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1914 Revisited: Evidence vs. Sophistry

Abstract: The response by Danilo Šarenac to a critical review of his own and two of his colleagues' reflections on the 1914 Sarajevo assassination is subjected to close analysis of the specific details emphasized in that response.

Keywords: Sarajevo 1914, Danilo Šarenac, Mark Cornwall, Andrej Rahten, John Zametica

According to Horace, "Anger is a short madness". Danilo Šarenac's response¹ to my review² of a collection of essays entitled *Sarajevo 1914: Sparking the First World War*³ is an example of what happens when some people start obsessing over their outrage. In making public his indignation at my evaluation of his work, he descends into incoherence and obscure argumentation, to put it charitably. And this is quite apart from the accompanying scorn and wrath aimed at me. His displeasure is indeed enormous judging by the language he uses to denigrate me, without actually finding anything specifically objectionable in my review that he can accurately quote, still less disprove. I am accused by him of being "extremely impolite, dismissive and contemptuous" about several authors in the said collection, including himself; I allegedly use "appalling and regrettable" tactics to discredit those I disagree with; I do not have even "the minimum of decency", we are told, when criticizing

- 1 Danilo Šarenac, "A disturbing revisiting for the Centenary. My reply to Mr. John Zametica", *Currents of History* 3/2022, 297–304.
- 2 John Zametica, "The Elusive Balkan Spark: 28 June 1914, Again and Always", *Currents of History* 3/2021, 297–331.
- 3 *Sarajevo 1914: Sparking the First World War*, ed. Mark Cornwall, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

others, and I “attempt to gaslight those who value the scholarly engagement”. The list goes on: I lose my “temper” when someone disagrees with me, and I “misquote” authors and even “mislead” readers by “purposely” withholding relevant information. And I am not “trustworthy” either? That’s perhaps the nicest thing that Šarenac says about me.

In terms of character assassination and mudslinging, this diatribe represents a fine effort: the adjectives are juicy and the venom is abundant. It is striking, though, that Šarenac wages this campaign while at the same time berating me for crossing “the lines of decorum”. He writes, in all seriousness and not without a pomp, that he is concerned to place emphasis on “the culture of dialogue”. This irony aside, he makes a series of claims and accusations which can only be described as fact-free and eminently unacademic in spirit and form. Nevertheless, I feel obliged to subject Šarenac’s text to the same degree of critical scrutiny that is normally awarded to any presumably refereed article on an important subject in a respectable journal.

Šarenac’s commentary on my review essay is unusual in that he does not limit himself to disputing what I write about his contribution in the said collection, but also feels prompted to defend two of his fellow contributors to the same volume. Whether he is a self-appointed guardian of his colleagues or whether he has acted on their behalf in consultation with them is irrelevant. Either way, he has not served them well.

The first of them is Mark Cornwall, who edited and also wrote the introduction to *Sarajevo 1914*. It seems that I gave reasons to Šarenac to be upset, because he claims that I make “laconic observations” about Cornwall’s introduction, that I misquote him, and that I argue “with a position never taken by the author”. The last two charges are very serious. But the way in which Šarenac opens his critique of my remarks concerning Cornwall’s introduction is entirely divorced from a reasonable academic disputation. For he cites a sentence I wrote about Cornwall in the review essay:

“Professor Cornwall himself is a noted specialist on the history of the Habsburg Empire though, oddly, his best works so far are an essay from 1995 on Serbia during the July 1914 crisis, and an earlier essay on King Nicholas of Montenegro and the Great Powers, 1913–1914”.⁴

As it happens, I acknowledge here Cornwall’s expertise on the Habsburg Empire. I also highlight his familiarity with purely Balkan matters. In my book on Austria-Hungary and the Balkans, moreover, I make clear my appreciation

4 Zametica, “The Elusive Balkan Spark”, 298; Šarenac, “A disturbing revisiting for the Centenary”, 299.

of Cornwall's research concerning Serbia in the July crisis.⁵ And if I consider his Balkan scholarship to be a praiseworthy element in his opus, that is a view to which I am entitled. Yet this will just not do for Cornwall's acolyte Šarenac. "In fact", he gushes, "Professor Cornwall's biography looks much brighter if we add a few details." He duly adds them:

