Afterlife of Empire: Muslim-Ottoman Relations in Habsburg Bosnia Herzegovina, 1878-1914

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ABSTRACT

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“Afterlife of Empire” explores Ottoman cultural, social, and political continuities in Bosnia Herzegovina during the Habsburg administration (1878–1914). The research focuses on the enduring influence of the Ottoman Empire – an influence perpetuated both by the efforts of the Ottoman imperial state, and by the former subjects in Bosnia Herzegovina itself to explain the lingering aftereffects of the Ottoman Empire in the province. At the core of this dissertation is the argument that the Ottoman subjects and the former territories did not stop being Ottoman in any significant sense immediately after the separation from the empire, and that the break with the empire was not that of rupture, but characterized by enduring features of the empire that evolved to respond to diplomatic and strategic interests in the region.

A shift from the common inclination to analyze the Habsburg period as the introduction of modernity, and a focus, not on the national/ethnic framework constructed around identity, but on the overlapping, multiple loyalties in this study convey a more accurate representation of the period and an assessment of what legitimacy and sovereignty meant in this region. By drawing on Ottoman and Bosnian archival sources in focusing on Bosnia’s overlapping imperial, regional, religious, linguistic, and cultural frameworks, this dissertation demonstrates the importance of considering the Ottoman context after its formal departure, and the significance of incorporating Islamic
intellectual history in understanding the past and present of Bosnia Herzegovina and Southeastern Europe in general.
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Note on Transliteration

There are a number of transliteration systems for languages used in this dissertation: Ottoman Turkish, Turkish, Bosnian (Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian), and Arabic. I tried to make the reading of non-English words and terms accessible without losing accuracy of pronunciation. For Ottoman Turkish and Bosnian written in Arabic script I used modern Turkish and Bosnian transliteration whenever possible. Exceptions are words commonly used in English in their original form, such as pasha, and not paşa (Turkish) or paša (Bosnian). For terms that are commonly known in English in their Arabic form, I used the IJMES standard transliteration guide, so it is shari’a and not şeriat (Turkish) or šerijat (Bosnian). I used language-specific transliteration when it referred to the context of the region and language, for example when referring to vakuf and medresa in Bosnian, as opposed to vakıf and waqf, and medrese and madrasa.

As far as proper names, I tried to keep them in the form that would have been used in the individuals’ cultural and linguistic circles, so it is Šerif in Bosnian and Cemal in Turkish, as opposed to Sharif/Şerif or Jamal. For place names I used the English version and transliterations if they are commonly used (such as Mecca and not Mekke and Salonica instead of modern day, Thessaloniki). I also refer to Ottoman/European Ragusa of the period as Dubrovnik, and use Skopje instead of the Ottoman and Turkish Üskup. Bosnia and Bosnia Herzegovina are used interchangeably, but Herzegovina used alone, refers to the actual region. Transliterations that might appear unusual should be considered in the context of the argument.
Below I provide a guide to Turkish and Bosnian pronunciation. For simplicity, if any of the sources consulted in this dissertation used Bosnian Cyrillic script, these terms are transliterated in Latin, with which the Cyrillic is interchangeable.

Turkish pronunciation guide:

- **a** like *o* in *oz*
- **e** like *a* in *hay*
- **i** like *u* in *muddle*
- **ö** like the German *ö*
- **ü** like the French *üt*
- **ç** like *ch* in *chimney*
- **ğı** like *gh* in *bought*
- **ş** like *sh* in *shed*

Bosnian pronunciation guide:

- **ć** like *ts* in *cats*
- **č** like *ch* in *church*
- **ć** like *t* in *future*
- **đž** like *j* in *just*
- **đ** like *d* in British *duke*
- **j** like *y* in *yellow*
- **š** like *sh* in *ship*
- **ž** like *s* in *treasure*
Note on Sources

The following study is a result of my research conducted primarily in the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives), abbreviated as BOA throughout the dissertation. I also made use of resources available at the Beyazıt Devlet Kütüphanesi and the İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi libraries in Istanbul. In Bosnia Herzegovina, I researched relevant material at the Gazi Husrev-Beg Library, the Archive of Bosnia Herzegovina (ABH), and the Library of the Oriental Institute at the University of Sarajevo. In addition to unpublished archival documentation and manuscripts, I used published document collections, memoires, and publications and press of the period.
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The research for this dissertation was conducted in various institutions in Turkey and Bosnia Herzegovina and I am indebted to numerous individuals and friends in these locations for the moral support, generosity, and knowledge they shared with me. In the Bašbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi in Istanbul I am particularly grateful to Ayten Ardel, Fuat Recep, and Seyit Ali Kahraman. Special thanks go to Amina Šiljak-Jesenković, Adnan Kadrić, and Behija Zlatar at the Oriental Institute, and Šacir Filandra at the University of Sarajevo for their assistance and generous support during my research in Bosnia Herzegovina. I thank my friends and colleagues, Tsolin Nalbantian, Mu’nes Hojairi, Cenk Palaz, Kadir Ustun, Lale Can, Linda Sayed, and Jared Manasek who shared with me the experience and trials of graduate school, dissertation research and writing, and provided help and support at times I needed it most. Karin van der Tak has proved herself a loyal friend time and again, and I thank her for reading and editing this dissertation more times than she bargained for.

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Introduction

When the Turkish foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, symbolically spent the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr of 2011 in Bosnia Herzegovina as part of the new Turkish foreign policy approach, which some have termed “neo-Ottomanism,” he evoked emotional reactions from officials, as well as the general public.¹ The highest Muslim religious authority in Bosnia Herzegovina, the Reis ul-ulema, Mustafa Cerić, stated that “today was a day we waited for for centuries” in his sermon held in Sarajevo’s central mosque and attended by Davutoğlu. According to the accounts, after the Eid prayer, an elderly man approached the foreign minister and, after shaking his hand, asked, “Where have you been? You are 150 years late!”²

Some 150 years earlier, the Ottoman Empire reluctantly accepted the stipulations of the Berlin Treaty (1878) that relinquished its province of Bosnia Herzegovina to Habsburg control without any specifics on the extent and duration of the mandate. This dissertation explores Ottoman continuities in cultural, social, and political sense in Bosnia Herzegovina during the Habsburg administration (1878–1914), and the enduring influence of the Ottoman Empire—an influence perpetuated both by the efforts of the imperial state from afar, and by its previous subjects in Bosnia Herzegovina itself. It focuses on the ways in which Muslims in particular responded to the new administration,


and how they navigated their loyalties between the Habsburg and Ottoman. This
dissertation is also a case study about the life of empires after they cease to exist in a
territory, and about the distinct imperial features that continued to structure the lives of
subjects in understanding their place, identity, and future prospects. I argue that the
Ottoman subjects did not cease to be Ottoman instantaneously, challenging the view that
Ottoman provinces stopped being Ottoman in any meaningful sense immediately after
their formal separation from the Empire. I also address the chief historiographical issue in
regard to the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina after 1878: In addition to the relevance of
reaching accommodation with the new authorities in Vienna, the ways in which they
maintained and transformed relations with Istanbul is equally important, but
insufficiently explored.

The Habsburg occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina differed from other Ottoman
territorial losses in Europe, not only because of its legal ambiguity, but also because its
Muslim majority was protected by the new administration, since Muslim acceptance of
the Habsburg authority was considered crucial for the Austrian plans in the province and
the Balkans. I have identified two major Muslim responses to the Habsburg occupation:
first, the voluntary migration of Slavic-speaking, non-Turkish Muslims to other Ottoman
territories; and second, for those who stayed, an attempt to sustain earlier relations with
the Ottoman Empire in the realms of religion, politics, culture, and socioeconomic
involvement. Ottoman imperial allegiances and sentiment played an important role in the
ways in which the Muslims strengthened and restructured ties with the Ottoman Empire,
seeing it as their Great Power protector. In this study, I show how these imperial
continuities evolved to respond to growing demands of diplomatic and imperial
initiatives, and strategic and political interests that converged in Bosnia Herzegovina at
the turn of the twentieth century.

In focusing on Bosnia Herzegovina after the Berlin Congress (1878), I analyze the
Ottoman efforts to maintain its sphere of influence in the region by relying on Muslim
loyalties. Ottoman imperial experience was transformed in reaction to diplomatic,
strategic, and political circumstances overlapping with the context of the Habsburg
Monarchy. The Habsburg response, which included its investigation of how other
empires—Russia in Central Asia, France in North Africa, and Great Britain in India—
dealt with their respective Muslim populations, also form part of my analysis. The
Habsburgs created the conditions for Ottoman continuities, most significantly by seeking
to modify the Ottoman Muslim religious hierarchy as part of the Habsburg Monarchy and
diffuse the role of the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph at the height of the Pan-Islamic
movement—in effect creating their own, Habsburg Muslim millet.

The period of this study ends with the beginning of World War I, which brought
about a different set of considerations and circumstances, although Bosnia Herzegovina
continued to be a part of the Habsburg Monarchy until its dissolution in 1918. In terms of
geographic parameters, I focus on the province of Bosnia Herzegovina within the borders
established after the Berlin Congress which roughly corresponded to its Ottoman borders
(with the exception of some regions of Herzegovina that were awarded to Montenegro in
1878, and the Sanjak of Yeni/Novi Pazar that remained Ottoman), and which also
continue to be the present borders of independent Bosnia Herzegovina.³

³ On Bosnian borders throughout the centuries, Ratimir Gašparović, Bosna i Hercegovina na geografskim kartama od prvih početaka do kraja XIX vijeka (Sarajevo: Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine, 1970).
The Ottomans, and later Habsburgs, surveyed their population in confessional terms; in Bosnia Herzegovina those were the Muslims, Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Jews, and Romas. 4 Mid-nineteenth-century population approximations range from 900,000 to 1,050,000 with varying claims as to which confession (Muslim or Orthodox Christian) comprised the slight majority. 5 According to recent population studies, the Muslim majority of the Ottoman period was reduced due to uprisings, war, and migration in the volatile period of 1875–78 to come up just under 50 percent in the first Austrian censuses. 6 The Bosnian Muslim petitioners to the Ottoman Empire throughout the Habsburg period defined their numbers in the vicinity of 400,000, an approximation that is in general accord with population statistics and calculations of later historians. Throughout the Ottoman period, and on the eve of the Habsburg occupation the land and the administration of the province were controlled by the local notable-landowners who were predominantly Muslim, while their land was worked by Christian and Muslim peasants and sharecroppers. For the most part agricultural, with trade and artisanal activity limited to the urban centers, the Bosnian society and class structure were dominated by the landowning notables, who although not landlords of the European feudal magnitude represented the most important power center in the province.

The Bosnian Muslims are largely descendants of local Slav converts to Islam, who quickly integrated into the Ottoman society of which Bosnia and Herzegovina

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became a part in the fifteenth century. Their unique status as the defenders of the westernmost borders of the Ottoman Empire, prominent participation in the Ottoman conquests in Europe, but also distinguished service in the highest levels of the administration, the religious establishment, and other sociocultural facets, put the Bosnian Muslims and the province within the inner circles of the Ottoman polity. The early Ottoman military-land system provided for a creation of the landowning class, who managed to make their land possessions and titles hereditary even when that was not the practice in the rest of the Ottoman Empire, pointing to their exceptional status, as well as the notables’ propensity to preserve their independence from the center. This tendency, whether it came in the form of resistance to conscription, reform, or land concessions, was negotiated strictly within the confines of the Ottoman system from which they drew their status, legitimacy, and rights.

The peasant uprisings of the second half of the nineteenth century came under the European spotlight for a variety of political and economic reasons, drawing attention to the class and confessional divisions of the region. This confessional diversity seems to have fascinated European travelers to Bosnia the most, although the rest of the Ottoman Balkans were just as diverse, if not more, in terms of religious and linguistic variety. While these other regions, after becoming independent nation-states worked to homogenize their populations in accordance with the nationalist ideologies, Bosnia Herzegovina in many ways managed to preserve its diversity—and especially its

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Muslims—precisely because of Habsburg rule. This unique situation in the former Ottoman Balkans of an area where Muslims continued to command political presence, provided for the conditions that allowed them to continue, reinvent, and even strengthen their ties to the Ottoman Empire from a relatively comfortable position and employ them for their own advantage locally.

Situating the Dissertation in the Historical Literature

Bosnia Herzegovina and the entire Balkans emerged on the European scene in the nineteenth century as part of the Eastern Question, that of “Turkey in Europe”—a problem for the European Great Powers framed around notions such as “liberation of a people from the spiritual domination of the Ottomans” and “progress of the West toward the East.” In the words of Karl Marx, the Balkans were a “splendid territory [that] has the misfortune to be inhabited by a conglomerate of different races and nationalities, of which it is hard to say which is the least fit for progress and civilization,” and where the “attempts at civilization by Turkish authority” have failed due to “fanaticism of Islam.”

Likewise, the very cause of the existence of the Eastern Question was found in the presence of “alien substance” in the “living flesh of Europe,” which was the “Ottoman Turk.” Whereas the overtly Orientalist nineteenth-century attributes disappeared from scholarly literature, the historical paradigm set at this time burdened the Balkan historiography into the early twenty-first century.

