their own magistrates and used their own customs.’ The same author, however, shows the close relations existing between Bosnia and Hungary when he goes on to say that ‘Roritzes,² Exarch of Bosthna,’ aided the King of Hungary against the Greeks. Manuel reduced Bosnia, with Croatia and other parts of Hungary, for a while; but the Magyars were not long in recovering the province, and Bela III. in 1168 made Culin, son of Borić, Ban of Bosnia, who henceforth styles himself *Fiduciarius Regni Hungariæ*.

The rule of Ban Culin is justly regarded as the brightest period in the annals of Christian Bosnia. Under his auspices and protection the merchants of Ragusa begin to plant their factories in Bosnia, and open out anew the rich mines which had been left unworked since the days of the Romans. Culin is said to have been the first Bosnian prince who struck coins, and the general prosperity was such that to this day ‘the times of good Ban Culin’ are invoked by the Bosniac when he wishes to express the golden age.

But the patronage which Culin afforded to a religious sect that now becomes prominent in Bosnia makes his rule of still

¹ See p. 315. Perhaps this stream once formed the boundary of Croatia in this direction. Evidently the name must first have been applied to Bosnia by *Dalmatian* borderers. The name Rama at first comprised the territory between this river and the Adriatic.

² The Ban Borić. The passages relating to Bosnia in Cinnamus are in his *Historiar.* lib. iii. c. 7 and 19.

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greater importance, and leads us to the consideration of a subject which has its bearings even on English history.

The doctrine of the Two Principles of Good and Evil, which had its origin perhaps in the sublime mythology of Persia, and the eternal conflict of Light and Darkness, held its own amongst the various Gnostic sects of Christianity, scattered throughout the Eastern world, while the West was content to slumber in comparative orthodoxy. In Armenia, where these doctrines had certain affinities with the earlier religion, they seem to have taken especially firm root; and here, as in the other border states of the Byzantine Empire, heterodoxy went hand in hand with patriotism. Considering the hostile relations in which both nations stood to Byzantium, it is not at all surprising that friendly communications should have subsisted between the Armenians and the Bulgarian Slaves whose country lay to the east of the Serbians. Further, it was extremely natural that Armenians, for national as well as sectarian reasons, should view with jealousy the progress of orthodox missionaries among the Bulgarians, and should attempt to counteract it by organising a propaganda of their own Manichæism.

Such was actually set on foot. How early this proselytism was first commenced is doubtful, but it is certain that the Danubian Slaves were converted from heathenism *pari passu* by Manichæan and orthodox missionaries. The Byzantine Emperors, by their transplantation system, gave the Armenians every facility for their work. In the middle of the eighth century Constantine Copronymus, who had perhaps some sympathies with the heretics, transplanted a body of Paulicians from Armenia into Thrace, who we learn, on the authority of Cedrenus, spread the Paulician heresy through those parts, then largely inhabited by the Bulgarian Slaves. At the end of the ninth century, when the persecution of Byzantium had provoked the Paulicians of Armenia to assert their independence, and when 'the Roman Emperor fled before the heretics whom his mother had condemned to the flames,' and Tephricé became the capital of a free-state devoted to Gnostic Christianity, the missionary efforts of the Armenians among the Slaves was