"In 2000, Professor Cornwall wrote a very important book called *The Undermining of Austria-Hungary: The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, about the propaganda war against the Habsburg empire. He then in 2016 he [*sic*] published a very notable book: *Sacrifice and Rebirth: The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War*, about the memory of the war in the former Habsburg lands. More recently he has received a prestigious Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship to work on Treason and Disloyalty in the Late Habsburg Monarchy. Finally, in 2022 he was awarded the Palacký Medal of Merit in the Historical Sciences by the Czech Academy of Sciences – the highest Czech award for any historian".⁶

How impressive, and we should thank Mr Šarenac for reminding us, however cringeworthy the passage above is. At this point I shall resist the temptation of commenting on the subject of personal and professional dignity, or on the all too frequent phenomenon of certain Balkan academics' obsequiousness to Western authorities. It is one thing for historians to praise fellow historians in the context of a scholarly discussion, but quite another to elevate them to Olympus in an attempt to ward off any criticism of their work. Cornwall's CV is entirely irrelevant to my critique of his argument in the introduction to *Sarajevo 1914*.

Having established Cornwall's infallibility to his own satisfaction, Šarenac hastens to accuse me of calling him "incompetent". At this point rigid critical focus is needed, because nowhere in my review essay do I employ this term with regard to Cornwall, or anyone else for that matter. To suggest otherwise is more than twisting my words, it is a pure invention by Šarenac. The offending adjective does not exist in my text. An apology from Šarenac is in order here, as befits someone who claims to uphold high standards of decency. In transparently making things up, he is doing the very opposite of rescuing his credibility.

In reply to the postulates in my review essay, Šarenac writes that I see Cornwall as "guilty" for arguing that the South Slav Question resulted in the outbreak of the First World War. And he protests that "Cornwall has never

5 John Zamenta, *Folly and Malice: The Habsburg Empire, the Balkans and the Start of World War One*, (London: Shephard-Walwyn, 2017), 593–594, 603.

6 Šarenac, "A disturbing revisiting for the Centenary", 300.

written anything so blunt”. Let us look at the details here. I did not write that Cornwall was “guilty” of pushing that particular thesis – Šarenac just keeps getting his facts wrong. What I wrote is that, in a broad sense, Cornwall was “guilty of committing sins of omission” in his introduction entitled “The Southern Slav Question”. This remark, based on my view that Cornwall omitted certain important historical factors surrounding the issues he raised, related not to his thesis (to which he was fully entitled) but to his overall argument in support of that thesis, as expounded in his introduction. Šarenac writes, however, that I argue “with a position never taken by the author”. Whereas I in fact challenge Cornwall’s statement concerning the outbreak of war in 1914, in which he says that the book he edited “reasserts the importance of the Southern Slav Question as a major cause of that war”. In other words, he did take up precisely the position which Šarenac claims is not there, or at the very least he endorsed it. To contend, as Cornwall does, that the Southern Slav Question was a major cause of the Great War is an unproven assertion that requires some evidence to support it – which neither Cornwall nor any of the contributors to his volume provide. In reviewing Cornwall, one of the points I make is that purely Southern Slav issues, with the exception of the relatively brief episode of the Bosnian annexation crisis, did not really feature in Austro-Serbian relations – they were not present in 1914, and were not, as Cornwall suggests, “a major cause of that war”.