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As Maria Todorova observed, “the amazing continuity” in nationalist historiographical discourses shaped Balkan history-writing by considering the Ottoman Empire as backward, any problematic phenomena as a consequence of its legacies, and nation as the foundation of a linear path to progress and modernity.\(^\text{11}\) The Ottoman past was regarded an oppressive conquest by an alien power that interrupted the Balkan nations’ development as part of Europe, and the historians often reflected this attitude in their works.\(^\text{12}\) The consistent equating of Ottoman with Islamic and Turkish in historical and political discourses not only rendered established Muslim communities across the Balkans alien, but also stigmatized all social, political, and cultural characteristics—such as religion, architecture, language, arts, and other symbols associated with the Ottoman heritage—as an indication of backwardness that was followed by a policy of “de-Ottomanization” and “de-Islamicization,” in many cases with tragic consequences.\(^\text{13}\)

In this setting, study of the Balkans was further encumbered by disciplinary divisions. Scholars of the Balkans are often situated within East or Southeast European studies, and the region is frequently studied separately from the Ottoman context that falls within Middle Eastern studies. The answers to this “basic historiographical


challenge” of “how to fit the centuries of Ottoman rule into the story of the [European] continent as a whole” worked their way into scholarship produced after the 1990s, although focused on early and early modern periods, offering alternative perspectives on contested issues such as conversions to Islam, cross-regional and interreligious relationships, centrality of the Balkans in Ottoman history and Ottoman self-perceptions, as well as experiences of Ottoman governance, notions of modernity and diversity, and responses to crisis and change. In addition to a variety of languages and imposed disciplinary divisions, wars, political conflicts, and crises also continue to hinder research based on regional sources. Ethnic cleansing of Muslim communities in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo in the 1990s occurred along with the importunate destruction of libraries, archives, and other forms of Ottoman/Islamic heritage.

14 Mazower, xl.


The formative period of nation-states and study of Ottoman legacies is still overshadowed by scholarly work limited to national boundaries and based on the premises that invented these nations, almost always centered around a break with the Ottoman Empire and otherness of “Asiatic Islam.” These views were challenged even in the early twentieth century, pointing to commonalities such as Byzantine and Ottoman continuities, and a syncretism of cultural, religious, and social practices in the Balkans, but received little attention by the scholarly community. Recent cross-disciplinary works continue to expose the inadequacies of such outlook, offer novel interpretations, and raise questions about the Ottoman era as the formative period in the modern experience of the region. In this context, Todorova underlined that it was “preposterous to look for an Ottoman legacy in the Balkans. The Balkans are the Ottoman legacy.”

This perspective is also closely related to the study of empires that, in light of the contemporary disillusionment with nationalism, became a widespread means in debating world history, analyzing contemporary politics, and comparing phenomena of larger

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historical processes.\textsuperscript{20} The question of Bosnia and its internal circumstances were, for both the Ottoman and Habsburg empires, a part of the long nineteenth-century dilemma of how to resolve the contradictions of maintaining the supremacy of a territorially vast, multi-religious empire, with modern principles of sovereignty and legitimacy increasingly based on homogenous ethno-linguistic nation-states.\textsuperscript{21} My research shows that Bosnian Muslims insisted on claiming religious, human, and civil rights—privileges both empires claimed to champion in order to legitimize their right over the province and attract allegiance of the population.

By focusing on Bosnia’s overlapping imperial, regional, religious, linguistic, and cultural frameworks in this study, I demonstrate the importance of considering the Ottoman context even after its formal departure, and the significance of incorporating Islamic intellectual history in understanding the past and present of Bosnia Herzegovina and southeastern Europe in general. As a basic premise, this dissertation argues that the former Ottoman provinces did not cease their connection with the center overnight. I explore the problem of how to explain the lingering aftereffects of the Ottoman Empire, since the formal ending of the Empire did not terminate its presence in the minds of individuals. While this question is not one with a final answer, my aim is to probe different aspects of Ottoman continuity and relationship contributing to the understanding of the dynamics of the Ottoman presence and its legacies in the post-imperial space.


\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 738. Also, D. C. B. Lieven, \textit{Empire: The Russian Empire and Its Rivals} (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); and Partha Chatterjee, \textit{Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse} (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).
Approaches and Aims

The study of Bosnia Herzegovina during the Habsburg administration, or even the focus on Muslims in this period, is not a new undertaking. This period is perhaps one of the most studied periods of Bosnian history. The Habsburg era attracted attention especially in German and South Slavic languages as the region of East-West encounter, where the introduction of the enlightened European rule replaced the repressive Ottoman rule, ending in the assassination of Crown Prince Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914 and the start of World War I. Most important for national historiographies, this was the period of nation-building and modernization on the European model, and was often approached as such in scholarly works. Common for the historiographies of this period is that they were all written from within the modernization paradigm, and in many different ways, and from various perspectives that explore how modernity did or did not arrive to Bosnia Herzegovina with the Habsburg rule. According to this literature, the Habsburgs, as the representatives of what was modern, European, and enlightened, took over the derelict province, and the Ottomans seemed to have disappeared from the Bosnian scene after 1878 in every significant aspect.

Several relevant works were written in European languages, while Bosnian and Yugoslavian historians produced volumes on different aspects of the Habsburg rule based on Bosnian and Austrian sources of that period. Robert Donia’s Islam Under the Double Eagle, together with Peter Sugar’s work on industrialization, factored as the only

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major works in English until the war in the 1990s attracted scholarly attention to Bosnia Herzegovina. Donia’s monograph, a study of Muslim political elites in major urban centers of Habsburg Bosnia Herzegovina work focuses on the local roots of the movement for religious and educational economy. The work explores the Austrian sources of the movement and its local roots, as well as the intra-communal struggles related to the Muslim leadership and its connections to the new administration.

Robin Okey’s study of the Habsburg mission in Bosnia Herzegovina is based on Bosnian, Austrian, and Hungarian sources, and provides a thorough analysis of the Habsburg rule in the province, including educational programs, social organizations, and student movements. Assessing the Habsburg “civilizing mission” in Bosnia Herzegovina, Okey demonstrates the Habsburg approach to rule through religious hierarchies and goes beyond the national narratives in evaluating its successes and failures.

Nusret Šehić’s monograph is the most exhaustive work on the movement for autonomy, as is Mustafa Imamović’s analysis of the Muslim political developments during the Habsburg rule. Both works are based on a combination of Austrian and local archival sources, personal documents, and the contemporary press. Muhsin Rizvić published a number of significant analytical works on the literary developments during the Habsburg period, while other authors, taking advantage of the rich archival documentation in Bosnia Herzegovina, examined specific aspects of the period, including

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the regime of Benjamin Kállay, urban changes, education, industrial and agricultural developments, and railroad expansion.25

With an aim of contributing to this historical literature, I take on a different approach in this study. The principal perspective of this dissertation is that it takes the Ottomans as a serious presence in Bosnian affairs in the period after 1878 and examines different dimensions of their influence, relationship, and continuity, questioning the sharpness of the break with the Ottoman Empire. By treating the transition from one empire to another not as a radical break, but as continuity in many aspects, I seek to move away from the fixation on modernity as an outcome of the Habsburg rule, and instead emphasize its double edge character for the Bosnian Muslims—the choices between Habsburg and Ottoman modernity, and the ways in which its versions were internalized and incorporated in the Bosnian Muslim experience.

The sources and archival materials I employ, the methodology I use, as well as the perspective I take, allow me to ask novel questions, identify new connections, and draw conclusions that contribute to several overlapping fields of study. By focusing on Ottoman sources I am able to look at the Habsburg period in Bosnia Herzegovina from an Ottoman perspective, which to my knowledge has not been done before. Scholars often observed the Habsburg occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina as the time of complete detachment from the Ottoman Empire and termination of all links and relationships.

While that was the case when it came to the administration of the province—and for

25 Muhsin Rizvić, Bosansko-muslimanska književnost u doba preporoda (1887–1918) (Sarajevo: Mešihat Islamske zajednice BiH, 1990); Hamdija Kreševljaković, Sarajevo za vrijeme austrougarske uprave (1878–1918) (Sarajevo: Arhiv grada, 1969); Mitar Papić, Školstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme austrougarske okupacije: 1878–1918 (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1972); Dževad Juzbašić, Politika i privreda u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom (Sarajevo: ANU BiH, 2002); Idem, Izgradnja željeznica u Bosni i Hercegovini u svjetlu austrougarske politike od okupacije do kraja Kállayeve ere (Sarajevo: Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine, 1974); Tomislav Kraljačić, Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini: 1882–1903 (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1987).
research purposes, the conventional archival documentation, such as Ottoman provincial records or censuses that ended after 1878—I focus on the sources that illustrate the continuation of connections, and those that were generated in response to the circumstances of this province and its Muslim subjects. Contextualizing a variety of sources from the Turkish Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, library and archival sources in Bosnia Herzegovina, as well as Ottoman and Bosnian papers, periodicals, and other publications, enabled me to construct a new perspective on first, the ways in which former Ottoman subjects continued and restructured ties with their previous center; and second, an insight on the logic of Ottoman imperial policies in the territories they lost, and toward their former subjects.

Close reading of the sources exposed positions and attitudes of the former subjects, Ottoman government officials, and diplomats in understanding the unique circumstances of Bosnia Herzegovina. Individual and group petitions, policy proposals, local and regional administrative reports from Ottoman territories bordering Bosnia, memoirs, newspapers, and periodicals of the time revealed an array of strategies and solutions proposed and employed by these actors. They enabled me to reconstruct a more nuanced picture of the period characterized by a variety of interests, ideas, and approaches as seen through the eyes of individuals.

My research shows that the Ottoman policies did not always follow a singular direction or strategy: the Sultan might have sent one message representing the Pan-Islamic character of the caliphate (such as the idea that all Muslims should live under a Muslim ruler), but the workings of the consuls, diplomats, administrators, and officials of the Emigrants Commission showed different logic, interests, and approaches that were
based on practical considerations ultimately affecting policy implementation and outcomes. The Cabinet and the consuls continuously advised the Sultan against migration, not out of lack of sympathy for the Muslim cause in Bosnia Herzegovina, but precisely for the purpose of maintaining a strong Muslim presence in the legally ambiguous former Ottoman territory, who would in turn promote Ottoman interests in the region. The Treasury and the Emigrants Commission found the migration equally problematic but from a financial and strategic perspective. In addition, public opinion came to have an increasingly important role, and the Ottoman establishment often took into consideration the resonance of its policies in the Ottoman Empire, the Muslim world, and in Europe.

The period under consideration was a crucial time for the Bosnian Muslims. During these four decades, they were transformed from being members of the Ottoman imperial polity, governed by a Muslim ruler, to being a minority in a Christian Habsburg Empire with which they had a history of conflict, and during a time of national affirmations in the Balkans. The entire period represents a gradual process of separation from the Ottoman Empire, reassessment of new ties and loyalties with the two empires, as well as changes in the relationships within the community, its organization, and varied responses to new social and political circumstances. My research indicates that while historical, religious, and cultural ties played a role in the Bosnian Muslims’ continuous engagement with the Ottoman Empire, it was the pragmatic considerations of these former Ottoman subjects that motivated their demands for rights and protections, and trans-imperial claims of subjecthood and citizenship.
I also consider the overlapping framework of the Habsburg Monarchy, which in an attempt to attract the Ottoman Muslim subjects encouraged and revitalized a number of Ottoman imperial features, in some ways becoming more established and formal than they were during the full Ottoman control of the province. The collaboration of certain sections of the Bosnian elite stratum further sustained the Habsburg rule, while the resistance to it was channeled through various ways of claiming Ottoman legal rights and subjecthood, as well as internationally recognized privileges and protections.

Whereas the national/ethnic framework is the most common context within which this region and its inhabitants are studied, in this work I am not interested to pinpoint the exact identity or national belonging of the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina—tireless attempts to do so are still ongoing. I shift away from the aspect of national histories to the existence of ties provided by the Empire. My aim is to isolate a period in history characterized by both rupture and continuity and distinguish different aspects of provincial, imperial, and international circumstance that affected Muslims’ allegiances and shaped their responses. In highlighting these features, I also strive to give the Muslims of the province historical agency, demonstrating that it was not only the Habsburg and Ottoman policies or international circumstance that shaped their self-perceptions, community organization, and institutions, but also their own endeavors.

Exit, Voice, and Loyalty

In order to understand the transition that followed the Habsburg occupation and the formal end of the Ottoman Empire in Bosnia Herzegovina, it is necessary to be attentive to the continued and transformed linkages and allegiances that sprung up
between the Bosnian Muslims and the Ottoman Empire. In exploring this, I used the arguments of Albert O. Hirschman’s *Exit, Voice and Loyalty* for the case of Bosnia Herzegovina. The basic concept applied to organizations and interpreted in many fields including political science, involves options for members or groups when faced with deleterious situations, or deterioration of their benefits as members: they can exit and abandon the relationship entirely, or voice their dissatisfaction, propose solutions, and attempt to repair their condition and benefits. Loyalty has an important effect on both decisions and directs a member’s or group’s choice of “exit” or “voice.”

In following this schema, it is obvious that migration of Bosnian Muslims was a reaction that can be characterized as “exit” in relation to the Habsburg Monarchy and informed by loyalty to the Ottoman Empire. Yet while initially significant, migration turned out to be more alarming as prospect than reality, and in effect had become part of the “voice.” The options for, and behavior of those who remained is a manifestation of the ways in which the “voice” was used; while loyalty, that informed both reactions, was the most important feature of the continuation, creation, and transformation of relationships between the province’s Muslims and the two empires.

