

*Tomasz Jacek Lis*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0188-5755>  
Jagiellonian University

## DEOSMANISATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA BETWEEN 1878 AND 1918 ON THE EXAMPLE OF SARAJEVO\*

### Abstract

In 1878, Austria-Hungary received a mandate in Berlin to exercise power in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During this period, they pursued a policy of deosmanisation and Europeanisation of the country. Vienna's actions, however, differed significantly from the policies of neighbouring Serbia or Bulgaria, where the deosmanisation processes resulted in the partial or complete elimination of Islamic culture from the public space. Therefore, the article aims to outline the cultural policy of Austria-Hungary in Bosnia and Herzegovina, primarily in the context of the culture of remembrance, and to show the Austrian visions of the approach to the local past. The capital city of Sarajevo served as an example of this policy, where the processes mentioned above are best seen in terms of the actions of the authorities themselves, the preserved archival legacy, and professional literature.

**Keywords:** culture of remembrance, Bosnia and Herzegovina 1878–1918, Austro-Hungarian occupation, Balkans

### I INTRODUCTION

Since the borders of the Ottoman Empire in Europe began to shrink, i.e. from the end of the seventeenth century,<sup>1</sup> the deosmanisation

---

\* The research presented in this article was financed by the grant of the Polish National Science Centre (NCN): Social Changes of the Muslim Communities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria in the Second Half of the 19th and at the Beginning of the 20th Century: Comparative Studies (2020/39/B/HS3/01717).

<sup>1</sup> Until the seventeenth century, the Ottoman Empire was on the offensive. Although the armies of the Porte did suffer defeats, none of them, even when they lost the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, were able to break its power. Donald Quataert,

process had been noticeable in the areas lost by the Porte. This phenomenon applies to demographic, legal, constitutional, architectural, and social changes. In short, it is the rejection or modification of every element of life that was associated with the then-ruling authority of the Ottoman Empire. The deosmanisation became a mass phenomenon in the nineteenth century when the Balkan Peninsula became a place of intensified national liberation, which resulted in the partial or complete shedding of the sovereignty of Istanbul.

Deosmanisation and often deislamisation was a direct or a partial consequence whenever the sultan's power was limited in the nineteenth century. It happened because, as a rule, power was passed into the hands of the Christian population, which additionally constituted the majority of the country. For example, this was the case in Serbia, which had had autonomy within the Ottoman Empire since 1830, and it gradually expanded in the following years until it gained complete independence in 1878. The introduction of autonomy meant that the Muslims living in these areas had to leave. This order applied not only to private individuals but also to religious institutions such as *waqfs* [a Muslim religious or charitable foundation created by an endowed trust fund].<sup>2</sup> Estates belonging to *waqfs* and mosques were passed to the state and church institutions.<sup>3</sup> When there were no more Muslims (except for the military crew, which until the 1860s was stationed in Kalemegdan),<sup>4</sup> the process of deosmanisation of public

---

*The Ottoman Empire 1700–1922* (Cambridge, 2005), 24–5; Stanford I. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and the Modern Turkey*, i: *Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280–1808* (Cambridge, 1976); translated into Polish as: *Historia Imperium Osmańskiego i Republiki Tureckiej*, i: *1280–1808* (Warszawa, 2012), 337.

<sup>2</sup> И. Колај Ристановић, *Статус вакуфских добара у Кнежевини Србији (1878–1882)* (Beograd, 2020), 79–82.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Until the 1860s, an army of 3,000 Turkish soldiers was stationed in the Kalemegdan fortress in Serbia. In addition, the country was inhabited by several thousand civilians, a total of approximately 12,500 people. Ultimately, after the outbreak of the conflict between Turkish and Serb forces in 1867, there was a migration of the Muslim population, which mostly settled in neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina. Fikret Karčić, 'Posljedni muslimani u Beogradu 1867', *Takvim za 2018 godinu* (Sarajevo, 2018), 160–4; Safet Bandžović, 'Iseljavanje muslimanskog stanovništva iz kneževine Srbije u Bosanski vilajet (1862–1867)', *Znakovi vremena – Časopis za filozofiju, religiju, znanost i društvenu praksu*, 12 (2001), 151.

space began.<sup>5</sup> Its consequence was the obliteration of most of the traces of architecture from the Ottoman period, which was perfectly visible, for example, in urban space. In Belgrade alone, which had seventeen mosques at the end of the eighteenth century, until the end of the nineteenth century, only one remained – Barjakli džamija,<sup>6</sup> which still exists today. The deosmanisation of other countries in the Balkan Peninsula was similar – for example, in Bulgaria, where power was also taken away from the Ottomans and handed over to the Christian majority.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, when it was decided to hand over power in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, it was met with significant opposition from the local Muslims.

## II

### BOSNIA – A COUNTRY DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS

The loss of privileges, forced migration, and finally, the destruction of monuments (on purpose or not) meant that Muslims from Bosnia and Herzegovina tried at all costs to prevent power from passing into the hands of Christians, which threatened the country after the Congress of Berlin (1878). Admittedly, after the bey rebellion was pacified by Omer Pashe-Latas (1806–71) in 1850,<sup>8</sup> local elites from

---

<sup>5</sup> Safet Bandžović, *Bošnjaci i deosmanizacija Balkana. Muhadžirski pokreti i pribježišta "sultanovih mustafira" (1683–1875)* (Sarajevo, 2013), 311–12.

<sup>6</sup> Destruction of Muslim heritage in Serbia took place not only through deliberate destruction, but also by refusing subsidies for renovations. This applied not only to mosques and buildings once owned by Muslims, but also to the archives from the Ottoman times, which were deteriorating due to the lack of adequate space to store them. 'Неадекватан смештај и несређеност архиве, Београд, 10–13.04.1896', in Бранка Прна (ed.), *Живети у Београду 1890–1940* (Београд, 2008), 60–1.