So much for Šarenac’s defense of Cornwall, about whose introduction he has nothing more to say. The other beneficiary of his academic custodianship is the Slovene historian Andrej Rahten. As in the case of Cornwall, Šarenac commences his protective action with an assault on me. His initial broadside, however, is most perplexing:

“Mr. Zametica starts this section again with a harsh accusation. He says that Mr. Rahten is ‘guilty of commission’ implying that his chapter overlaps in its main thesis with a book already published by Rahten. This is a strange remark indeed, as historians often disseminate their ideas in lectures, articles, and ultimately in books. It is not unusual that historians further develop their ideas or simply repeat them despite the fact that these were mentioned in their previous work”⁷

It seems that a new rule has been promulgated by Šarenac whereby one is not allowed to refer to a historian’s previous work if it is relevant to some subsequent one. In his eyes, to do so constitutes “a harsh accusation”. But this is what I actually wrote at the start of my discussion of Rahten’s essay:

7 Ibid.

“If Cornwall is in a broad sense guilty of committing sins of omission in his introductory account of the Southern Slav question, one of the contributors to this volume is responsible for a major sin of commission. This is Andrej Rahten, a research fellow at the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In 2014, when a flood of books appeared in connection with the 100th anniversary of the Sarajevo assassination, Rahten made his own contribution with a study of Franz Ferdinand in the light of Slovene interpretations of the assassination. He had previously also produced an interesting study of contemporary Slovene perceptions of the Balkan Wars. His piece in Cornwall’s collection (entitled “Great expectations: The Habsburg heir apparent and the Southern Slavs”) draws heavily on the research presented in those books.”⁸

My offence, apparently, was to suggest that Rahten’s essay is in significant measure based on some earlier research. In mentioning it, I merely indicated that I am not unfamiliar with his work. At the same time, I referenced his books in a footnote, effectively doing him a favour by drawing the attention of a wider international audience to some of his publications. A possible problem here is Šarenac’s inadequate grasp of the English language. The passage above does not suggest that Rahten was in any sense “guilty of commission” for utilizing previous research in his essay – which is Šarenac’s ludicrous gripe. From what I actually wrote later in my review, it is abundantly clear that Rahten’s sin of commission relates to something quite different and far more serious: namely, the extensive use of a strikingly untrustworthy source and fallacious attribution in respect of a second source – both of these being central to his claims regarding trialist reform plans supposedly contemplated by Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his advisers at Vienna’s Belvedere palace.

Regarding my evaluation of Rahten’s use of sources, Šarenac complains that I ridicule one of those, a 1930 booklet produced by a former Austro-Hungarian diplomat, one Edmund von Horváth. He then cites Rahten’s bold assertion that Horváth “was undoubtedly a go-to expert in discussions on the Southern Slav Question”, possessing “superior knowledge of Serbia”. The fact that Rahten does not provide any supporting evidence for this claim is of no concern to Šarenac, who purports to have detected a fatal weakness in my analysis:

“Namely, in his critique, Mr. Zametica purposely did not inform his readers as did Rahten - that Edmund von Horváth was not just any Hungarian diplomat but that he actually served in Belgrade for six years. Moreover, this was not just any period but 1902 to 1908. It was a very interesting time to

8 Zametica, “The Elusive Balkan Spark”, 307.

be in Belgrade. By omitting these ‘details’ Mr. Zametica misleads his readers, and his omission is serious”.⁹

Just because someone is a diplomat in Ouagadougou does not necessarily make him a sought-after expert on west Africa. As I point out in my review essay, Horváth’s name does not appear in the relevant Austrian memoir literature, nor is he ever mentioned in the eight-volume official collection of documents dealing with Austria-Hungary’s foreign policy, 1908–1914. Before Rahten, moreover, no historian looking closely at the Habsburg empire’s South Slav issues even mentions Horváth by name. Why has the academic world ignored this person? For someone who was “undoubtedly a go-to expert”, as Rahten would have us believe, such anonymity is inexplicable. Šarenac’s argument is therefore not just with me but with historiography in general. The nub of it is that Horváth is a deservedly obscure figure, as outlined in my paragraph below. Far from intending to mislead readers by not mentioning Horváth’s period in Belgrade, I omitted the biographical details of this minor diplomat as irrelevant: neither Rahten nor his apologist Šarenac have documented any trace of Edmund von Horváth having contributed to Habsburg deliberations of South Slav issues.