The Ottoman, Habsburg, and Russian empires were all characterized by an astounding diversity of peoples and institutions over a vast geographic span. They did not have coercive power over its population characteristic of modern day states, but they inculcated a sense of belonging and allegiance to the empire and the ruler, and a positive acceptance of the state in all its “irregular” and unique variations throughout the realms. My findings shows that subjecthood and/or citizenship in the late nineteenth and early

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twentieth century was not an indicator of loyalty and political allegiance as it is generally accepted today—almost exclusively tied to nation-states and ethnicities.

Eric Hobsbawm wrote that “it would be desirable to see a study of the attempts by more authentically legitimist dynasties, such as those of the Habsburg and the Romanov, not merely to command the obedience of their peoples as subjects, but to rally their loyalty as potential citizens.” Rallying loyalty of potential citizens in the Ottoman case was associated with the nineteenth-century Tanzimat (Reform) and the promulgation of the Gülhane Rescript (1839), which declared legal equality of all subjects irrespective of religion and universal obligations of the state, implementation of which was further developed in the reform decree (İslahat Fermanı) of 1856, transforming the millet system and the ways in which the state engaged its citizens. Ottomanism, refashioned by the end of the nineteenth century as an overarching identity in response to nationalisms’ geopolitical threats, never really took hold popularly, as other nationalisms would later, but the notion of loyalty to the Ottoman State and the Sultan existed alongside local, regional, religious, occupational, linguistic, ethnic, and many other identities, and was often affected by pragmatic considerations. Their watershed did not come about with the separation from the Empire, but continued to live in imperial institutions, administrative and state practices, traditions, and identities that were reproduced in the post-Ottoman context.


28 Ariel Salzmann noted that “[c]itizenship-like rights in the Ottoman Empire—that is, claims premised on a direct relation between state and individual—date only to the middle decades of the nineteenth century, when sultanic regimes attempted to transform both the coercive and consensual means of rule. As elsewhere the processes of citizenship were protracted; new rights were unevenly conferred and irregularly enforced.” Ariel Salzmann, “Citizens in Search of a State: The Limits of Political Participation in the Late Ottoman Empire,” in Extending Citizenship, Reconfiguring States, ed. Michael Hanagan and Charles Tilly (Lanham, MD: Rowman &Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 38.
Loyalty to the state and dynasty has been studied in detail in the works that focus on the Ottoman formative and pre-modern periods. In the studies of the late Ottoman era, loyalty and allegiance as factors in the Empire’s sociopolitical system and in individual lives of its subjects have been overshadowed by post-Ottoman national histories (including Turkish) that paint a picture of Ottoman suppression of “natural” identities and allegiances, and of an Empire that almost seems not to have had any subjects who were loyal, but who had exploited various opportunities to get rid of the imperial “yoke.”

Modern scholarship on loyalty of the Hamidian period was studied as part of the contemporary trend among empires to “invent” their traditions by emphasizing the significance of the sovereign, dynasty, and rituals and symbols of imperial rule, envisioned to have an effect on subjects whose loyalties were challenged by popular political mobilization of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.\(^\text{29}\) Scholars wrote extensively on citizenship, political allegiances, and legal jurisdictions in states and instances of fragmented and mixed sovereignty.\(^\text{30}\) Many analyzed the causes and consequences of imperial collapse for multiethnic societies, characterized by redefined notions of loyalty, based on features of the national discourses that prevailed as the common definition of political allegiance.\(^\text{31}\)


\(^\text{31}\) Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen, eds., *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation Building The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman and Habsburg Empires* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997); Uri
However, very little has been written on allegiances to the Ottoman Empire of former subjects, such were those of Bosnia Herzegovina (although for a period of time they technically fall into a category with overlapping sovereignty), those that were never Ottoman subjects (like the Russian Muslims), or yet those whom Salzmann called “spiritual citizens,” all professing loyalty and expecting protections from the Sultan without apparent reciprocal obligations that characterize citizens. Although these groups were all Muslims, it did not mean that only Muslims were loyal to the Sultan or sought Ottoman protection, as many newer studies of the late Ottoman period show.

In the Bosnian case, it was the Orthodox Christians and later their Serbian representative organizations that on occasion based their demands on Ottoman continuities and relationships sometimes cooperating with the Muslims in realizing common goals. The understanding of empires as having “parallel realities,” as Péter Hanák defined Hungarian national reality based on language and ethnicity, and a

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33 Hanagan and Tilly, 51.


35 Some Orthodox Christian leaders supported the Ottoman claim over Bosnia Herzegovina and even made sure to mark the celebration of the sultan’s ascension to the throne each year until the annexation. In Vladimir Ćorović, *Političke prilike u Bosni i Hercegovini*, (Beograd: Politika, 1939), 40. For a brief overview of consequences set in motion by the Berlin Treaty, see Mehmet Hacisalihoğlu, “Muslim and Orthodox Resistance Against the Berlin Peace Treaty in the Balkans,” in *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2011), 125–43.
supranational, defined by loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty and the Empire, is a notion in its nascence in the study of multicultural empires in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Similar questions are explored in an edited volume by Michael Brenner and Derek J. Penslar in regard to the Jewish loyalties and communal transformations in the post-Habsburg Austrian Republic and Weimar Germany. This understanding of not only parallel, but overlapping, composite loyalties is the guiding perspective in my observation of the Bosnian Muslims' allegiances in this dissertation: the ways in which Ottoman loyalties in Bosnia Herzegovina transformed, first, during the ambiguous transition from Ottoman to Habsburg administration, and then, gradually with the waning of Ottoman actual influence in the province.

Chapters and Questions

The outcome of my research in this dissertation is structured around several areas that best expose imperial continuities and overlapping allegiances while giving insight into the enduring afterlife of the Ottoman Empire in Bosnia Herzegovina. Chapter 1 analyzes the ways in which the Habsburg occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina affected the Muslims’ relationship with the Ottoman Empire. Muslims reacted by trying to preserve their status, religion, traditions, and ways in which social, economic, and political life of the province continued, insisting on maintaining the old Ottoman order and Ottoman legal rights to the province. This chapter points to the ways in which the Muslims


37 Michael Brenner and Derek J. Penslar, eds., In Search of Jewish Community: Jewish Identities in Germany and Austria, 1918–1933 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).
fashioned a new bond with the Ottoman Empire, in some ways considering it closer, and
the relationship more dependent, than it was in the previous century of Ottoman rule.

Chapters 2 and 3 consider the migration of the Bosnian Muslims to the Ottoman
Empire and the debates generated in response to the population movements that
characterized the last Ottoman century. In Chapter 2, I analyze the petitions for migration
and related Ottoman consular and administrative reports, in an effort to contextualize the
social, political, and diplomatic reasons of migration. In examining the “exit” option, I
shed light on the political action in response to different aspects of the Habsburg
administration, but also as a show of loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.

Chapter 3 examines the desirability of migration from different vantage points:
Ottoman, Serbian, Bosnian, all converging on the same conclusion, although for different
reasons. Ongoing debates about one of the largest population movements in the late
nineteenth and early twentieth century that critically transformed the demographics of the
Balkans, Anatolia, and the Levant developed in the modern Islamic intellectual milieu of
the period. These debates were discussed in a very similar fashion in Baku, Sofia, Cairo,
Istanbul, and Sarajevo, considering migrations’ religious, strategic, and political
implications.

In Chapter 4, I analyze the ways in which the Ottoman Empire insisted on claims
over Bosnia Herzegovina, by employing diplomatic strategies to keep Bosnia
Herzegovina in its sphere of influence, responding to, but also affecting the attitudes of
local Muslims in relation to the Sultan. Here, I explore what legal and diplomatic
opportunities Muslims used in order to draw conclusions about their understanding of
subjecthood/citizenship, sovereignty, legitimacy, and loyalty.
Chapter 5 deals with political mobilization and how Muslims skillfully engaged with both empires in claiming their trans-imperial rights and protections. This chapter highlights the imperial subjects’ refined understanding of notions such as citizen and civil rights, and the ruler’s responsibility for the well-being of his subjects. In this chapter, I trace the manner in which the Ottoman administration closely followed and engaged in political developments in Bosnia Herzegovina, watchful of the effect it had on the Ottoman image internationally.

In chapter 6, my focus is on the post-annexation period (1908–1914) and the manner in which Muslim loyalties toward the Ottoman Empire, as well as Ottoman policies, transformed in light of the new political situation. By focusing on the questions of loyalty and allegiance, I draw attention to the role of imperial sentiment in endurance of Ottoman legacies.

Finally, in Chapter 7, I concentrate on the Bosnian Muslim intellectuals—a group of cultural reformers who represent an important aspect of society’s transition to modernity. The reformists readily adopted new forms of communication established by cultural features of the Ottoman Tanzimat in its last years in Bosnia. Furthermore, they fused the new forms of sociability introduced by the Habsburgs, with the Islamic intellectual discourse developing in Bosnia Herzegovina and elsewhere among Muslims who found themselves in comparable situations in Central Asia, Bulgaria, and Greece.
Chapter 1

Diplomacy of Separation

The nature of the Habsburg occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina was constructed on the basis of political and legal ambiguity. The Ottoman and Habsburg rulers both claimed protection over the Muslims, who, taking advantage of their unique position, formed new relationships with both empires in an attempt to preserve their status and interests that also integrated the sentiments and influences of contemporary social and political currents. This chapter examines how the Habsburg takeover of Bosnia Herzegovina affected the Muslims’ relationship with the Ottoman Empire. It also analyzes the ways in which the Ottoman Empire insisted on claims over Bosnia Herzegovina, by employing diplomatic strategies to keep this province in its sphere of influence, responding to but also affecting the attitudes of the local Muslims in relation to the Sultan.

Faced with a new empire ruling their province, the Muslims reacted by trying to preserve their status, religion, traditions, and ways in which social, economic, and political life of the province continued, insisting on maintaining the old Ottoman order. Their efforts involved attempts to negotiate and form a new space for the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina and the Habsburg Monarchy, by strengthening and restructuring ties with the Ottoman Empire. For Muslims, the Ottoman Empire became the Great Power protector, and they fashioned a new bond with the Ottoman Empire, in some ways considering it closer and the relationship more dependent than it was in the last century of Ottoman rule in Bosnia Herzegovina.
The fact that the Berlin Treaty and the subsequent Habsburg-Ottoman agreement upheld the relationship of the Muslims with the Sultan-Caliph in Istanbul as the highlight of the new arrangement for the province, helped identify religion and relationship with the Ottoman sovereign as the medium of communication and leverage in negotiation with both empires. The Habsburg continuation of Ottoman laws and practices also facilitated some of the channels through which the Muslims were able to maintain relationships with the Ottoman State.

Being Ottoman became one of the main ways of being Muslim, because the Ottoman Empire was seen as the defender of Muslims’ interests in Bosnia Herzegovina. Sultan Abdülhamid II’s transformation of empire by using Islam and the caliphate to advance its influence even beyond Ottoman borders also had an impact. The Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina strategically employed the notion of Muslim protection put forth by the caliph, and presented their demands with specific Ottoman concerns of legitimacy and international prestige in mind.

_Habsburg Takeover_

When the news of the Berlin Congress and its decisions spread in Bosnia Herzegovina in the summer of 1878, more through rumors than any official announcements, Muslims were in disbelief: Some began to prepare for resistance, some rose up to migrate to other Ottoman regions before the Austrians arrived, while some went about their business as usual. Even the Ottoman governor seemed to be surprised when the Austrian consul informed him of the near Habsburg takeover of civil and
military administration in Bosnia Herzegovina. After the news leaked from the consulate, as described by the contemporary chronicler Muhammed Enveri Kadić, the Muslims gathered in Sarajevo’s central Gazi Husrev Beg Mosque for evening prayer and even invited several Orthodox Christian leaders to discuss their course of action. The decision was made not to open shops the following day, bringing life in the city to a halt.


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2 Ibid.
A few days later, armed crowds in the streets of Sarajevo compelled the Ottoman military commander Veliuddin Paša to resign, as they worried that he would not represent their desire to resist occupation.\(^3\) By the end of the month, locals who took over the administrative office and military and telegraph command posts replaced Ottoman authorities in several regional centers.\(^4\) The Mostar county chief administrator and military commander were killed by the locals who wanted to prepare for defense,\(^5\) in spite of Ottoman orders not to resist. For a brief period in the summer of 1878, when neither empire had full control of Bosnia Herzegovina, the Muslims engaged in opposition to the advancing Habsburg forces and became “rebels” in the eyes of both the Habsburg and Ottoman empires.\(^6\)

Although Bosnia Herzegovina was an important core province of the Ottoman Empire and its notables were renowned defenders of the imperial borders (serhat), this was not the first time they caused headache to the Ottoman administrators in Istanbul.\(^7\) Of the entire Ottoman provincial elites, the Bosnian notables were considered most independently minded. The basic historical irony here is important to point out: after a troubled relationship in the first half of the nineteenth century, it took a Habsburg occupation for the Bosnian notables to affirm their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.

\(^3\) Ibid.

\(^4\) Hamdija Kreševljaković, *Sarajevo u doba okupacije Bosne* (Sarajevo, 1937), 128.

\(^5\) BOA, Y.EE. 103/36 (August 4, 1878).