<sup>7</sup> Krzysztof Popiek, "To Cut down the Forest of Minarets": The Transformation of Bulgarian Cities after 1878', in Magdalena Gibiec, Dorota Wiśniewska, and Leszek Ziątkowski (eds), *The City and the Process of Transition from Early Modern Times to the Present* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2019), 82–8; Milena B. Methodieva, *Between Empire and Nation. Muslim reform in Balkans* (Stanford, 2021), 79–86.

<sup>8</sup> From the 1820s in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the local Muslim elites called *beyes* [*begovi*] and *aghas* [*agovi*] rebelled against the government in Istanbul, occasionally organising armed uprisings. The largest of them took place in 1831, when Hussein bej-Gradašćević proclaimed himself a vizier independent of the Sultan and took the then capital of the country, Travnik. See Husnija Kamberović, *Husein-kapetan Gradašćević (1802–1834)* (Gradačac, 2002). Ultimately, in 1850, the Sultan finally

Bosnia and Herzegovina were not satisfied with the sultan's politics; nevertheless, the prospect of falling under the rule of the Habsburgs was an even greater catastrophe for them. Therefore, although Austrian propaganda proclaimed that the occupation was not directed against Muslims, the Austro-Hungarian army met with resistance from the local population, who, following the example from neighbouring Serbia or Bulgaria, feared the consequences of separating the Bosnian *wilayah* [an administrative division: province, governorate] from the Ottoman Empire.<sup>9</sup>

However, from the very beginning of its operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vienna emphasised that it wanted to help all the country's inhabitants. Anyway, the international mandate that Austria-Hungary received in Berlin was to ensure equality for all residents – including Muslims. Therefore, the sultan himself appealed to Bosnian Muslims not to oppose the presence of Austrian troops because: “They bring you not war, but peace ... The emperor and the king promises that all the sons of this soil will be equal before the law, all will keep their lives, religion and property”.<sup>10</sup> Obviously, neither the international mandate, let alone the voice of the sultan, who was discredited in the eyes of the Bosnian *beyes*, could not help much; therefore,

---

decided to pacify the local elites by sending an officer, Omer Pasha-Latas, to Bosnia, who with the help of, among others, Poles fighting in the Ottoman army finally restored the power of the Sultan throughout the country. See also Galib Šljivo, *Omer-Paša Latas u Bosni i Hercegovini 1850–1852* (Sarajevo, 1977). The character of Omer Pasha-Latas became the theme of a novel by Ivo Andrić. Ivo Andrić, *Omer Pasza Latas: Marshal to the Sultan*, introduction by William T. Vollmann, transl. Celia Hawkesworth (New York, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> The decisions taken in Berlin in 1878 resulted in a nationwide revolt, the first victim of which was the Ottoman vizier, who had to rescue himself by escaping. Although there was no unity among Bosnian Muslims and there were cases of people protesting against armed resistance, most of the *beyes* took up the fight against Austro-Hungarian troops. Mihovil Mandić, *Povijest okupacije Bosne i Hercegovine 1878* (Zagreb, 1910); Edmund von Horstenu, *Tuzla und Doboj 1878* (Wien–Leipzig, 1909). This did not prevent some *beyes* from starting cooperation with the State Government in Sarajevo, see Husnija Kamberović, *Begovski zemljišni posjedi u Bosni i Hercegovini from 1878 to 1918* (Sarajevo, 2005), 390.

<sup>10</sup> “Oni Vam ne nose rat, nego mir ... Car i kralj naređuje da svi sinovi te zemlje uživaju po zakonu ravnopravnost, da svima zaštiti život, vjera i imovina”, ‘Proglas stanovništvu Bosne i Hercegovine’, in Dženana Čaušević, *Pravno-politički razvitak Bosne i Hercegovine. Dokumenti sa komentarima* (Sarajevo, 2005), 196 [transl. T.J. Lis].

the conquest of Bosnia and Herzegovina was bloody and cost Vienna many victims.<sup>11</sup>

Although the Bosnians defending their country against the Austrians lost because they had to lose, the situation of Muslims was different than that of their compatriots in other Balkan countries. Especially in the face of the fact that, in 1879, Emperor Franz Joseph I undertook under Article 2 of the so-called Novopazar Convention that he would defend the freedom of religion of the inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially the local Muslims.<sup>12</sup> Of course, the joint declarations of the Sultan and the Emperor did not prevent the exodus of some Muslims, especially the clerical and military elites, which began to leave Bosnia into the Ottoman Empire.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the scale of this phenomenon cannot be compared with the situation in Serbia or Bulgaria. For almost the entire period of Austrian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Muslims accounted for over 30 per cent of the population.<sup>14</sup> In addition, while their position in cities was significantly weakened, which will be discussed later, they bravely defended their privileges in the countryside, which, moreover, were assisted by the State Government in Sarajevo.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Almost 80,000 soldiers were involved in the subordination of Bosnia and Herzegovina, most of them from the Hungarian part of the country, see László Bence, *The Occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878* (New York, 2005), 117. During the fighting, Austro-Hungarian troops lost almost 6,000 soldiers, see Zečir Ramčilović, 'Demografske promjene nakon berlinskog kongresa (1878) u Bosni i Hercegovini', *Historijski Pogledi*, 2 (2019), 75.

<sup>12</sup> 'Carigradska (novopazarska) konvencija', in Ljubomir Zovko, *Studije iz pravne povijesti Bosne i Hercegovine 1878–1941* (Mostar, 2007), 124–6.

<sup>13</sup> According to Bosnian Herzegovinian historians, it was supposed to be even 8,000 people, see Mustafa Imamović, *Historija Bošnjaka* (Sarajevo, 2007), 367.