Still on the subject of Horváth, Šarenac studiously ignores my main criticism of Rahten’s use of Horváth as a source. This relates to Horváth’s manifest lack of credibility. How can it be otherwise when in his booklet he narrates as true a spectacularly fictitious story about Gavrilo Princip and his fellow assassins? Namely, that having been imprisoned at Theresienstadt they were set free just after the war and then welcomed by jubilant crowds in Prague, to whom Princip gave a rousing speech. Of course, Princip never was set free to address anybody, because he died in Theresienstadt prison in April 1918. His two fellow assassins imprisoned in Theresienstadt preceded him in death. In the light of this resurrection fable, one wonders how Rahten could have taken seriously anything Horváth wrote. Šarenac must surely have read my detailed account of the Rahten-Horváth comedy before reviewing it. He therefore owes us an explanation as to whether he is keeping silent on the matter due to his belief that nothing can disqualify a source, or because he himself feels embarrassed by the said matter.

Šarenac is equally reticent about my exposure of a major falsehood constructed by Rahten. Yet again, this has to do with the latter’s creative use of sources. In order to give credence to his thesis that Franz Ferdinand was assassinated on account of his support for a trialist reconstruction of the Dual

9 Šarenac, “A disturbing revisiting for the Centenary”, 301.

Monarchy, Rahten wrote that Dragutin Dimitrijević Apis himself had said so, even citing his alleged words to that effect. Since no author had ever come up with such crystal-clear evidence linking the assassination to its supposed organizer (Apis) and his political motive, Rahten's "disclosure" merited a close check. It turned out that he had found this information in a little-known book by a Canadian travel writer and amateur historian. More interestingly still, the latter's book did not ascribe to Apis the words cited by Rahten. Those words were referenced in it as stemming from David MacKenzie's biography of Apis. MacKenzie likewise did not put them into Apis's mouth, directing his readers to their source in a Belgrade archive. The archival inspection quickly revealed that MacKenzie's material related to a couple of highly speculative public talks given long after the war by Apis's nephew Milan Živanović. In other words, Rahten presented false evidence in favour of his preconceived notions.

Šarenac overlooks Rahten's problematic approach to source material. Although his reaction to my review essay, for all its anger, keeps up the pretence of a serious academic rejoinder, it fails to address – or even touch upon – some of my most pertinent commentary. I can only assume that his silence signifies tacit acknowledgement of the validity of my critique of Rahten. Nevertheless, he still believes that it is me whom he can successfully attack on the broad front:

"However, the real problem Mr. Zametica has with this text is that Mr. Rahten dared to analyze once more the issue of potential 'trialism' and the views Archduke Franz Ferdinand held about this question. One of the key arguments of Mr. Zametica's own book is that trialism was never taken as a serious reform idea by the most important holders of power in the Habsburg monarchy. It appears that he loses his temper any time someone dares to suggest other possibilities".¹⁰

On the contrary, I have found serene peace and felt both professionally and personally gratified to have unmasked Rahten's fraudulent attempt to keep alive a historiographical fallacy about some allegedly serious Habsburg reform plans for a trialist reorganization of the empire. But Šarenac keeps going, this time with a bewildering new line of attack:

"He [Zametica] omits to mention that Mr. Rahten quotes a number of other Croat and Slovene figures who also voiced support for or at least their thoughts about the issue of trialism. These included Ivanka Klemenčič, the first Slovene professional female journalist, and a number of Croatian politicians".¹¹

10 Šarenac, "A disturbing revisiting for the Centenary", 301.

11 Ibid.

The fact that such voices existed – as I readily, and indeed at some length, record in chapter three of my book – does not mean that they exerted any influence on the Belvedere circle. Those voices were hardly important sources of power in the Habsburg monarchy. Croatocentric trialism was a fantasy of the Zagreb political class with hardly any rooting in the gardens of Belvedere. Moreover, pointing out that Ivanka Klemenčič was the first Slovene professional female journalist might serve as a politically correct sop to the spirit of postmodern times, but any reading of the said lady's reverential and in fact categorically Catholic tribute to Franz Ferdinand only reveals her modest credentials as a journalist. Her booklet contains outbursts of hate against Serbs, as well as an ardent appeal to the Slovenes to renew their pledge of loyalty to Austria. She explicitly counts only the Slovenes and Croats as “Yugoslavs” – excluding the Serbs.¹² As for the (non-existent) impact on the heir to the throne of her support for the putative trialist reform plans, this is as if a blog on an obscure website should be taken into account when explaining decision-making at the highest level.