\(^6\) BOA, Y.EE. 103/42 (August 12, 1878).

\(^7\) Members of the resistance, however, were not only notables but came from all walks of life. Some historians point out that the notables, especially the most powerful ones in Sarajevo and other major centers, did not at all participate in the resistance to the Austrian forces in 1878.
After Bosnia Herzegovina was established as a border region in the eighteenth century, its military and administrative configuration was restructured for defensive purposes, building up the sipahi corps and establishing a Bosnian military-notable elite. The western border of the Empire was fortified and the Bosnian forces were more or less in constant war-readiness at home anticipating and repelling Austrian, Venetian, and Montenegrin attacks, while at the same time contributing military units to Ottoman wars as far as Persia.

The notables, ayans and kapudans, established their independence through a number of (mostly tax and legal) exemptions for being engaged in ongoing military activities, and virtually shared local power with the Istanbul-appointed governors who deliberated provincial matters with the assembly of notables. Local notables often contradicted orders from Istanbul, and opposed the governors and special envoys bringing direct orders from the Sultan. Sometimes the uprisings were caused by salary delays, and sometimes the notables refused to send units to Ottoman fronts interpreting the imperial orders as it fit their interests: For example, when an imperial order was publicly read in Sarajevo in 1770, asking for Rumeli Janissary units to be sent to the Russian front, the Bosnians argued it did not refer to them as Bosnia was not part of Rumel. Subsequently, a war tax was assessed and it took central authorities four years to finally collect it, albeit by forceful means. Increasing the number of taxes and abuse by tax collectors were often deemed “un-Islamic,” and repeatedly refused, initiating stricter measures from the center.

The notables in northwestern Bosnia caused an international crisis after refusing to accept the Ottoman implementation of the peace agreement with Austria. Concluding

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8 Mustafa Imamović, *Historija države i prava Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo: Magistrat, 2003), 316–18.
Ottoman wars with Austria, carried out by mainly Bosnian troops and on Bosnian borders, a peace treaty was finally signed in 1791. A new border between empires was altered by a peace settlement, so that Austria returned several fortified towns to the Ottomans, keeping only one, Cetingrad, and the surrounding villages.

The Sublime Porte sent the text of the agreement with the map to the province to appease the regional notables who did not accept the changes. A fatwa (religious ruling) was also sent to Bosnia in order to facilitate the marking of the new border, but the locals harassed and threatened the commission that set out to complete the task. Several notables petitioned the Porte complaining of the situation. The Sublime Porte then sent a special envoy with orders for the governor to personally carry out the task giving him the power to do all that was necessary, including punishment and exile of insubordinate notables.9 It took two years just to mark the new border with Austria, while the notables were irritated that the Sultan “gave away their land so easily.”10

That is why they took advantage of the Austrian-French fighting in Dalmatia, and took over Cetingrad in 1809, proudly informing the governor that the lost territory was taken back.11 The Porte was being accused of breaking the peace agreement, while the notables did not heed the orders and threats of the Bosnian governor and the Porte to return the territory to Austria. The French sent messages of support to the disobedient notables, claiming that Napoleon would support Bosnian ownership of the disputed territories.12

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10 Ibid., 114.

11 Ibid., 117.
However, Bosnians became anxious when the French surrounded and turned their cannons toward the disputed fort.\textsuperscript{13} Again, the notables petitioned the Porte for help, claiming that the Bosnian military was exhausted fighting in Serbia and that without the Porte’s support, Bosnia as a whole would experience the fate of Crimea.\textsuperscript{14} The crisis was avoided when the regional notables finally yielded to Austrian threats and returned the fortress. Some notables from the northwestern border region toward Austria continued to disturb the order by incursions into Austrian territory that irritated the Porte, which sent a succession of governors who could not achieve full control of the provincial notables. The extent to which the notables in Bosnia were independently minded, even in the period before the administration’s centralization efforts, was reflected in the fact that the disputed fortress was once again occupied for a short period by the same notables from the northwestern region in 1822.

Resistance to the new military order, reorganization of the tax system, and abolition of Janissaries, as promoted by the Ottoman Tanzimat reforms, was particularly strong in Bosnia Herzegovina. Its independent notables and numerous Janissaries rejected the Ottoman reforms that were to curtail their power and economic benefits. Anticipating their rejection of reform implementation, the Ottoman central administration even attempted to fill the new provincial positions from among the notables, but they unanimously refused, united to safeguard their independence.

Led by Husein-kapetan Gradaščević, Bosnian ayans clashed and defeated the imperial army of Sultan Mahmud II in 1831. The Ottoman governor Namık Pasha was

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 122.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 130.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid. According to Austrian sources.
forced to flee the provincial capital Travnik, and Husein-kapetan Gradaščević declared himself governor of Bosnia. The ayans claimed that reforms were un-Islamic and demanded that no such reforms be implemented in Bosnia and that Janissaries’ rights, notables’ properties, and the way they were inherited in the family be protected. Furthermore, Bosnian ayans demanded that future governors be appointed among the local notables, attempting to further secure their independence from the center. Although defeated soon after, the most powerful ayans were politically and physically eliminated by harsh actions of Governor Omer Pasha Latas in 1850. Bosnian historians are quick to point out that this event was the beginning of a Bosnian national struggle for independence. However, the notables’ actions and demands were strictly aiming at protecting their power and privileges, never stepping out of the Ottoman framework.

Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, who visited Bosnia Herzegovina in the mid-1860s as the Imperial inspector in charge of recruiting soldiers for the new Ottoman military, negotiated with the notables to have the Bosnian troops comprised of volunteers for the first year. The notables accepted participation in the new military, but not before they negotiated for soldiers to serve within Bosnia only, have local commanders, and limit the years of service. Although Tanzimat reforms were being implemented with enthusiasm by Ottoman statesmen in Bosnia Herzegovina, wary notables relentlessly tried to preserve as much of their independence as they could.

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15 According to Cevdet Pasha, a distinguished Tanzimat statesman, even in the problematic northwestern border region army volunteers exceeded quotas, and in his memoirs he commented: “Look at these crude border people how they hold the sultan sacred and what reverence they show to imperial orders.” Ahmet Cevdet Paşa and Cavid Baysun, Tezakir 21–39 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991), 86.

16 Ibid., 38–39.
With the Habsburg conquest of the province, the Muslim notables turned to the Ottoman Empire for help and protection, and asserted themselves as Ottomans to the Habsburg authorities. Already in December 1878, several Bosnian representatives arrived in Istanbul and submitted a petition to the Sublime Porte. They stated that they were ready to face whatever difficulties might accompany the process of taking Bosnia Herzegovina back. In case that was not possible, they insisted on migrating to the Ottoman Empire. The migration was most likely envisioned as a collective act, because the signatories asked for settlement regions to be allotted to them, as well as for financial aid for those unable to pay the cost of travel.\footnote{BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ. 2/40 (December 24, 1878).}

Having built their prominence as defenders of the Ottoman borders fighting in the name of Islam, the Bosnian notables often challenged the central administrators and even criticized Sultans’ actions on the basis of being “un-Islamic.” Whether it was taxes not regulated by shari’a (Islamic religious law), relinquishing territory to non-Muslims, or even the European-like uniforms of the Tanzimat soldiers, the opposition employed religious discourse but it was based on an understanding of their rights to do so as Muslims and as members of universal Ottoman polity.

*Imperial Claims*

The decision at the Congress of Berlin allowing Austria-Hungary to govern Ottoman Bosnia Herzegovina created a number of gray areas where both empires attempted to assert their claims and maintain their interests. Since the unique and legally vague status of such an administration was also new, the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, and their shared subjects had an opportunity to exploit the ambiguities of this situation to
their benefit. Milestones in the Habsburg takeover of the province, such as the initial occupation, introduction of conscription, and annexation, were at the same time causes of international controversy where the two empires exerted diplomatic weight. Their subjects similarly reacted by professing loyalties to incite further diplomatic action.

**Negotiating Losses: Ottoman Diplomacy at Occupation**

The Berlin Congress was one of the last meetings of the long nineteenth century, convened to resolve the Eastern Question. Bosnia Herzegovina was in the center of the Easter Question when the peasant rebellions of 1875 brought the matter of Ottoman reform back into European diplomatic circles. At the deliberations in Berlin, the Ottoman representatives resisted the otherwise unanimous plan to allow a Habsburg Mandate in Bosnia Herzegovina, not basing their argument on the fact that Bosnia Herzegovina was Ottoman for hundreds of years or that Muslims were a majority in the province, but claiming that the Bosnian people chose to stay under Ottoman administration reflecting new considerations in international politics of the period readily employed by Ottoman diplomats.

When pressured to finally accept the decision, the Ottoman negotiators insisted on a written confirmation that sovereign rights of the Sultan in Bosnia Herzegovina would be maintained and that the occupation was of temporary nature. The fate of Bosnia Herzegovina was described in the Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty, giving the provinces of Bosnia Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary to occupy and administer, while Yeni/Novi Pazar Sanjak was to have a limited Habsburg military presence. Furthermore, a separate convention between the Habsburg and Ottoman empires was to specify the details of the occupation.
The Ottoman military had orders not to oppose the Habsburg forces occupying Bosnia in 1878, but the news that the soldiers abandoned military barracks and joined people on the streets compelled the Porte to advise its envoy at the negotiations, Ottoman Foreign Minister Alexander Karatodori Pasha, that it would be beneficial to come to an agreement with the Habsburgs sooner than later.\(^\text{18}\) An additional consideration for the Ottoman administration to conclude an agreement regarding Bosnia Herzegovina was the turmoil in the public opinion caused by the events in Bosnia that had put the Ottoman State in a difficult position.\(^\text{19}\) Alexander Pasha though wondered if the outcome of armed fights in Bosnia Herzegovina would influence the negotiations.\(^\text{20}\) Although it looked like Bosnia Herzegovina was to be lost to the Ottomans in a pattern similar to the ongoing crumbling of their territories, it also seemed that many different outcomes were possible depending on how the diplomatic game was played.

The Ottoman consul in Pest informed the Porte that half of the 50,000 Habsburg soldiers who were about to enter Bosnia were Hungarian and sympathetic to the Ottoman Empire.\(^\text{21}\) Aware of their impotence militarily, the Ottomans hoped for something like the Hungarian disapproval of occupation, or the objections of other Great Powers that might have seen Austria’s actions as overly ambitious in order to stop the inevitable. Diplomatic strategy was the only approach the Ottomans were left with, especially after the Ottoman officials were incapacitated and lost control in the province. Telegraphs were sent for this purpose to European monarchs such as the British Queen, hoping that the events in

\(^\text{18}\) BOA, Y.EE. 103/29 (July 9, 1878).

\(^\text{19}\) BOA, Y.PRK.EŞA. 1/28 (September 19, 1878).

\(^\text{20}\) BOA, Y.EE. 76/55 (August 15, 1878).

\(^\text{21}\) BOA, Y.EE. 103/32 (July 25, 1878). Nine Hungarian soldiers who refused to fight against the Ottoman Empire were executed, BOA, Y.EE. 103/50 (August 21, 1878).
Bosnia Herzegovina would impel the Great Powers to at least stop the Austrian advancement and limit the duration of the military occupation.\(^{22}\)

The outcomes of the Berlin Treaty were most unfavorable to the Ottoman Empire, which, with a few territorial concessions, ended up losing territories to other European powers or newly created independent states. Eastern Rumelia and Macedonia were back in the Ottoman fold, but with a number of conditions focusing on reform and status of Christians in the Empire.

Serbia and Montenegro received territorial concessions in addition to acknowledgement of their full independence. At the insistence of the Alliance Israelite Universalle regarding the treatment of Jews in Serbia, the members at the congress requested that Serbia legally adopted freedom of religion. Despite the new guarantees, the Muslim (Slav, Roma, Albanian, Turkish, and Circasian) population emigrated from Serbia—some by force, and some voluntarily in fear of Serbian activity they witnessed during the Russo-Ottoman war.\(^{23}\) Similar outcomes were achieved in Montenegro that also acquired Muslim populated regions. The fate of Muslims in these regions was enough to concern the Ottoman State and the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina apprehensive of their future. Several years after the occupation, a Bosnian author wrote that the Austrian occupation actually protected the Bosnian Muslims from the doom of their coreligionists in neighboring lands.\(^{24}\)

\(^{22}\) BOA, Y.EE. 103/45 (August 11, 1878).


\(^{24}\) Mehmed-beg Kapetanović Ljubušak, *Budućnost ili napredak Muhamedovaca u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo, 1893), 5.
Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876–1909), having had to deal with a loss of Ottoman territories since the moment he ascended the throne, initiated a new course of Ottoman foreign policy focused on deflecting external threats by way of diplomacy. He tried to compensate for the Empire’s military weakness by positioning the Ottoman Empire as an important component of the balance of power in Europe: each of the Great Powers was fearful of other powers achieving control or influence in the Ottoman Empire, and the Sultan worked to manipulate those concerns to his advantage, without committing to any alliances.\(^{25}\)

With the loss of Muslim populated territories, such as those abandoned to Russia, Serbia, and then Bosnia Herzegovina, soon followed by Tunisia and Egypt, Sultan Abdülhamid II based his foreign policy on a discourse of protection of non-Ottoman Muslims. Islamist policies were also useful to consolidate the diverse Muslim groups at home, leading to the creation of a public opinion concerned with the treatment of Muslims worldwide. In addition to being Muslim under non-Muslim rule, Bosnian Muslims were also (former) Ottoman subjects, which further affected attitudes and sentiments of the Ottoman administration and public opinion. These Ottoman attitudes and allegiances professed by the Bosnian Muslims worked in a symbiotic relationship.