<sup>14</sup> According to the census of 1879, it was over 448,000 (39 per cent of people), in 1885, 492,000 (37 per cent), in 1895, 549,000 (35 per cent), while in 1910, 612,000 (32 per cent). Data obtained from the censuses: *Haupt Übersicht der politischen Eintheilung von Bosnien und Herzegowina* (Sarajevo, 1880); *Hauptresultate Volkszählung in Bosnien und der Hercegovina vom 22. April 1895* (Sarajevo, 1896); *Ortschafts- und Bevölkerungs-Statistik von Bosnien und der Hercegovina nach dem Volkszählungs-Ergebnisse vom 1. May 1885*, Sarajevo (Sarajevo, 1886); *Rezultati popisa žiteljstva u Bosni i Hercegovini od 10 oktobra 1910* (Sarajevo, 1912).

<sup>15</sup> Although the Austrian authorities announced changes in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian countryside, they did not decide to take radical steps against the wealthy Muslim *beyes*, who were the main obstacle in carrying out agrarian reforms. It was feared that their liquidation might disturb internal relations, see Dževad Juzbašić,

The relatively strong position of the followers of Islam resulting from political guarantees, as well as the country's multinationality, meant that the deosmanisation process, although also taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, looked different than in the case of other Balkan countries that emancipated from the power of Istanbul. What is more, the nature of Austria-Hungary, which was a multicultural and multi-religious state, meant that the approach of the authorities, including the local administration brought from different parts of the monarchy, was focused on a dialogue with Muslims<sup>16</sup> and not their pacification.

The policy pursued by the Austrians in their subordinate provinces was usually based on supporting the weaker group at the expense of the stronger one. It was like that in Dalmatia, where from the 1860s, Slav-Croats and Serbs began to be supported at the cost of Italians,<sup>17</sup> or Galicia, where the Polish-Ruthenian conflict<sup>18</sup> was played out in a similar way. It was no different in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where, fearing the growing importance of Croats as well as Serbs, support for Muslims willing to cooperate with the new government was initiated.<sup>19</sup> They were primarily representatives of the city elites, mainly from Sarajevo, who, like Mehmed Bej-Kapetanović-Ljubušak, noticed the opportunity for Muslims in the new reality.<sup>20</sup>

---

*Politika i privreda u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom* (Sarajevo, 2002), 115–17. It was only in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia that the agrarian problems were finally resolved, see Witold Szulc, *Przemiany gospodarcze i społeczne w Jugosławii w okresie międzywojennym 1918–1941* (Poznań, 1980), 79–82.

<sup>16</sup> Arhiv Bosne i Hercegovine, Zemaljska Vlada Sarajevo (hereinafter: ABH, ZVS) 1907, ref. no. 5/10.

<sup>17</sup> Antoni Cetnarowicz, *Odrodzenie narodowe w Dalmacji. Od slavenstva do nowoczesnej chorwackiej i serbskiej idei narodowej* (Kraków, 2001), 55; Josip Vrandečić, *Dalmatinski autonomistički pokret u XIX. stoljeću* (Zagreb, 2002), 94–5.

<sup>18</sup> More about this topic: Bohdan Hud, *Ukraińcy i Polacy na Naddnieprzu, Wołyniu i w Galicji Wschodniej w XIX i pierwszej połowie XX wieku* (Warszawa, 2018).

<sup>19</sup> Mehmed bej Kapetanović-Ljubušak, *Budućnost ili napredak Muhamedovaca u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo, 1893), 8.

<sup>20</sup> The policies of Vienna were aimed at opposing both Croatian and Serbian propaganda, as both Croats and Serbs wanted to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time, Croatian actions were more of a cultural domination in their nature, while Serbian actions were cultural and political, see Ludwig Steindorff, *Geschichte Kroatiens. Vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Regensburg, 2020), 140–3. Moreover, Vienna was concerned that Serbia would constitute an extension of Russia's politics

### III DEOSMANISATION AND EUROPEANISATION

The deosmanisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, best seen in the example of the capital city of Sarajevo, took place along with its Europeanisation, whose social and architectural patterns came from Vienna. However, the arrival of the new government did not mean a revolution but rather an evolution. Wherever it was possible, attempts were made to modify the current state of affairs by changing only the Turkish nomenclature to Austrian, e.g. in the case of *sandžak* [a former Ottoman administrative district], which from 1878 became *Bezirk*.<sup>21</sup> With time, however, it was decided to liquidate some institutions, such as commercial courts. In contrast, others, such as sharia courts, were marginalised or their competencies were changed, as was in the case of *waqfs*,<sup>22</sup> which obtained more of an educational role. It turned out to be necessary to establish entirely new units, such as the Supreme Court or the Central Bank. Anyway, the entire civil administration was created from scratch, and although the civil law took into account the special needs of Muslims,<sup>23</sup> the Koran ceased to be the most important source of law, replaced by Josephine codes from the beginning of the 19th century.<sup>24</sup> Modern offices needed modern officials educated according to Austrian patterns, so there was

---

in the Balkans, see Dušan Bataković, 'Prelude to Sarajevo: The Serbian question in Bosnia and Hercegovina 1878–1914', *Balkanica*, 28 (1996), 117–54; Chedomille Mijatovich, *The Memoirs of a Balkan Diplomatist* (London, 1917), 38; Alan John Percivale Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809–1918. A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary* (London, 1964), 190–1. On Vienna's policies towards Muslims see Robert J. Donia, *Islam under the Double Eagle: the Muslims of Bosnia and Hercegovina, 1878–1914* (New York, 1981); Xavier Bougarel, *Islam and Nationhood in Bosnia and Hercegovina: Surviving Empires* (London–New York, 2018).