Having made these strenuous efforts on behalf of his colleagues, Šarenac appears to have run out of steam by the time he gets to discuss my take on his own contribution to Cornwall's volume. He does lodge a complaint, however meekly, about my observation that his essay on Serbian military intelligence and the Sarajevo assassination contains almost no research. I thereby demonstrate, he writes, “a very conservative stance towards the nature and methodology of historical research.” His topic, he maintains, is not one of those where one simply goes “through 400 boxes” of new evidence.

If this is so, I suggest, then what we historians understand by “research” loses its previous meaning. Šarenac actually stated in his essay that “no new sources are available” for his subject. How does he know? Did he do old fashioned research in order to find out? He admits that in the essay he set out to “reexamine” all that went on in 1914. But instead of then conceding that his piece is a “re-interpretation” or “re-examination”, he prefers to ‘blind with science’, using high-sounding language to lecture us on the “nature and methodology of historical research”. It should be noted, *en passant*, that some historians in the Balkans are fascinated by the term “methodology”, which they use at random and which in most cases means nothing.

Another term beloved by Šarenac is “context”. Downplaying the usefulness of those “400 boxes”, he explains: “On the other hand, dealing with the

12 *Zločin v Sarajevu. Tragična smrt prestolonaslednika Fran Ferdinanda in njegove soproge vojvodinje Hohenberg*, (Ljubljana: Katoliška Bukvarna, 1914), 1–3.

context is essential.” Agreed. One cannot explain a historical event or process without bringing into the picture the relevant determinants. But is Šarenac trying to say here that his “context” is immutable whatever may be found in some of his 400 boxes? Making sure that we do not lose sight of the importance of “context”, he continues: “Indeed, many of our studies of the Sarajevo assassination remain highly speculative. However, by further stressing the context, our speculations about the facts of the Sarajevo assassination can become more rooted in reality.” So, we are expected to believe that our conjectures about past events will become miraculously valid if we just keep harping on about their “context”, i.e., if we simply repeat the already known or already assumed circumstances surrounding them. This is a remarkable position to take for someone who makes his living as a historian.

In a final spasm of annoyance, Šarenac throws at me new accusations interspersed with some virtue-signaling as well as self-praise:

“Treating Serbia as an innocent bystander in the crises of 1914 did not attract me nor did the easiness and the stereotypes with which several foreign historians have approached Serbian pre-war society. I also decided not to overlook Serbia’s actual territorial ambition toward Bosnia. I supported my analysis of the Sarajevo assassination’s context with Serbian literature that has appeared in the last twenty years. The cumulative effect of such an approach proved to be valid and refreshing. Mr. Zametica however has problems with most of my writing. In his dismissive style, he mocks again my comments about the military planning of the Serbian army, treating this as irrelevant. This shows he is hardly familiar with the evolution of Serbian military thinking before 1914.”¹³

Significantly, Šarenac adds this give-away nugget: “I have not started my research with the preconception that I intend to blame the whole 1914 crisis on Austria-Hungary” (p. 302). Šarenac would be well advised to leave it to others to assess the validity and freshness of his approach. He is also pretty careless in claiming that I am ignorant about Serbian military planning. But what he inadvertently reveals here is an *a priori* position that is precisely the opposite of an impartial approach. For Serbia did not necessarily strike him as “an innocent bystander” in 1914, and he was not going to rush and blame Austria-Hungary for “the whole 1914 crisis”. And in any case one had to keep in mind “Serbia’s actual territorial ambition toward Bosnia.” This, then, is Šarenac’s open-minded “research” concept – not to mention “methodology”.

13 Šarenac, “A disturbing revisiting for the Centenary”, 302.