On his return to Istanbul, commanding Ottoman official in Bosnia Herzegovina at the time of occupation Ferik Seyyid Ahmed Hafiz submitted an eyewitness report on the entry of the Austrian forces. In addition to having entered Bosnia without the official agreement between the two states—in itself a great insult to Ottoman honor and standing—he criticized the Austrians for behaving as if Bosnia was their own property:

“They invited people to live under the same banner,” and promised collective clemency. When the intention of permanent military occupation became obvious, he continued, the people, “who had been accustomed to Ottoman just rule for nearly 450 years,” chose death over living under Austrian rule.

According to his report, the Austrian response to the opposition was intense violence: “as if the Bosnians were their own subjects who continuously rebelled,” were given clemency, but could not learn, and therefore were treated like bandits with unusual cruelty. “The houses from which shots were fired on the Austrian army were set on fire” and those inside were shot including women and children.26 The offense at the Austrian disrespect of the Ottoman Empire, first by entering the Ottoman territory without official approval and then by treating Ottoman subjects as if they were their own, seems to have been the starkest impression of this Ottoman official. A similar report judged the fact that the Habsburg forces entered Bosnia Herzegovina without waiting for the conclusion of the bilateral agreement, as an attempt to disregard and marginalize the Ottoman Empire, which would need to stand up for its honor and glory.27

Reports of other Ottoman officials and military personnel, as well as telegraphs by locals about actions of the Austrian military, citing robbery, murder of women and children, and capture of Ottoman soldiers, were presented to the highest officials in Istanbul.28 In response to complaints of Austrian brutality in Bosnia Herzegovina, a special Cabinet meeting was called by the Sultan himself.29 It was decided to send protest

26 BOA, Y.PRK.ASK. 2/9 (September 16, 1878).
27 BOA, Y.EE. 103/33 (July 27, 1878).
28 BOA, HR.TO. 498/38 (October 7, 1878).
29 BOA, Y.EE. 3/67 (October 2, 1878).
messages to the Habsburg Monarchy, and to describe Austrian violence in detail to other European powers, since it was in complete opposition to the purpose of their mission in Bosnia Herzegovina as outlined in the Berlin Treaty.

Protesting the Austro-Hungarian atrocities toward the population in Bosnia Herzegovina the Ottomans were mostly ignored. Ottoman ambassadors sent protest notes to their host administrations, which they reported back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The responses, or the lack thereof, summed up European ambivalence toward Ottoman grievances: the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not bother to respond to the Ottoman ambassador in St. Petersburg; London charge de affaires reported that Lord Salisbury related England’s concern and had contacted Count Andrassy about the events; France’s minister of foreign affairs stated that the Austrian soldiers had to respond to opposition, but that they would not have violated Bosnia Herzegovina as it was in the Habsburg interest to attract the Muslim people; the Ottoman embassy in Rome reported that the Italian foreign minister expressed regret for the events, but in the ambassador’s opinion Italy was in no position to take up Ottoman cause with the Habsburgs.

The Austrians were annoyed: The Ottoman representative in Vienna was asked why this had to become a public matter and said that the two states could have resolved “false assumptions” had they been contacted directly; and finally, that it was unnecessary to spread this news across Europe, as they would never win the public opinion anyway. He was right: Despite actively dispatching news of Habsburg “cruel actions” (harekat-i gadarane), the Ottomans were not able to muster public opinion in Europe that would help stop the advancing army or achieve some leverage in negotiating its mandate. The

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30 BOA, Y.EE. 5/1 (November 3, 1878).

31 BOA, Y.EE. 103/56 (October 30, 1878).
Ottomans were not even nearly successful at achieving a public outcry against the Habsburgs, as they tried to use the European tactics that often brought about Ottoman issues into the European mainstream.

Members of the Ottoman Cabinet discussed different options for Bosnia Herzegovina, the most desirable being autonomy, that would leave them administratively involved in the province. They also deliberated a collective transfer of the Muslim population south toward Albania as the last resort to save them from further mistreatment.32 From the experience the Ottoman Empire had up to that point—when each loss of territory brought Muslim refugees—it was natural to think that the Habsburg takeover would not be much different from the Russian, Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, or Montenegrin. Proposing autonomy would have allowed the Ottoman State a legal presence in the province, and it was an option that often resurfaced as a solution for Bosnia Herzegovina, anticipated by Ottoman statesmen and Bosnian Muslims. The Ottoman diplomatic goal was simply to maintain any kind of influence in Bosnia Herzegovina.

The Habsburgs completely controlled Bosnia by late 1878, and planned for Yeni/Novi Pazar Sanjak, tucked in between Serbia and Montenegro, to have a limited Habsburg and Ottoman military presence. Sultan Abdülhamid II approved negotiations with the Habsburg state regarding Bosnia and Yeni Pazar, concerned that this district could also be completely occupied like Bosnia, which would give the Austrians more of an opportunity to engage in “harmful activity” in the Ottoman Empire.33 Furthermore, the Ottomans only had a written note from the Habsburg Foreign Minister Count Andrassy,

32 Ibid.

33 BOA, I.MMS. 60/2849 (February 14, 1879).
regarding Ottoman sovereignty promised in Berlin, and the Sultan thought that it would be beneficial to make the claim official. The Sultan’s approval was conditioned by four main requirements: Ottoman sovereignty in the province, temporary nature of the occupation, observance of Ottoman laws for Bosnian subjects, and determination of the number and location of Habsburg soldiers to be stationed in Yeni Pazar.\(^{34}\)

With fresh memory of Russians at the gates of Istanbul, the fear of Habsburgs reaching Salonica became more real with their occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina and their military stationed in Yeni Pazar. Discussions at the meeting of the Ottoman Cabinet revealed distrust of the Habsburg Monarchy which was being accused of even trying to insert itself in Greek expansion plans, in order to control parts of Western Rumelia.\(^{35}\) After such a swift takeover in Bosnia Herzegovina, intensified Habsburg activity in the Balkans was expected. Seeing no response from Europe regarding the atrocities the Habsburgs committed in Bosnia, the Ottomans had one more chance to influence the outcome of the Bosnian occupation: the bilateral agreement with Austria-Hungary detailing the occupation concluded in 1879.

The Ottoman Cabinet met in the Sultan’s private quarters on the evening of April 19, 1879, to discuss the agreement. The meeting started with a list of questions by Sultan Abdülhamid II regarding the situation on the ground that would affect further Ottoman action.\(^{36}\) Of main concern for the Sultan were intentions of the Habsburg Empire in the Balkans, seeing that Yeni Pazar was just a step toward Salonica. Assuming that Austria would not stop at Salonica alone, but planned to take over Albania, the Sultan and the

\(^{34}\) Ibid.

\(^{35}\) BOA, Y.A.HUS. 160/86 (April 5, 1879).

\(^{36}\) BOA, Y.EE. 77/68 (April 19, 1879).
Cabinet members were worried about a scenario where the Ottomans would be pressed into an unacceptable situation between two powers (Russia and Austria-Hungary) in a principality consisting of Istanbul and its surroundings.

According to informal news and intelligence presented at the meeting, armed resistance of the locals was expected. It was also acknowledged that the locals would not obey Austrian or Ottoman orders—especially after seeing what had happened in Bosnia Herzegovina—but would fight “to death.” The fact that Austria insisted on sharing the military presence with the Ottomans in Yeni Pazar was assumed to be an Austrian plan to use the Ottoman military to contain any upheaval by the locals. Therefore, to avoid “oppressing our own people with our hands,” the least that could be done was to secretly encourage and help the population of Yeni Pazar and Albania to oppose the Habsburgs in an event of occupation.37

The convention between the Habsburg and Ottoman empires was finally signed in April 1879 containing 10 articles. The articles were prefaced with a statement that the military occupation in no way infringed upon the sovereignty of the Sultan in the province.38 However, there was no mention of the temporary nature of the occupation. The second article contained some of the most important conclusions of the convention referring to observance of religious freedoms for inhabitants of Bosnia Herzegovina, “especially the relationship of Muslims with their religious officials.” This article also stressed that the Austrian officials needed to pay special attention and respect Muslims’ honor, traditions, and religious practices, and to ensure Muslims’ personal and material safety. The same article guaranteed that the name of the Sultan was to be mentioned in

37 Ibid.

38 BOA, Muahedenameler, 56/15 (April 21, 1879).
Friday prayers, and that the Ottoman flag was to be hoisted on minarets in accordance with the practice until that time. Article 3 promised the use of Bosnian income exclusively within the province. Articles 7 through 10 dealt with the stationing of Habsburg soldiers in Yeni Pazar Sanjak, limiting their numbers and positions.

The Habsburg Monarchy violated and invalidated many of the agreement articles counting on the Ottoman inability to enforce them and the lack of support in the European circles if they protested. For example, although continued free circulation of Ottoman money was agreed upon according to Article 4, it was prohibited within a year and Bosnia Herzegovina was included in the Habsburg economic, trade, and customs system. Considerable Ottoman funds, goods, and military equipment remaining in the province were to be freely used by the Ottoman Empire as per Article 5, but many Ottoman complaints upon news of their destruction by the Habsburgs found no response. 39

Article 1 referred to the continuation of administrative positions filled by locals and Austrian commitment to employ local administrators. Due to issues ranging from candidates’ loyalty to lack of Habsburg educational and language requirements, the Austrians got around this article as well, as witnessed in the many Muslim grievances about discrimination in provincial administrative positions. Article 6 left the question of Bosnians living and traveling outside of the province for another agreement in the future.

39 BOA, Y.PRK.HR. 7/47 (February 17, 1884); MV 17/10 (February 9, 1887); Y.PRK.HR. 11/64 (February 10, 1889).
The question of Ottoman representation in the province was completely avoided in this convention. A foreign observer doubted the survival of even an Ottoman consul, but the ambiguous situation seemed to have benefited both sides: the Austrians would not accept an Ottoman governor or a similar representative symbolizing Ottoman sovereignty or Bosnia’s autonomy tying the province to the Ottoman Empire, as the Ottomans had hoped. Nor was a consul acceptable to the Ottomans, who would then actually be confirming Bosnia’s foreign status and thus negating the Sultan’s sovereignty if they had sent such a representative. With no clear blueprint on the ways in which the occupation was carried out, the Habsburg Monarchy was in a position where it learned by trial, continuously testing the limits of subjects in Bosnia Herzegovina, as well as those of the Ottoman Empire.

Expanding Habsburg Influence

Bosnia Herzegovina was one of the early cases of internationally sanctioned occupation. The law of international occupation had just begun to be regulated in the nineteenth century: one of first major attempts being the Hague Regulations on land warfare of 1899 and 1907, more than two decades after the occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina. The guiding premise for these attempts was a necessity to develop rules that would govern the ways in which an occupying power ruled the occupied territory and balanced its own interests with those of the original sovereign and the population.41


Because these considerations came at a later time, Austria-Hungary had great latitude in the way it envisioned and conducted the occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina.

The Habsburgs never really envisioned the occupation as temporary, but from the start worked on integrating this province into the Monarchy, so its official annexation would be a smooth and an almost natural development. The majority of the Muslim population was to play a key role in this absorption by developing allegiance to the emperor and the Empire and aspiring to such union on their own. Beginning in the first days of the occupation, the Austrian administration encouraged indigenous efforts for separation from the Ottoman Empire in official matters, most important being the religious relationship with the Şeyhülislam. Success was limited and Habsburg efforts continued to be received with hesitation, although some among the leading landowners and nascent intelligentsia accepted the Habsburg vision of modernization and progress as the only beneficial future for Bosnia Herzegovina.

Ottoman apprehension of Habsburg’s expansion plans was not completely baseless either. Austrian activity in Bosnia Herzegovina, together with their military presence in Yeni Pazar and policies in the neighboring Ottoman regions raised concern among Ottoman officials. Bosnian Muslims complained that Austria had been slandering the Ottoman Empire and Muslims by accusing them of tyranny and repression since the Ottoman conquest of the region hundreds of years ago, and using it as a pretext for diplomatic action, as well as for inciting Christian vengeance for the alleged oppression.42 Another version of revised history appearing in an Austrian report explained how most of the land was in the Muslims’ hands because they were pre-Ottoman landowners who converted to Islam just so they could keep the land and would “return to their old faith”

42 BOA, HR.SYS. 256/2 (May 11, 1880).
in the near future.\textsuperscript{43} For the Tanzimat Ottomans, and especially the Hamidian administration, history and history writing had a didactic role with an aim to bolster the power of the Empire and the Ottoman dynasty, through increasing the power of the central state and reestablishing loyalty of its subjects.\textsuperscript{44} Therefore, the spread of different versions of history was seen as damaging both to the Ottoman image abroad, as well as to the legitimization of policies at home.\textsuperscript{45}

The Habsburgs maligned the Ottoman Empire in the hope to cut the ties of the population with the Empire, or even better, turn them against it, just like various European colonial powers did in Ottoman provinces they desired to control. The approach worked, and the narrative of the Ottoman Empire as colonial, and the subjects as oppressed by the Ottomans for hundreds of years in need of European liberation, was picked up steadily with the rise of nationalism in the Ottoman regions colonized by European powers form the Levant to North Africa. Variations of the same became central in all nationalist accounts in the Balkans, elements of it included even in the contemporary nationalist narrative of the Bosnian Muslims.