<sup>21</sup> Mustafa Imamović, *Historija države i prava Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo, 1999), 278.

<sup>22</sup> Enes Durmišević, 'Šerijatski sudovi u Bosnija u drugoj polovini XIX stoljeća', *Anali Pravnog fakulteta Univerziteta u Zenici*, 12 (2013), 75–89; Mehmed Bečić, 'Trgovački sporovi u Bosni i Hercegovini: osvrt na sudove, stranke, predmete i dokumente ranog postosmanskog perioda', *Historijske Traganja*, 20 (2021), 149; Srećko Džaja, *Bosna i Hercegovina u Austrougarskom razdoblju (1878–1918). Inteligencija između tradicije i ideologije* (Mostar–Zagreb, 2002), 59.

<sup>23</sup> Eugen Sladović pl. Sladovički, *Upravna nauka i upravno pravo Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo, 1916).

<sup>24</sup> Imamović, *Historija države*, 284.

no place for the locals, whose knowledge of Persian or Turkish did not compensate for the lack of knowledge of the German language. As a result, the cities became a place of migration for intelligentsia from various parts of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, which took over the responsibility of building a new elite, causing changes in the social structure, especially in cities.

The capital city of Sarajevo excelled in this process. While in 1879 there were 21 thousand inhabitants, in 1910 it was almost 52,000.<sup>25</sup> Social relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina were much more liberal than in other Austrian countries. Internal transfer within social groups was faster because the authorities wanted the country to develop dynamically, and they needed hard-working and properly educated people – their social origin had a smaller impact on promotion than competencies.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, it was easier to make careers for people who would not have a chance to succeed in their home country, such as sons from peasant families who managed to obtain a university degree, Jews, as well as people who had a sense of mission to celebrate the achievements of Western civilisation.

Initially, Muslims who, as mentioned above, could not meet the requirements of the Austrian administration<sup>27</sup> were excluded from this process. However, to counteract this, the Austro-Hungarian authorities began developing an education system to train the local population according to the patterns prevailing throughout the monarchy. At the same time, a loyal local elite was brought up, which in the future was to take up leadership positions in the country. The conservatism and prejudices of the state administrators meant that the process of including the locals in decision-making circles was quite limited; nevertheless, it progressed.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, this led

<sup>25</sup> Теодор Крушевач, *Сарајево под Аустро-угарском управом* (Sarajevo, 1966), 15.

<sup>26</sup> Tomasz Jacek Lis, *Polscy urzędnicy wyższego szczebla w Bośni i Hercegowinie w latach 1878–1918* (Kraków, 2020), 98, 110–12.

<sup>27</sup> It is true that the statistics show that about half of the officials were of local origin, but the vast majority held lower positions. *Bericht über die Verwaltung von Bosnien und der Hercegovina* (Sarajevo–Wien, 1906–1917); Fedro Hauptmann, 'Privreda i društvo Bosne i Hercegovine u doba austrougarske vladavine 1878–1918', *Prilozi za istoriju Bosne i Hercegovine*, 59 (1987), 197–201; Tomasz Jacek Lis, 'Službenici u Bosni i Hercegovini 1878–1918', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, lii, 2 (2020), 631–3.

<sup>28</sup> The case was not helped by the participation of Serbian intelligentsia, including officials in anti-state conspiracies: 'Entwicklung der innerpolitischen Lage in der

to the situation that in the 1880s, students from Bosnia and Herzegovina began to appear at Austrian universities, including Muslims, for whom a special dormitory in Vienna was even opened, where they could receive halal meals and also pray to Allah in a dedicated place.<sup>29</sup> It resulted in the emergence of the first Muslim doctors, lawyers, and attorneys who became leaders of the Bosnian community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The deosmanisation process took place at the expense of the locals, who partly decided to migrate, and, partly due to the lack of appropriate competencies, participated only to a small extent in the activities of the national authorities. Muslims were elected to posts in local authorities – as mayors or members of city councils. Still, in Sarajevo, their competencies were limited by a special official for the capital [*vladin povjernik*] imposed by the state authorities, who was never a local community representative.<sup>30</sup>

The next stage of deosmanisation was the destruction of the old Ottoman architecture. However, it did not occur in the same way as in other Balkan countries. So if any buildings, including mosques, were destroyed – it was done under the pretext of the need to free space for constructing other important public buildings, such as offices, a casino or a bank. The construction of churches was also willingly allowed, especially Catholic ones.<sup>31</sup> The forces of nature, such as a fire in 1879, which consumed a large part of the city's wooden buildings,<sup>32</sup> proved to be helpful for the 'redevelopment' of the urban space of Sarajevo. The free space that was then obtained later served as a construction site for modern public and private buildings that began to be erected in the city. Of course, there was also deliberate

---

Zeit vom 13. to 18. Dezember 1912', in *Persönliche Vormerkungen von General Oskar Potiorek über die innerpolitische Lage in Bosnien und der Herzegowina*, ed. Zijad Šehić, Dževad Juzbašić (Sarajevo, 2015), 287.

<sup>29</sup> ABH, ZVS, 1900, ref. no. 58/1/8.

<sup>30</sup> Haris Zajmović, *Zapisnici sarajevskog gradskog zastupstva (1878–1881)* (Sarajevo, 2018), 14–15.

<sup>31</sup> Tomislav Kraljačić, *Kalajev regim u Bosni i Hercegovini 1882–1903* (Sarajevo, 1987), 313–15; Archbishop Josip Stadler obtained funds not only from the state but also from his friends, including archbishop Josip Jurij Strossmayer from Zagreb, see Zoran Grijak, *Politička djelatnost vrhbosanskog nadbiskupa Josipa Stadlera* (Zagreb, 2001), 119–20.