As for Serbia's military planning (about which I am allegedly clueless), the self-appointed military history specialist Šarenac gives us the following priceless elucidation:

“I will try to clarify this here. The Serbian army had, for example, no plan of attack or defense against Romania. However, it had two plans for a potential clash with Bulgaria. And there were as many as ten (all offensive) plans for attacking the Ottoman Empire. There was only one for fighting a defensive war with Austria-Hungary. To any well-intended and professional historian, this is telling and useful information.”¹⁴

This is most interesting, all the more so because Šarenac is right about Serbia having only one plan to execute in the event of armed conflict with its mighty Habsburg neighbour, and right also to say that it was a plan for a defensive war. Its origins go back to 1907, after Austria-Hungary had launched its tariff war against Serbia. The details of the plan were subsequently worked out by Chief of General Staff Radomir Putnik and his aide Živojin Mišić. Even though the Italian military had in the autumn of 1912 warned the Serbs that Austria-Hungary planned to strike from Bosnia from the west, the Serbian operational plan in 1914 kept the old assumption that the main attack would come from the north in the direction of the Morava valley. Certainly, the Serbian plan was focused on conducting defensive, not offensive operations.¹⁵ This makes one wonder why Šarenac – since he is actually pointing this out – is so keen to suggest at the same time that Serbia nurtured territorial (i.e., offensive) ambitions towards the Habsburg Bosnia territory, and was not “an innocent bystander” in 1914. The kindest comment here would be that he simply overlooked this *contradictio in adjecto*.

Such is Danilo Šarenac's arsenal of weaponry: his rifles are loaded with defective ammunition and his artillery pieces have faulty firing pins. He imagines, however, that he also possesses a ballistic missile which on closer inspection

14 *Ibid.*

15 *Veliki rat Srbije za oslobođenje i ujedinjenje Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, Knjiga prva, 1914. godina*, (Beograd: Izdanje glavnog đeneralštaba, 1924), 26, 31; Далибор Денда, „Геополитичке прилике у Европи и српски ратни план 1914. године“, *Србија и геополитичке прилике у Европи 1914. године*, ур. Миломир Степић, Љубодрог П. Ристић, (Лајковац: Градска библиотека; Београд: Институт за политичке студије, 2015), 111–133; Mile Bjelajac, Predrag Trifunović, *Između vojske i politike. Biografija generala Dušana Trifunovića 1880–1942*, (Beograd: INIS, Narodni muzej Kruševac, 1997), 59–61. See also James Lyon, *Serbia and the Balkan Front, 1914: The Outbreak of the Great War*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 107–113.

turns out to be a stink bomb. Namely, already early on he brings up the charge of nationalist bias in my work:

“Still, the true problem of his [Zametica’s] critique is his understanding of the Sarajevo assassination, not as a large scholarly problem, but as a cornerstone for defending the Serbian national narrative. Consequently, he understands any form of revisiting or questioning the role of the “Serbian side” in the Sarajevo events as a vicious and sinister attack against Serbia and its people. From Mr. Zametica’s perspective, you can only question the assassination of 1914 if you confirm his own positions. Do not read or write about this event if you want to question or reexamine anything – that is his message”.¹⁶

This is odd. What Šarenac calls “the Serbian national narrative” concerning the historical events and figures around the Sarajevo assassination, includes portrayals of Gavrilo Princip at its centre in the role of a national, Serbian hero – indeed, in recent years the Serbs have erected several monuments to him. But as those who have read my own book on this subject may recall, it revisits and questions this view, seeing in Princip an ardent supporter of the Yugoslav ideology that he and his fellow conspirators received from Croatia, not Serbia. Indeed, the book revisits and questions many other aspects of the standard Serbian narrative. For example, I expect that some overzealous patriots in Serbia will attack it for its somewhat critical appraisal of Nikola Pašić, the “wise” statesman forever lionized in Serbian narratives – just like Churchill in British ones. Similarly, they will probably not welcome my observation that in 1913 Serbia breached its agreement with Bulgaria from the previous year. Nor does the book endorse the Serbian fiction about brotherly Russian support pre-1914. On the contrary, it documents Russia’s indifference and even selfish Great Power mindset in matters affecting Serbia – a point other scholars have already noted when reviewing the book.¹⁷

Šarenac does not provide a single example to demonstrate what he labels my “obvious national priorities”. And yet he is actually quite insistent on the labelling: “Mr. Zametica defends a specific type of discourse where national feelings always have the upper hand over scholarship.”¹⁸ Why does he not illustrate this grave indictment with, for example, a document distorted or some important source ignored? Inevitably, he cannot. He also has no answer to my

16 Šarenac, “A disturbing revisiting for the Centenary”, 299.