Just like the Russians and the Ottomans assumed protective roles for Orthodox Christians and Muslims beyond their borders, the Habsburgs, once Holy Roman emperors, tried to establish themselves as protectors of Catholic minorities in the

\textsuperscript{43} BOA, Y.EE. 43/73 (August 22, 1882).
\textsuperscript{44} Ebru Boyar, \textit{Ottomans Turks and the Balkans: Empire Lost Relations Altered} (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 14–15.
\textsuperscript{45} On the ground, history telling, in fact preaching, encouraged nationalistic passions and political (and bandit) mobilization that caused so much headache to the late Ottoman administration. Sparked by the preparations for the commemoration of 500 years of the Kosovo battle, the Ottoman military was warned of a possible disorder and attacks especially in volatile border regions. A spy report warned of bandit raids into Kosovo from Serbia as military activity and training were intensified. According to other reports, an Orthodox priest spoke in front of Niš’s “scull tower,” telling the gathered folk that the tower was made by the Ottomans of their ancestors’ sculls, and encouraged unity for liberation of old Serbian lands, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Bosnia Herzegovina still under the 500-year-long Ottoman enslavement. BOA, Y.MTV. 39/50 (June 26, 1889); MV. 44/27 (June 13, 1889), in \textit{Bosna-Hersek ile Ilgili arsiv belgeleri}, 112–16.
Balkans. They sought to assume a protective role over Catholic religious rights in Ottoman Kosovo, and later interfered in elections of the Catholic archbishop in Işkodra, Albania. Austrian meddling in local Ottoman politics, and even bribery of Ottoman officials in the neighboring Ottoman provinces was noted by Istanbul, while occasional apprehension of Austrian spies testified to the monarchy’s interest in regional matters beyond their borders. The extension of the Habsburg sphere of influence in the Balkans was based on attracting allegiance to the Empire in the midst of mass political mobilization.

In their expansion in the Balkans, the Habsburg statesmen envisioned a sphere of influence that would appeal to various religious groups, trying to neutralize the spread of nationalism. In that sense, their aims were similar to those of the Ottomans in their own domains. So were the projected imperial images: the multicultural and multi-religious systems defying a new political fashion of state formation. The similarities in these empires’ understanding of their predicament and the ways they managed rising challenges of the early twentieth century, although beyond the scope of this study, are important for understanding the developments in the region after these empires dissolved, as well as the ways in which their legacy was absorbed in the post-imperial space.

The Habsburg administration was uneasy about enduring Ottoman influence in the province that contested its plans of attaining allegiance of the population. It tried to contain any opportunities for continuation of relationships or formation of new bonds,

46 BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO. 177/10 (December 24, 1892).
47 BOA, HR.HMŞ. ŞO.199/59 (March 1, 1910).
48 BOA, HR.SYS. 141/49 (March 3, 1911); A. MKT. MHM 608/10 (May 21, 1912).
49 For example, BOA, DH.MKT. 563123 (August 20, 1902).
although that proved to be difficult, as many informal networks existed between the population and the Ottoman Empire on various levels. Family, business, educational, and trade affiliations continued after the Austrian occupation and were crucial in the Bosnian oppositional movements, especially considering the high illiteracy rate that prevented other forms of communication.\footnote{Aydin Babuna, “The Berlin Treaty, Bosnian Muslims, and Nationalism,” in \textit{War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 and the Treaty of Berlin}, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011), 208, 219–220; and Donia, \textit{Islam Under the Double Eagle}, xii.}

The concern of the provincial administration was so intense that they even tried to limit and control travel to and from the Ottoman Empire. In 1896, Bosnian students studying in the Ottoman Empire and wanting to visit during religious holidays were not allowed to enter Bosnia Herzegovina by the Habsburg administration. According to the Ottoman consul in Dubrovnik, the administration feared that they would rouse the Muslim population and spread harmful messages among them.\footnote{BOA, BEO Gelen Giden Katalogu, 1003/63-1, 70–71 (March 29, 1896).} Bosnians who had attempted to travel to Bosnia Herzegovina with Ottoman passports were treated as foreigners, and were often denied visas, of which they complained to the Ottoman authorities, maintaining that Bosnia was still an Ottoman province and citing travel as “a natural right of those belonging to civilized governments.”\footnote{BOA, HR.SYS. 259/1-65 (April 27, 1903).} Finally, the Habsburg administration also interfered in the Bosnian Muslims’ pilgrimage, the hajj, the facilitation and protection of which was the prized holy prerogative of the Ottoman Sultan, the \textit{Khadim al Haramayn} (Custodian/Servant of the Two Holy Places),\footnote{BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 572/17 (August 28, 1895).} all in an effort to divert Ottoman-Bosnian relations in the Monarchy’s direction.
Symbolic manifestations, like the celebration of the Sultan’s 25th accession to the throne (Cüllü-i Humayun), were banned in Bosnia Herzegovina, and in one such public celebration lawbreakers were assaulted by gendarmes and 46 Muslims and 3 Orthodox Christians were fined up to five hundred krone. In its place, celebration of the Habsburg emperor’s birthday, accession to the throne, and wedding anniversary were organized and encouraged among all confessions in the province.

The Ottoman consul in Dubrovnik assessing the situation, observed that although Austria sowed discord among “Catholics, Slavs [Orthodox], and Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina,” it had the opposite effect on the Muslims who, with some minor exceptions, became more united and unanimous: “Seeing their safety and way of life in danger, their wellbeing, honor, and religion threatened, the Muslims felt the need for strengthening by uniting, for the Sublime State, and even more for maintaining the connection [with the Ottoman Empire].” Indeed, a joint effort of notables and religious officials within Bosnia Herzegovina intensified and petitions were sent to Istanbul with equal regional representation and in collaboration with the Bosnian diaspora in the Ottoman Empire.

*Power of the Sultan-Caliph*

The social and political developments in the Ottoman Empire and the wider Islamic world were followed with interest in Bosnia Herzegovina as exemplified in the

54 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 411/107 (December 27, 1900).
55 BOA, HR.SYS. 259/1, 26-31 (June 27, 1906).
56 BOA, HR.SYS. 259/1 (April 8, 1901).
57 For example: BOA, Y. PRK. MYD. 15/81 (December 1, 1894), and Y. PRK. AZJ. 41/95 (April 19, 1901).
many subscriptions to the Ottoman and Islamic reformist press, as well as reprints and translations of relevant articles in the Bosnian papers.\textsuperscript{58} The trade, family, and educational ties that the Bosnian Muslims maintained with the Ottoman Empire also provided for transmission of ideas and concepts developing in the Ottoman domains. Political engagement of Bosnian subjects in the Ottoman Empire seems to have been relevant as well: according to one of the sources, a recommendation was made not to accept Bosnian migrants to Istanbul at the particular time when the administration was dealing with heightened oppositional action. The reason provided in one of the documents was that the Bosnian migrants often joined forces with the Bosnian and Albanian students, who were supporters of oppositional activities.\textsuperscript{59} However, once outside of the Ottoman domains, the Muslims were attracted by the policies of the caliphate and they ultimately fostered a sense of pan-Muslim allegiance.

The Habsburg takeover of Bosnia Herzegovina and most of its rule coincided with the establishment of the regime of Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876–1909). One of the highlights of his rule was fashioning “Islamist modernity in opposition to the West,”\textsuperscript{60} by emphasizing his role as caliph and protector of Muslims worldwide. The Sultan’s orientation toward those Muslims outside the Ottoman Empire certainly appealed to the Bosnian Muslims who were apprehensive about their future under non-Muslim rule.

\textsuperscript{58} See Kemal H. Karpat, \textit{The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), in particular Chapter 5 “Knowledge Press and the Popularization of Islamism.”

\textsuperscript{59} BOA, Y.EE. 79/59 no date. (Folder date July 30, 1878). Despite this cautionary attitude, a number of Bosnian Muslims’ petitions for acceptance to higher schools or for scholarships were positively resolved. Similarly, efforts were made to place migrant children and orphans into trade and other boarding schools.

\textsuperscript{60} M. Şükrü Hanoğlu, \textit{A Brief History of the late Ottoman Empire} (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 138.
Sultan Abdülhamid II’s title of caliph was widely accepted within Ottoman domains as it was for other preceding sultans. What changed during the rule of Abdülhamid II was the fact that his title was beginning to be seen in a different light due to shifting circumstances in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The point of view from Istanbul, as well as that of Muslims worldwide changed for several reasons.

The European colonial expansion violated Ottoman domains and absorbed Muslim populations in Ottoman Europe, Asia, and Africa. France occupied Algeria and Tunisia; Britain ruled in Egypt and India, the Russians defeated Muslim rulers in Central Asia, Austria-Hungary occupied Bosnia Herzegovina, while the Dutch advanced in Indonesia and Malaysia. The loss of Ottoman territories to Christian states, together with the European economic incursions, further intensified the Ottoman Muslims’ defensive sentiment. By the end of nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire, despite its weaknesses, was the only remaining substantial Muslim state (aside from Iran) that had preserved its independence. This earned it prestige throughout the Muslim world.

Many Muslims who fell under European colonial rule—even those who were never a part of the Ottoman Empire—looked up to the Ottoman Sultan for help, guidance, and sometimes even material assistance. Some Muslim rulers offered allegiance to the Sultan, and some even proposed merging their states into the Ottoman Empire. They did so in anticipation of a European conquest, but also for reasons related to Islam: some

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thought they were physically too far from the “core” of the Muslim world, or that misfortune befell them for neglecting their faith, and that they were economically, politically, and militarily weak for those reasons.\textsuperscript{65} The need for protection against European encroachment, and the call to the fundamentals of Islam as a way to revive and modernize the Muslim society, superseded regional concerns in an effort to ensure the survival of Muslims.\textsuperscript{66}

For the Muslim modernization movement, that came to be called Pan-Islamic (first in Europe, but later even by its own activists), the caliphate was a traditional universal Islamic institution that was to be the rallying point for all Muslims.\textsuperscript{67} The Ottoman Empire during the rule of several sultans preceding Abdülhamid II, positioned themselves as protectors of the Muslims outside Ottoman domains. This concept started to take shape after the treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774, when a large Muslim population was abandoned to Russia.\textsuperscript{68} Losses in the Balkans, where most of the Empire’s Christians lived, left the Ottoman state for the first time ruling over a population of which Muslims were a majority.

Selim Deringil observed that with the transformation of power relations following modernization, a legitimacy crisis in the Ottoman Empire was met with policies and strategies focused on Ottoman Muslim subjects, as well as Muslims worldwide. During the Hamidian regime, the Ottomans “adjusted their state ideology” by drawing on the

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., 30.

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 21–22.

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{68} Bernard Lewis, “The Ottoman Empire in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: A Review” \textit{Middle Eastern Studies} 1 (April 1965): 291.
Islamic political theory and the concept of the caliphate calling for a divinely supported strong ruler, protector of the holy places of Islam, and defender of the shari’a.\(^{69}\)

Sultan Abdülhamid II’s role as caliph was developed in such a way that it served the political goals of the Ottoman State in the international arena. The Ottomans worked to promote the sense of a pan-Muslim allegiance by engaging even the non-Ottoman Muslims, carving out a space in the diplomatic arena and advancing the image of an Ottoman Muslim leadership. It was with this effect in mind that the Sultan proposed mediating services to the United States in negotiations with the Philippine Muslims, for example.\(^{70}\) Likewise, the education of boys from Java and Singapore in Istanbul, producing Turkish-speaking Ottoman citizens unsettled the established relationships between the Dutch colonizers and their subjects.\(^{71}\) The same intention was behind the Sultan’s envoys’ visit to China in 1901 and the opening of the Hamidiye University in Beijing.

In a similar fashion, the Ottoman consul in Dubrovnik, in his recommendations for policies regarding the Bosnian Muslims, proposed that the Ottoman State financed the education of Muslim students in Ottoman schools.\(^{72}\) Although competing with Austria-Hungary, which also financed education of Bosnian Muslims in Vienna, attempting to tie their allegiance to the Habsburg Monarchy, Istanbul remained a destination for Bosnian Muslims’ education. Istanbul also continued to be the center of religious learning well into the middle of the twentieth century, testifying to Muslims’ understanding of Istanbul.


\(^{70}\) Hanioğlu, 130.

\(^{71}\) Deringil, 351.

\(^{72}\) BOA, HR.SYS. 259/1 (April 8, 1901).
as an Islamic capital, even long after the policies of Sultan Abdülhamid II were abandoned and the Empire ceased to exist.

Increasingly avoiding conflict, and instead focusing on diplomacy as its main role in the European balance of power politics, the Ottoman Empire was able to use the caliphate and the prestige of the Sultan-Caliph to undermine rival powers with Muslim populations. The policy toward the non-Ottoman Muslims was tailored as the occasions arose, and the Ottoman officials did not engage in widespread Islamic propaganda as the European statesmen feared. Yet, the particular situation of the Muslims under non-Muslim rule responding to Ottoman claims over the world’s Muslims, as well as contemporary trends such as a rise of nationalism, affected the persistence of a Pan-Islamic sentiment that neatly fit into the Islamic notion of umma (the Muslim community). The image of a powerful all-Muslim leader when the Muslims were in an unenviable position was certainly appealing.