<sup>32</sup> Hamdija Kreševljaković, *Sarajevo za vrijeme austrougarske uprave (1878–1918)* (Sarajevo, 1969), 24–5.

destruction of buildings or sacred spaces, such as Muslim cemeteries [*mizars*], which were converted into parks. However, the *mizars* were not deprived of all the characteristic tombstones, the so-called *turbets*, but they were left despite the desacralisation of space. When in 1910 the Cracow Slavist Jan Magiera came to Sarajevo, he sadly stated: “The city does not even have many peculiarities. New buildings, such as the Catholic church, market hall, and government buildings, are no different from those in Vienna, Budapest or Cracow or in other cities”.<sup>33</sup>

On the other hand, the authorities tried to show that they cared about the country’s historical heritage. A tangible example of this care was the establishment of the National Museum in Sarajevo in 1888.<sup>34</sup> It was one of the most modern institutions of this type in the Balkans, worthy of a Vienna or Prague. The aim of this institution was to take care of historical monuments, as well as conduct and coordinate archaeological, ethnographic and linguistic research in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>35</sup> The aim of supporting the country’s scientific and technological development was to show the international public opinion that Vienna perfectly fulfils its international mandate and is able to combine ambitious plans for dynamic development and respect for local tradition and culture. The museum employed permanent employees such as Konstantin (Kosta) Hörmann, Viktor Apfelbeck and Ćiro Truhelka. Moreover, it collaborated with other scientists from Bosnia, Herzegovina, and other parts of the monarchy. The museum also published its scientific periodical *Glasnik Zemaljskog Muzeja*, which soon became recognised in Austro-Hungary. It was one of the first of its kind in the Balkans.<sup>36</sup>

Another significant symptom of the authorities ‘sensitivity’ to the oriental traditions and culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina

<sup>33</sup> Jan Magiera, *Na Słowiańskim Jugu* (Kraków, 1911), 58.

<sup>34</sup> Jozo Petrović, ‘Zemaljski muzej u Sarajevu’, *Narodna starina*, xiv (1927), 71–7; Ćiro Truhelka, *Uspomene jednog pionira* (Zagreb, 1942), 73–4.

<sup>35</sup> The museum’s budget included, among others, research trips of museum employees: ABH, Zemaljske Ministarstvo Finansija, 1891, ref. no. 5954/BH. It also financed archaeological excavations in the country: Vasilj Snježana, ‘Arheologija i arheološka istraživanja u Bosni i Hercegovini u vrijeme austrougarske uprane’, in Zijad Šehić (ed.), *Međunarodna Konferencija Bosna i Hercegovina u okviru Austro-Ugarske 1878–1918. Zbornik radova* (Sarajevo, 2011), 519.

<sup>36</sup> Marica Popić-Filipović, ‘Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine u postdaytonskoj Bosni i Hercegovini’, *Informatica Museologica*, 43 (2012), 185–6.

was the characteristic architectural style found only in the territory of this country, known as neo-Moorish [*pseudomaurijski stil*]. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Viennese architects appreciated the orientalism of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which meant that they decided to combine oriental motifs with Viennese secession. During the national exhibition, which took place in Vienna in 1898, a Bosnian pavilion designed by Joseph Urban was presented, referring to the style of buildings existing in the Ottoman Empire, which soon became one of the leading trends in Bosnian-Herzegovinian architecture.<sup>37</sup> As a result, many buildings with ornamentation referring to the neo-Ottoman style, an original creation not found anywhere else in the Habsburg monarchy, were erected. Representatives of the pseudo-Moorish style were the then architectural celebrities such as Karl Paraždik from Czechia, also Josip Pospišil or Josip Vancaš from Slovenia (then Cislithavia), whose work effects can be admired today thanks to the buildings which are the symbols of Sarajevo, such as town hall – *Vječnica*, a city well – *Sebilj*, and Koranic school – today the Faculty of Law of the Sarajevo University. Also, buildings referring to this style were created in other cities, such as the city library in Doboj. The abandonment of this style<sup>38</sup> was caused not so much by the lack of its acceptance in Bosnia and Herzegovina but by the financial and economic crisis that affected the country (including public works), and by the outbreak of war. Indeed, it was officially rejected only by the new Yugoslavian authorities, who did everything they could to separate themselves from the Austrian past, especially when it came to the culture of remembrance.<sup>39</sup> Vancaš himself was imprisoned after the First World War for favouring the previous ‘regime’.<sup>40</sup>

It is worth adding that in reference to the neo-Ottoman style in architecture, not only mosques were built, but also non-Muslim temples, like the Protestant church in Sarajevo (today the building

---

<sup>37</sup> Nedžad Kurto, *Arhitektura Bosne i Hercegovine. Razvoj bosanskog stila* (Sarajevo, 1998), 48.

<sup>38</sup> Maciej Falski, ‘Co przestrzeń miejska mówi o modernizacji? Sarajewo i Bośnia w okresie habsburskim’, in Danuta Sosnowska (ed.), *Fabryka Słowian. Modernizacje* (Warszawa, 2017), 230.

<sup>39</sup> Robert J. Donia, *Sarajevo: biografija grada* (Sarajevo, 2006), 158.