17 See, for example, the review of *Folly and Malice* by Miloš Vojinović (*Balkanica* LII/2021, 220–221).

18 Šarenac, “A disturbing revisiting for the Centenary”, 302–303.

questioning of his claims of Apis's involvement in the Sarajevo assassination. In this case, too, he just runs away from matters of substance.

Here we come to what is described in social sciences as “the hypocritical nature of reaction to political bias”. For Šarenac's source of concern is not really any perceived political or national bias in my work. It relates, rather, to the results of my research in contrast to his own agenda, shared by some authors in the West, of apportioning to Serbia as much blame as possible for the outbreak of the Great War. One of the chief conclusions of my investigations is that Apis and his Black Hand organization in all probability had had nothing whatsoever to do with the planning of the assassination in Sarajevo. Of course, the Black Hand story is the essential reason why a whole century of historiography dealing with the war's origins holds Serbia responsible, to varying degrees, for an assassination that led to a continental conflict. If historians begin to consider in good faith the argument that there was no involvement of the Black Hand, then the idea that Serbia was indeed “an innocent bystander” in 1914 will no longer carry nationalist overtones. But Šarenac and his ilk, blinkered by prejudice and oblivious to evidence, will never accept this possibility.

The preceding, however, places perhaps too much emphasis on the rational side of Šarenac's response to my review essay. That response is only superficially about my scholarship and my alleged lack of good manners. It should more properly be seen as an exercise in self-harm caused by academic vanity and a sense of injured pride.

Summary

Danilo Šarenac has responded to a recent review essay of *Sarajevo 1914: Sparking the First World War*, edited by Mark Cornwall. This essay, written by John Zametica, focuses on three contributions to that volume, by Šarenac himself and two other authors. Šarenac's response, according to Zametica, is hugely problematic intellectually and morally. While criticising him for not respecting “the culture of dialogue” – the respondent maintains – Šarenac evades any meaningful academic dialogue by ignoring the key critical observations made by Zametica. He asserts that the trivial issues, which Šarenac actually raises instead, stand exposed in the ensuing text as grotesque deviations. In levelling the charge of nationalist bias against the reviewer, Zametica concludes, Šarenac uses subterfuge in order to sound politically correct and hide his bigoted intolerance.

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Резиме

Џон Заметица

1914, ПОНОВО: ИЗВОРИ ПРОТИВ СОФИСТЕРИЈЕ

Апстракт: Одговор Данила Шаренца на критички приказ његовог текста као и радова двојице његових колега о Сарајевском атентату 1914. подвргнут је детаљној анализи конкретних тврдњи које су том приликом изнете.

Кључне речи: Сарајево 1914, Данило Шаренац, Марк Корнвол, Андреј Рахтен, Џон Заметица

Данило Шаренац је одговорио на недавни приказ зборника радова *Sarajevo 1914: Sparking the First World War (Сарајево 1914: Искра Првог светског рата)*, чији је уредник Марк Корнвол. Тај приказ из пера Џона Заметице фокусира се на прилоге самог Шаренца и још два аутора у поменутом зборнику. Шаренчев одговор је по мишљењу Заметице дубоко проблематичан, како интелектуално тако и морално. Премда га напада што наводно не поштује „културу дијалога“ – аутор даље тврди – сâм Шаренац се клони сваког смисленог академског дијалога тако што игнорише кључна критичка запажања Заметице. Он сматра да су тривијална питања, која Шаренац уместо тога покреће, раскринкана у самом тексту као гротескне странпутице. Упућујући приказивачу оптужбу за националистичку пристрасност, он прибегава приземним триковима, закључује Заметица, како би звучао политички коректно и прикрио сопствену загрижену нетрпељивост.