Kemal Karpat called the Muslim anti-colonial sentiment, which bore the Pan-Islamic movement, a new political consciousness expressed in religious terms.\(^{73}\) Niyazi Berkes, saw the ittihad-i Islam (unity of Islam, Pan-Islam) to mean political unity with a caliph as the actual ruler of Muslims everywhere; whereas, “Islam was not merely a religion; it was a nationality, a political community, a civilization.”\(^{74}\) Nikki Keddie observed that Pan-Islam had a strong traditional basis, but also appealed to “nascent nationalism” among Muslims, resembling the contemporary nationalisms in the fact that it looked back to an illustrious past it aimed to revive; and in its aspirations for a union in

\(^{73}\) Karpat, Yakup Bey’s Relations, 30.

the face of external threat, much like the contemporary Italian and German unifications.75 The definition of what Pan-Islam was is less important here than the effect it had on the Muslims, especially those outside of Ottoman domains, for whom the Sultan-Caliph had a new symbolic and political significance.

The policies of the Sultan were relevant for the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina for whom the Ottoman bond represented their connection to the Islamic world. They found themselves under non-Muslim European rule and surrounded by nationalist movements in the province and in the neighboring regions threatening to absorb them. With a belief in the Sultan’s might, the Muslims of Bosnia Herzegovina hoped that it would provide the protection and backing necessary for their survival as a Muslim community in a non-Muslim society. The image of a powerful Sultan in the eyes of Muslims was very much on the minds of the Habsburg statesmen attempting to devise policies for their Muslim subjects.

The Austro-Hungarian administration worked to neutralize the Ottoman influence, while the Muslims, very much aware of the developments in the Muslim world, insisted on their ties with the Sultan: first, based on the Berlin Treaty that guaranteed Ottoman sovereignty in Bosnia Herzegovina; and second, by claiming their religious rights that entitled them to a relationship with the caliph. The insistence of Bosnian Muslims on being Ottoman subjects was gradually replaced by claims of the caliph’s authority over the Muslims, following the realization that the restoration of the province to the Ottoman Empire was less and less likely.

Chapter 2

Migration

Migration was a response to the Habsburg military occupation and administration, and the social, political, and economic changes it brought. It was the most extreme of the reactions, and it carried repercussions for the Habsburg and Ottoman empires. It was the most apparent show of loyalty by the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina in relation to the Ottoman Empire, and an act of refusal of any possibility of negotiating their position in the Habsburg Monarchy.

An important aspect of the Habsburg occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina was the extent to which the population saw its future within Austria-Hungary and to what degree they identified with the Ottoman Empire. The Austrian guarantees of religious, property, and personal freedoms and their conciliatory attitude toward the Bosnian Muslim majority definitely had an effect on the Muslims’ understanding of their prospects in Habsburg Bosnia Herzegovina. This was the first instance after the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire from its European lands, where the Muslim population was not expelled and was protected by the new administration. However, to at least a section of the population, these conditions were not conducive enough to stay. One of the consequences of the Habsburg occupation and the Ottoman withdrawal was the migration of the Muslims to the Ottoman Empire that continued well-beyond both empires’ existence.

By examining the accounts of petitioners to the Ottoman authorities, consular reports, and the responses of the Ottoman officials, in this chapter, I contextualize migration in social, political, and diplomatic perspective and discuss the migration waves
and the reasons that initiated them. I try to analyze the ways in which the Bosnians still inhabited the Ottoman imperial milieu and ask: Why would these Slavic-speaking non-Turkish Muslims leave their homes and insist on settling within Ottoman borders?

The literature on Muslim migration to the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century is related to studies that deal with the withdrawal or dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the population movements that followed the creation of nation-states. In English, the most relevant works based on Ottoman archival documentation are by Kemal Karpat and Justin McCarthy.\(^1\) Turkish language literature is more extensive and also based on vast Ottoman archival material. It focuses on a variety of migrations from specific regions—Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Caucasus, Crimea, etc.—and the many aspects in which migration affected the Ottoman and Turkish state and society.\(^2\) Bosnian literature on migration in the post-Ottoman Balkans is based almost exclusively on Habsburg and local Bosnian, Serbian, and Montenegrin sources.\(^3\) Reasons and consequences of migration were a common theme in

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\(^3\) Ejub Sijerčić, *Migracije stanovništva Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo: Republički zavod za statistiku SR BiH, 1976); Safet Bandžović, *Isljavanje Muslimanskog stanovništva iz Srbije i Crne Gore tokom XIX stoljeća* (Sarajevo: El-Kalem, 1998), and *Isljavanje Bošnjaka u Tursku* (Sarajevo: Institut za istraživanje...
papers, journals, pamphlets, and even novels of the Habsburg period, emphasizing the
grave effect it had on the community and the individual, providing contemporary
accounts and attitudes toward migration.

Migrants did not generally understand their relocation as permanent, especially in
the early period of occupation. Many of them wanted to settle in regions close to Bosnia
Herzegovina to make their return easier. Others went back and forth, maintaining
residence and sometimes citizenship of both empires. The notables and religious leaders
in Bosnia Herzegovina used migration as a bargaining tool with the Habsburg (but also
Ottoman) administration. Claim of Ottoman sovereignty was an important leverage in
negotiations with the occupying forces, while migration represented the final exit option.
The fact that the Bosnian Muslims had a choice to either migrate or stay distinguished
them from other migrants to the Ottoman Empire, both in migratory pattern and numbers.

A steady flow of migration to the Ottoman Empire continued throughout the
period of the Austro-Hungarian administration of Bosnia Herzegovina, although the
greatest waves of population movements were at the time of initial occupation in 1878;
the announcement of the conscription law in 1882–1883, concurrent with Catholic
proselytism and Habsburg colonizing projects in the following years; and after the
annexation in 1908. In the period just before and after the occupation most migrants were
among the notables, those serving in the Ottoman administration and those who
participated in the resistance to the Habsburg occupation. Fearing for the loss of status
and assets, or repercussions within a new empire, many decided to take refuge in the

zločina protiv čovječnosti i međunarodnog prava, 2006); and Hifzija Suljić, "Iseljavanje Muslimana iz
safety of the Ottoman system they were a part of for centuries. Migration in the following years of Habsburg rule was a mixed reaction to political, social, and economic circumstances.

**Numbers**

Precise numbers of emigrants from Bosnia during the Habsburg occupation cannot be determined with certainty. Austrian authorities did not keep track of migration from the beginning of the occupation while later statistics present only a fraction of the migration movement, especially when compared to the numbers in Ottoman sources. The Ottoman *Muhacirin Komisyonu* (Emigrants Commission) records are most exhaustive. Ottoman officials recorded arrivals of immigrants who mostly came by sea from Salonica. During periods of high flow into the Ottoman Empire, the Commission sent representatives to Kosovo for those crossing the border and settling in the neighboring regions of Kosovo, Yeni Pazar, and Macedonia. Migrants who entered the Ottoman domains in other ways or in smaller groups often did not get recorded unless they themselves reported their arrival to the authorities, which happened when they wanted to be considered for government assistance. Some settled with family members—or had come for educational, trade, and other purposes—and then decided to remain in the Ottoman Empire, often finding suitable work or an administrative position.

Those leaving Bosnia Herzegovina had to satisfy Habsburg requirements for emigration, which often turned out to be the very reason for their decision: young men wanted to avoid conscription, others were being investigated by the state—often for political reasons, and few were even found to have crossed into Ottoman territory.
illegally to avoid paying debt in Bosnia Herzegovina. In the early period of occupation, neither the Habsburg nor the Ottoman authorities had a systematic policy toward migrants, and issues, when they arose, were resolved on a case-by-case basis. By the time the Habsburg administration was firmly instituted in Bosnia Herzegovina, the emigration procedure was established, and records became constant. Likewise, an increasing bureaucratization of the Ottoman State’s experience with immigrants generated detailed records and instituted policies. Considering all these facts, the actual numbers are most likely higher than any records reveal.

The earliest migrant numbers coming from one Bosnian Habsburg administrative report stated that 8,000 emigrants left in 1881 and 1882. The Habsburg government claimed that between 1883 and 1918 only 56,625 people emigrated, while another counted 55,274 emigrants between 1883 and 1910. Bosnian historian Mustafa Imamović gives a total of 150,000 migrants for the period of the entire Habsburg occupation. Based on Ottoman sources, Kemal Karpat calculated the number to be about 700 people per year, with a total between 80,000 and 100,000 immigrants from Bosnia between 1878 and 1912. He estimated that they made up 3–10 percent of all annual migrants to the Ottoman Empire.

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4 Nikola Jarak, Poljoprivredna politika Austro-Ugarske u Bosni i Hercegovini i zemljoradničko zadrugarstvo (Sarajevo: Naučno društvo NR Bosne i Hercegovine, 1956), 41.

5 Noel Malcom, Bosnia: A Short History, 139.

6 Jarak, 41.

7 Mustafa Imamović, Historija Bošnjaka, 372.

8 Karpat, “Migration of the Bosnian Muslims to the Ottoman State, 1878-1914: An Account Based on Turkish Sources,” 139–40.
Of all the immigrants to the Ottoman Empire in this period, Bosnian immigrants were among those who returned in the largest numbers. The main reason for this was the fact that it was actually possible to return, which was not an option for many immigrants from other regions. Karpat estimated that 10–15 percent of emigrants returned from the Ottoman Empire, while an example of Austrian official figures show a return of 4,042 people between 1883 and 1905, and over 12,000 between 1883 and 1910. The flow of migration from Bosnia Herzegovina to the Ottoman Empire was proportionately smaller than the migration from other regions of the Balkans and the Caucasus, but it was a high percentage of the population that demographically affected Bosnia Herzegovina and threatened to spoil the confessional balance the Austrians were so keen on preserving.

It is difficult to determine the exact number of migrants and returnees for various reasons, ranging from insufficient record keeping, unofficial migration, and the sheer span of years when and different circumstances under which migration took place. While existing numbers and statistical estimates vary, what is more important for this study is the ways and reasons the Muslims decided to leave for the Ottoman Empire, and what such migration meant for them.

Migration at the Time of Occupation, 1878

Immediately after Austria-Hungary took control over the province, Ottoman officials and the military withdrew to the Ottoman Empire. A small number of those who

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10 Jarak, 41.
participated in the resistance also followed fearing repercussions. They went on foot or by horse and carriage, taking their possessions and even livestock. In 1878, the British consul in Belgrade reported that Muslims from Bosnia Herzegovina traveled in poverty trying to go by train to Salonica, and from there by sea to Istanbul. Anticipating occupation, several notable families from Herzegovina sent representatives to Istanbul asking for permission to immigrate to the Ottoman domains. Upon approval, they set off on their journey, stopping in Istanbul, Izmir, and Damascus. Some remained in these provinces, while the rest finally settled in Haifa, Nablus, and Caesarea in Palestine, creating Bosnian settlements.

The initial oppressive policies harshly dealing with suspected members of the resistance caused Bosnians to petition the Porte. Just several months after the Austrian occupation, members of the Meclis-i Vukela (Ottoman Cabinet) presented the Sultan with their opinions regarding the increased volume in requests for migration from Bosnia Herzegovina. Complaints received from the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina, describing the oppression and tyranny that they experienced, were seriously considered and the need for action and policy development was realized. This source provides an insight in the early attitudes and considerations of the highest Ottoman officials on the issue of migration.

The two major considerations for the government were transportation, which would take place from Salonica to Anatolia, and settlement and upkeep of the migrants, which would fall on the local population and the state. Cabinet members agreed that the

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11 Bandžović, Iseljavanje Bošnjaka u Tursku, 129.

Muslim migration from Bosnia Herzegovina—where 400,000 Muslims and up to 500,000 Christians of different denominations lived—was definitely not in the interest of the Ottoman state, and that there were four important reasons for the Muslims to remain in the province.\footnote{BOA, Y.A.RES. 3/7 (April 27, 1879).}

Firstly, the rights of the Sultan over this territory and the continuation of the Ottoman involvement directly related to the survival and stability of the Muslim population in Bosnia Herzegovina. Secondly, in case the Austrians advanced toward Salonica in the future, the Ottoman State would have to defend itself, while the Muslim population would naturally rise to arms. The benefit of having a 400,000-strong Muslim force behind the advancing Austrian soldiers would be indispensable. The third reason given by the Cabinet members was that the Habsburg army in Bosnia Herzegovina comprised of 60,000 soldiers stationed there because of the Muslims, and that if the Habsburgs would want to transfer their military in the event of war with another country, they would have to consider the Ottoman attitude. As a final point, although the Austrians looked as if they opposed Muslim migration, the property of the departing Muslims—most of the farms and land in all of Bosnia Herzegovina—would be given to Christians, which would only strengthen the Austrian position. For this reason, a permanent Muslim presence in Bosnia Herzegovina needed to be supported in order to hinder the Habsburg plans.