<sup>40</sup> Husnija Kamberović, ‘Nasilje kao sudbina? Sarajevo na razmeđu carstva i država u 20. stoljeću’, in Husnija Kamberović (ed.), *Između rata i mira. Sarajevo u prelomnim godinama 20. stoljeća* (Sarajevo, 2020), 7–8.

of the Academy of Fine Arts), or the Sarajevo synagogue. These were deliberate efforts to emphasise the religious harmony prevailing in the country ruled by the Habsburg dynasties. Another equally important procedure was the deliberate accumulation of sacred monumental buildings at a distance of several dozen meters from one another in the heart of Sarajevo.<sup>41</sup> Apart from the propaganda behind many initiatives, it must be reported that the Austrian authorities managed to combine tradition and modernity in Sarajevo.<sup>42</sup> This was particularly admired by travelers visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina, who appreciated Austrian efforts to modernise the province entrusted to them.<sup>43</sup>

The Austrians not only modified the city centre, but also dynamically expanded it by including nearby areas in its borders. This way, the 'new Sarajevo' was created, i.e. the area to the west from today's Marindvor towards Ilidža. As it was supposed to be a completely new place on the map of Bosnia, no architectural references to neo-Ottomanism as in the city centre are noticed, but only modern, *art nouveau* buildings. The central place of the 'new Sarajevo' was the railway station, around which all the infrastructure was created, including the main office of the Society of Railway Officials of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>44</sup>

#### IV MEMORY AND IDENTITY

Between 1878 and 1918, Bosnia and Herzegovina's multinational society approached the Ottoman period's memory in very different ways. For Christians, both Orthodox and Catholics, this period was associated only with oppression. The Muslims themselves, although somehow they could still feel the relations with the sultan, as evidenced by the participation of over a hundred Bosnian volunteers in the fighting on the side of the Porte during the Balkan Wars,<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Donia, *Sarajevo*, 85–6.

<sup>42</sup> Mary Sparks, *The Development of Austro-Hungarian Sarajevo, 1878–1918: An Urban History* (London–New York, 2016), 187.

<sup>43</sup> Neval Berber, *Unveiling Bosnia-Herzegovina in British Travel Literature (1844–1912)* (Pisa, 2010), 66–7.

<sup>44</sup> Alija Bejtić, *Ulice i trgovi Sarajeva* (Sarajevo, 1973), 35–6; Falski, 'Co przestrzeń miejska', 230–1.

<sup>45</sup> Milorad Ekmečić, 'Utica j balkanskih ratova 1912/1913. na društvo u Bosni i Hercegovini', *Marksistička misao*, 4 (1985), 416–17.

approached recent history with a great distance, bearing in mind the numerous harm they had suffered from the hands of the authorities in Istanbul throughout the whole nineteenth century.

The national identity of Bosnian Muslims, emerging at the beginning of the twentieth century,<sup>46</sup> needed to be backed up by history to prove its claim to Bosnia as a sovereign land.<sup>47</sup> These needs were met by government policy, especially in the period when Benjamin von Kállay was the Joint Minister of Finance (1882–1903). The Austrian authorities not only wanted to influence the formation of the Bosnian national identity but also wanted to bind Muslims more closely with the monarchy. In their eyes, the Habsburg dynasty was to be the only guarantor of rights and freedoms for Bosnian Muslims, defending them, especially against Serbian attempts to incorporate parts of Bosnia. After unsuccessful attempts to create a separate Bosnian language<sup>48</sup> in the early 1880s, it was decided to go back to history and look for inspiration there. Often, references were made to the Middle Ages when Bosnia was an independent kingdom (1377–1463). At that time, some of its inhabitants belonged to the so-called Bosnian Church, whose members professed the dualistic Bogomil heresy. Research on this issue was conducted before Austria-Hungary took Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>49</sup> Still, it was not until the 1880s that modern Muslims began to be associated with medieval followers of Bogomilism.<sup>50</sup> The Bogomil followers, distinguished by their religion from the rest

---

<sup>46</sup> In 1905, as a result of the struggle for religious autonomy, a party composed of Muslims was established.

<sup>47</sup> Agata Jawoszek-Goździk, 'Religia (Bośnia i Hercegowina)', in *Leksykon idei wędrownych na słowiańskich Bałkanach XVIII–XXI wiek, i: Oświecenie, religia, racjonalizm*, ed. Grażyna Szwat-Gylybowa (Warszawa, 2018), 88.

<sup>48</sup> Marko Babić, 'Nazivi jezika – hrvatski, zemljanski, bosanski, za prvog desetleća austrougarskoga upravljanja Bosnom i Hercegovinom', *Časopis za kulturu hrvatskoga književnog jezika*, 3 (1989), 82–6.

<sup>49</sup> Franjo Rački, a Croatian clergyman, in 1869 published work *Bogomili i Patareni* (Zagreb, 1869–70), which is still used nowadays in research on this problem: Piotr Czarnecki, 'Geneza i doktryna dualizmu słowiańskiego w średniowieczu', *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Studia Religioznologiczne*, 41 (2008), 111–38.

<sup>50</sup> One of the pioneers of this concept was the countryman Benjamin Kállay János de Asbóth, whose touristic and ethnographic book *Bosznia és a Hercegovina – Útirajzok és tanulmányok* (Budapest, 1887), became one of the cornerstones of the theory connecting the Bogomil followers with Muslims. Soon after the book was published in Hungarian, editions in German (1888) and English (1890) appeared. Also later

of the inhabitants of medieval Bosnia, were to be the most numerous group converting to Islam, after in 1463 the Ottoman Empire defeated the last Bosnian king Stefan Tomašević of the Kotromanić dynasty. Therefore, the Bogomil theory was to prove that Bosnian Muslims had been a group of people for centuries religiously distinct from both Catholics (Croats) and, above all, the Orthodox (Serbs). The authorities generously supported studies on Bogomilism,<sup>51</sup> using, among others, the National Museum in Sarajevo, which became a research center on this issue.<sup>52</sup> It can be said that the whole discussion on Bogomilism which took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the years 1878–1918 is a kind of ‘invented tradition’, serving specific political goals.<sup>53</sup> In certain circles of Bosnian Herzegovinian intellectuals, this thinking has been functioning to this day and is one of the myths used to create a modern Bosnian national identity.<sup>54</sup>

Although Bogomilism is most often mentioned as one of the cornerstones of the national myth of Bosnian Muslim identity,<sup>55</sup> it is worth remembering that Bosnian Muslims themselves referred to other historical events, such as the ‘golden age’, which describes the sixteenth century, when Bosnia was one of the most important European parts of the Ottoman Empire,<sup>56</sup> or recalled outstanding individuals

---

this theory was very popular, see Mehmed Handžić, *Islamizacija Bosne i Hercegovine i porjeklo bosansko-hercegovačkih muslimana* (Sarajevo, 1940).

<sup>51</sup> A historical handbook for primary school in Bosnia and Herzegovina featured a part on this topic: *Povijest Bosne i Hercegovine za osnovne škole* (Sarajevo, 1893), 16. This publication was printed in government printing office.

<sup>52</sup> Marian Wenzel, ‘Bosnian history and Austro-Hungarian Policy: The Zemaljski Muzej, Sarajevo and the Bogomil romance’, *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 12 (1993), 127–42.

<sup>53</sup> Astrid Erll, *Memory in Culture*, transl. Sara B. Young (London, 2011); the page references are to the Polish edition: *Kultura pamięci. Wprowadzenie*, transl. Agata Teperek (Warszawa, 2018), 86–7.

<sup>54</sup> Agata Jawoszek, *Boszniacy. Literackie narracje tożsamościowe po 1992 roku* (Poznań, 2014), 19–21; Muhamed Hadžijahić and Mahmud Trajlić, *Islam i muslimani u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Istanbul, 1994), 43–7.

<sup>55</sup> Aleksandra Stankowicz, ‘Bośniacka świadomość historyczna a polityka narodowościowa Austrii’, in Maria Bobrownicka, Lucjan Suchanek, and Franciszek Ziejka (eds), *Współcześni Słowianie wobec własnych tradycji i mitów. Sympozjum w Castel Gandolfo, 19–20 sierpnia 1996*, (Kraków, 1997), 87–94.

<sup>56</sup> Symbol of this period was Gazi Husref Beg (1480–1541): Mirza Safet Bašagić, *Gazi Husref Beg u spomen četirstogodišnjice dolazka u Bosnu* (Sarajevo, 1907); Mehmed Spaho, ‘Gazi Husref Beg’, *Behar*, ix, 7 (1906), 99.

from modern history, such as commander Husejn Bej-Gradašćević or Smail-agi Čengić.<sup>57</sup> However, while the politics of the authorities and the actions of Muslim political leaders were helpful in the matter of Bogomilism, figures such as Čengić or Gradašćević did not arouse such enthusiasm of the state. The discrepancy between the state's vision of developing the Bosnian national identity and the Muslims' opinion was completely different,<sup>58</sup> especially between 1899 and 1903 when Muslims fought for religious autonomy.<sup>59</sup>

The status of Bosnia and Herzegovina since the annexation in 1908 was unique within the Austro-Hungarian Empire,<sup>60</sup> but the universalist cultural policy pursued by the Austrian authorities meant that the urban space of Sarajevo and other Bosnian towns and cities did not differ significantly from other urban centres of the empire. In offices or schools, the main element of decoration were the images of Franz Joseph I,<sup>61</sup> for whose prosperity people prayed before classes started.<sup>62</sup> When the elderly monarch celebrated his birthday, office workers were obliged to pray for his health and the prosperity of the country in mosques, synagogues, and Christian churches as well.<sup>63</sup> Officials, regardless of their religion, also had to celebrate the most important religious holidays. Therefore, when there were Christmas celebrations,

---

<sup>57</sup> Safet Beg-Bašlagić-Redžepašić, *Kratka uputa u prošlost Bosne i Hercegovine (Od g. 1463–1850)* (Sarajevo, 1900), 136–53.

<sup>58</sup> In 1912 the Muslim journalist Hifzi Muftić wrote: "Our goal is Islam, its strengthening and progressive change for us and for our children. This our ideal, our goal, is ... the Islam of prudence, justice, work and progress", Hifzi Muftić, 'Šta je naš cilj?', *Biser*, 2 (1912), 20.

<sup>59</sup> Nusret Šehić, *Autonomni pokret muslimana za vrijeme austrougarske uprave u Bosnia i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo, 1980); Bozo Madžar, *Pokret Srba Bosne i Hercegovine za vjersko-prosvjetnu samoupravu* (Sarajevo, 1982).

<sup>60</sup> Until 1908, Bosnia and Herzegovina was formally a province of the Ottoman Empire under the rule of Austro-Hungary. From the time of the annexation, it was the third element of the Habsburg Empire, not part of Cisleithania or Transleithania. At the same time, this country was somewhat discriminated against because it was the only one that from 1910 could not, despite having a parliament, send its representatives to parliaments in Vienna or Budapest, see Imamović, *Historija države i prava*, 320; *id.*, 'Zemaljski Štatut u ustavnoj historiji Bosne i Hercegovine', *Historijska Traganja*, 7 (2011), 29–33.

<sup>61</sup> ABH, ZVS, 1911, ref. no. 10 365/14.

<sup>62</sup> Mitar Papić, *Školstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme Austrougarske okupacije (1878–1918)* (Sarajevo, 1972), 17.

<sup>63</sup> Lis, *Polscy urzędnicy wyższego szczebla*, 129.

but also, for example, Bajram, senior state officials and authorities were obliged to participate in official ceremonies.<sup>64</sup>

In the urban space, no figures or events from the period of the Ottoman Empire were commemorated. The celebration of events and historical figures, important from the national point of view of Serbs or Croats, was also avoided, although when it comes to the latter nation, the Austrians treated their national-forming activities with much greater tolerance. For example, it was agreed to commemorate in Sarajevo Silville Strahimir Kranjčević, one of the most outstanding Croatian poets of his generation, who was also a close collaborator of Kállay.<sup>65</sup> The appreciation for Kranjčević perfectly illustrates another important aspect of building memory culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All the activities mentioned above, such as creating new elites, modernising the country, and taking care of the historical heritage (but only the one that could be useful from the point of view of Vienna), would come down to one thing – building ties between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Habsburg Empire. That is why the names of streets or squares often referred to politicians ruling in Bosnia, such as General Johann von Appel, after whom the square on the right bank of the Miljačka River was named. General Josip Filipović also had his square, which was renamed in 1910 to Franz Joseph Square, because people probably wanted to thank him for granting the first constitution in the country's history that year. Besides, the reigning emperor was the patron not only of the market square, but also, until the end of the First World War, today's Defenders of Sarajevo Street [*Branilaca Sarajeva*]. After the assassination attempt on Archduke Franz Ferdinand, today's Marshall Tito Street bore his name. The tragically deceased heir to the throne and his wife, Princess Sophia von Chotek, were commemorated in another way by erecting a monument to them in Sarajevo on 28 June 1917. Commemorating officials and, above all, the ruling monarchy aimed at softening the image of the authorities in the eyes of the residents. Therefore, in the press subsidised by the state, the image of the benevolent emperor was disseminated,<sup>66</sup> and in the army<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>64</sup> Bajram, *Sarajevski List*, 5 (12 Jan. 1902), 2.

<sup>65</sup> Historijski Arhiv Sarajevo, osobni fond Josip Milaković, sign. JM-217.

<sup>66</sup> *Nada*, 3 (1 Feb. 1895), 44.

<sup>67</sup> From 1882, Bosnia and Herzegovina had its own regiments, which were subordinate to Austrian generals.

from 1908, soldiers who were killed on the front on behalf of the emperor were to be buried like shahids.<sup>68</sup> There were a lot of articles in the newspapers about the senior officials,<sup>69</sup> their travels<sup>70</sup> and their private lives. This also built a good image of the government in the eyes of the population.

## V

### CONCLUSIONS

The process of de-Ottomanisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Austro-Hungarian rule was different from what we find in the neighbouring Balkan states, which managed to emancipate themselves from the rule of the Porte. These differences resulted primarily from the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina belonged to a multinational monarchy, which set itself the goal of building a pluralistic society in religious and cultural terms, and not a single nationality. That is why it supported Muslims, whom it considered the weakest national group, because it did not have such memory potential in the form of rich culture and history as Serbs or Croats. Therefore, they tried at all costs to reconcile the Ottoman tradition with Western European modernity. This had been done on many levels; e.g. by helping young Muslims to get an education at Austrian universities, or by promoting architecture that was supposed to be a syncretism of Viennese Art Nouveau and the Moorish style, or by financing archaeological research. Each of these actions aimed at one thing – building a new Bosnia and Herzegovina loyal to the monarchy. The role of memory was very important in this process. Properly interpreted past was supposed to help emphasise the national distinctiveness of the Bosnian, and the ubiquitous cult of the emperor and the Habsburg family was supposed to create a bond between the elites and the monarchy.

However, these actions did not bring final success. The country's economic problems primarily impacted the younger generation,

---

<sup>68</sup> Enver Imamović, *Historija bosanske vojske* (Sarajevo, 1999), 290–1.

<sup>69</sup> E.g. Bela Kraus' 10 years of work as a senior official of Bosnia and Herzegovina Finance Department, *Sarajevski List*, 51 (1 May 1898), 2; or Mehmed beg Kapetanović-Ljubusak's disease, *Sarajevski List*, 82 (13 July 1898), 2.

<sup>70</sup> Villma Kallay's, wife of Benjamin von Kallay, visit to Sarajevo, *Sarajevski List*, 61 (25 May 1898), 3.

who had already been brought up in Austro-Hungarian Bosnia and Herzegovina. The radicalism of these young people, fueled by anti-monarchism and inspired by the ideas of the Yugoslav movement, brought a series of smaller or larger outbreaks of aggression manifested in street protests, destruction of property, as well as terrorist actions. One of them ended with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, which initiated a series of events that led to the collapse of Austria-Hungary.

*transl. Marta Palczewska*

#### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bougarel Xavier, *Islam and Nationhood in Bosnia and Hercegovina: Surviving Empires* (London–New York, 2018).

Donia Robert J., *Sarajevo: biografija grada* (Sarajevo, 2006).

Erll Astrid, *Kultura pamięci. Wprowadzenie* (Warszawa, 2018).

Imamović Mustafa, *Historija države i prava Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo, 1999).

Jawoszek Agata, *Boszniacy. Literackie narracje tożsamościowe po 1992 roku* (Poznań, 2014).

Juzbašić Dževad, *Politika i privreda u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom* (Sarajevo, 2002).

Kamberović Husnija, *Begovski zemljišni posjedi u Bosni i Hercegovini od 1878 do 1918* (Sarajevo, 2005).

Lis Tomasz Jacek, *Polscy urzędnicy wyższego szczebla w Bośni i Hercegowinie w latach 1878–1918* (Kraków, 2020).

Wenzel Marian, 'Bosnian History and Austro-Hungarian Policy: The Zemlajski Muzej, Sarajevo and the Bogomil Romance', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 12 (1993), 127–42.

Крушевач Теодор, *Сарајево под Аустро-угарском управом* (Sarajevo, 1966).

**Tomasz Jacek Lis** – 19th- and 20th-history of South Slavs and Polish-Balkan relations, narrative source editing; assistant professor at the Modern World History Section, Jagiellonian University in Cracow; e-mail: tomli88@gmail.com