Finally, the Cabinet also elaborated on the logistics and feasibility of the discussed migration. They considered the financial burden on the Treasury, the lengthy time it would take to organize the transport of 400,000 people, and the difficulties for the migrants this transport by land and sea from Rumelia to Anatolia would entail. They
concluded that the financial capacity of the state would not cover even the partial expenses of migration and settlement, while the already exhausted Anatolian population could not be expected to aid the incoming population. Predicting failure of such policy, they cited the fact that the authorities were not able to settle and provide basic needs for the emigrants who were already in Anatolia at the time of this discussion. Cabinet members recommended that the Muslims should be discouraged from migration by active involvement of the Ottoman State and close scrutiny of their immediate circumstances; participation in their social, economic and religious affairs; and by becoming their ultimate protectors and guardians. However, they continued, those who had made a firm decision to migrate should not be turned away.\textsuperscript{14} The Ottoman ambassador in Vienna, reporting on the petitions for migration in the same year, likewise advised that migration was disadvantageous for both the Bosnian Muslims and the Ottoman State.\textsuperscript{15} The attitude of the Ottoman authorities early on in the occupation focused on two facts: that their territorial claims should be based on Muslim populations’ presence in the region, and the understanding that an influx of immigrants would not be financially feasible for the state.

In spite of discouragement and the Ottoman political opposition to migration, requests to immigrate to the Ottoman Empire continued, and in 1880 the Ottoman authorities allowed immigration of “landless Muslims who lived in remote areas.”\textsuperscript{16} The address to the Ottoman authorities by their Bosnian subjects continued. A number of prominent religious figures and “representatives of the people” (\textit{Bosna ulema ve mesayihiyelle mu’teberan-i ahalisi}) complained to the Porte in 1880 about the ill-treatment

\textsuperscript{14} BOA, Y.A.RES. 3/7 (April 27, 1879).

\textsuperscript{15} BOA, Y.A.HUS. 163/29 (December 17, 1879).

\textsuperscript{16} BOA, Y.A.HUS. 163/29 (January 6, 1880).
they were experiencing at the hands of the Habsburg administration. After listing the various ways in which the Habsburg administration violated the promises under which it came to occupy Bosnia Herzegovina, the letter explained the opinions, attitudes, and expectations of the signatories:

> Our country’s intensely difficult circumstances and miserable condition make us envy those who moved onto another world [passed away]. Although we are of the opinion that it is our responsibility (vakibe-i zimmet) to migrate from here, what has compelled us to stay put until now is the article of the Yeni Pazar Convention between the two states that confirms the permanence of the sultan’s legal rule over the land of Bosnia Herzegovina.\(^\text{17}\)

Referring to the agreement between the two empires, the signatories concluded with a plea for justice, noting that it was fully obvious that the articles of the mentioned agreement could not have meant for more than 400,000 Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina, “faithful to the Sublime State, to be left to oppression and ruin.”

The dissatisfaction with the new authorities in Bosnia Herzegovina and the economic difficulties seem to have been bearable as long as the occupation was considered temporary and that the Ottoman Sultan has sovereign rights over the Bosnian territory. The signatories did not only appeal to the Ottoman Empire basing their claims on the Ottoman imperial system, but also on a close reading and examination of international agreements, and even “against the civilized norms of the nineteenth century” (*ondokuzuncu asrın medeniyyetine karşı*). The migration that ensued in the early period of the occupation seems to have been understood as temporary. Those who emigrated initially settled in the areas of the Ottoman Empire closest to Bosnia Herzegovina: Yeni Pazar, Macedonia, and Albania, hoping that the Ottoman

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\(^{17}\) BOA, HR.SYS. 256/2 (May 11, 1880) in *Bosna-Hersek ile ilgili arşiv belgeleri*, 86–89.
administration would be reestablished and that they would be able to return home in the near future.

The Habsburg administration cited the inability of some Muslims to adjust to the new economic and administrative circumstances as the main reason for migration. Joining the Austro-Hungarian economic and trade system artisans and merchants faced competition they were not able to keep up with, while the peasantry was affected by higher monetary taxes. In addition, the average cost of living almost doubled with the establishment of the Austrian administration. Some authors observed that the economic situation and agricultural productivity in the parts of the Ottoman Empire where the migrants settled, such as Yeni Pazar, Albania, Macedonia, and Anatolia, were worse off than in Bosnia Herzegovina at the time, and concluded that “psychological reasons,” in addition to military defeat and initial repressive measures by the new administration, were the primary motivation for migration.

Preceding the Austrian occupation, the province of Bosnia Herzegovina already suffered unrests that took a toll, not only on the population numerically but also having economic, social, and infrastructural consequences. Although the rebellion of 1875 in Herzegovina was quelled within a year, bandit groups with help from Serbia, Montenegro and the Habsburg territories continued the attacks on Ottoman officials and especially the Muslim population, disturbing normal life, agriculture, trade, and personal security and causing migrations within and from Bosnia Herzegovina. There was a considerable

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18 See Hamdija Kreševljaković, Sarajevo u doba austrougarske okupacije 1878–1914, Appendix compares consumer prices before and after occupation in Sarajevo.

19 Bandžović, 127.

20 BOA, HR, SYS. 250/1 doc. 221 (December 11, 1875); doc. 152 (March 16, 1876); doc. 146 (April 1, 1876); doc. 95 (April 22, 1876); doc. 93 (April 27, 1876), doc. 96 (April 25, 1876); doc. 323 (May 29, 1877/May 18, 1878), in Bosna-Hersek ile ilgili arşiv belgeleri, 50–69.
migration of the Christian population to the Habsburg territories from the Herzegovina region; they were prevented from returning by the same bandit groups which perpetuated the state of rebellion by the destruction of homes, infrastructure, and crops, and posed a threat to the returnees. The insecurities and unrest in especially the border regions of the province brought about murder, disease, and hunger, all of which contributed to the decimation of the population. Justin McCarthy, comparing the Ottoman census of 1870 and the Austrian census of 1879, found a 35 percent loss of the Muslim population in this period.\(^\text{21}\) Considering these disruptions that translated into social and economic hardships, it can be concluded that the occupation and the material and psychological transformations it brought added an additional strain to an already exhausted population.

Although Austria-Hungary did not keep a record of the emigrant population in the early years of the occupation, an estimated 8,000 individuals leaving Bosnia Herzegovina between 1878 and 1883 was quoted by the administration at a later time.\(^\text{22}\) Other sources cited a number of 50,000 people leaving Bosnia in 1878; French sources estimated 60,000 refugees from Bosnia and Bulgaria in Macedonia in January 1879, while the British consul there reported some 200,000 migrants living in bad conditions in September of the same year.\(^\text{23}\)

With the transition to a civil administration, the Austrian policies in Bosnia were devised so as to show the “humanity and efficacy of Habsburg rule,” a demonstration of


\(^{22}\) Bandžović, 138.

which would make complete and definitive Austrian control possible and acceptable in the future.\textsuperscript{24} A particular effort was made by Austrian policymakers and officials to work with Bosnian Muslims since they were the majority in respect to the two other religious groups. Austria Hungary was wary of Pan-Slavism in its lands and in neighboring Serbia, and was hoping that by having control over Bosnia Herzegovina and loyalty of its Muslims, it would contain its spread. Muslim migration was not beneficial to Austrian plans, as it disturbed the confessional balance, and it affected the Monarchy’s image: after all, its mandate was to improve the situation in the province, not drive away its population. In addition, the internal politics of the Habsburg Empire, such as debates about the nature of Dualism and opposition to occupation in the Monarchy’s Hungarian half, had an important role in the Austrian handling of its new province. For all these reasons, migration was not desirable, and the Habsburg authorities instituted a variety of administrative obstacles, as well as supported local efforts in discouraging the movement.

*Conscription as Motivation for Migration*

With the introduction of the obligatory military service an uprising broke out in Herzegovina in 1882 that quickly spread to other areas.\textsuperscript{25} The Bosnian Muslim and Orthodox Christian population protested the measure claiming that it infringed upon the Sultan’s sovereignty and that as Ottoman subjects, in spite of the occupation, they could not be asked to serve in a foreign imperial army.\textsuperscript{26} Not only did the Muslims consider

\textsuperscript{24} Donia, 8–10.

\textsuperscript{25} BOA, Y.A.HUS. 169/87 (February 16, 1882).

\textsuperscript{26} For an Ottoman reaction: BOA, Y.A. HUS. 167/46 (April 20, 1881); Y.A.HUS. 169/4 (November 25, 1881); Y.A.HUS. 169/13 (November 27, 1881).
themselves subjects of the Sultan and found the conscription contrary to the agreements between the two empires, they also opposed the fact that the conscripted soldiers were treated like “any other Habsburg recruits,” and were sent to other regions of the Empire (“even as far as Vienna”) instead of being stationed in the province for local defense purposes.  

In addition, the Muslims questioned conscription in religious terms, that is, if it was permissible to serve in a non-Muslim army at all. The most inflammatory were rumors that quickly spread among the population, claiming various ways in which Muslims in the Habsburg military would be forced to give up their tradition as signified in certain religious obligations: they would be forced to eat pork or not be allowed to pray, for example. Herzegovina under the Ottoman rule was often largely independent, especially when it came to conscription and other obligations to the state, making the opposition to this law all the more intense. Only some two decades earlier, Ottoman inspector Ahmet Cevdet Pasha was sent to Herzegovina due to an uprising there, and tackled the issue of resistance to the conscription. He was successful in obtaining the support of the notables who pledged allegiance to the Sultan and promised to encourage conscription among the population in the name of “Islam and the State” (din ü devlet).  

The reaction to conscription in Bosnia Herzegovina initiated more emigration. The measures that the Austrian administration took focused on the administrative aspects: requiring those wanting to leave to apply for permission from the provincial authorities, the issuance of migrant travel papers, and verification that there were no outstanding


obligations of the prospective migrant to the state, such as debt or military service. A number of applications for emigration were submitted and approved in the period immediately following the introduction of obligatory military service.

Residents of the Čajniče and Foča in southeastern Bosnia Herzegovina, for example, petitioned the Ottoman Empire to allow them to migrate because they refused to serve in the Habsburg military and were not given passports by the Habsburg authorities.²⁹ Other reports describe rebellious groups from the same region that opposed conscription and engaged in extensive armed fights with the Austrian army.³⁰ The informants from the Ottoman province of Iškodra also reported that the uprising spread to Sarajevo and Mostar and that the rebels burned military barracks.³¹ Thirty-six families applied to migrate from the small central Bosnian town of Prnjavor in 1882,³² while around 300 emigrated from towns in the northwestern region in 1883.³³ The Ottoman administration prepared to take the necessary measures, realizing that despite the discouragement and prohibition of migration, a large population move was about to take place.³⁴ In response, the Ottoman government allocated one million liras for

²⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK. 10/55 (January 17, 1882).
³⁰ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 13/23 (July 7, 1882).
³¹ BOA, Y.A. HUS. 169/87 (April 17, 1882).
³⁴ BOA, A.MKT. MHM 486/92 (March 12, 1882).
transportation and settlement of immigrants whose numbers were estimated at 10,000–12,000 in the 1882–1883 period.\textsuperscript{35}

Conversions

With the occupation by a Christian power, and awareness of the fate of the Muslims in neighboring countries upon withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire, fears of conversion and other forms of religious discrimination by the new authorities circulated among the Bosnian population. The Austrian administration upheld freedom of confession as one of its promises to gain the trust of the Muslims, but instances of conversion and active Catholic proselytism were often a cause of complaint to Istanbul and Vienna, and stirred popular fears that for some were reason enough to migrate to the Ottoman Empire.

With the arrival of the Habsburg administration the presence and activity of the Catholic Church became more intense and visible.\textsuperscript{36} The earliest proselytizing activities in Herzegovina in 1881 caused an immediate reaction by local Muslims who even petitioned the Habsburg Emperor.\textsuperscript{37} Instances of conversion that stirred popular passions of the Orthodox Christian and Muslim population most often involved underage individuals, especially young girls, kidnapped and married off; or with the help of the Catholic establishment, moved out of Bosnia Herzegovina. Already in 1878, two village

\textsuperscript{35} Kemal Karpat, “Migrations of the Bosnian Muslims to the Ottoman State, 1878–1914,” 130.

\textsuperscript{36} For example, before the occupation, there were only 35 Catholic churches in Bosnia Herzegovina, and by 1900 the number rose to 135. Tomislav Kraljačić, \textit{Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini 1882–1903} (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1987), 316.

\textsuperscript{37} Hamdija Kapidžić, \textit{Hercegovački ustanak 1882} (Sarajevo, 1958), 72–73.
girls in Herzegovina were allegedly forced to convert and marry Catholics, causing several families from the area to emigrate.\(^{38}\)

One such case of a young Muslim girl’s conversion in 1890 provided the notables from around the province to rally around a common issue in their protests against the activities of the Church. Habsburg administrative reports coming from Bosnian regional centers conveyed the Muslims’ excitement and offense taken in reaction to the speeches of the Bosnian Archbishop Stadler on the subject of the conversions. The reports warned that this could widen the gap between Catholics and Muslims and lead to a Muslim convergence with the Orthodox Christians, in no way desirable for the administration.\(^{39}\)

Most alarming was the fact that the Muslims saw the Habsburg regime as supporting the actions of the Catholic Church, and began to think that their rights and religious freedoms were not as legally protected as they were promised.

The lack of action on behalf of the Muslim religious leaders in the newly established Habsburg hierarchy made the Muslims feel abandoned and willing to consider migration in order to preserve their way of life. Hoping to calm Muslims’ fears and the migration it caused, the administration endorsed laws that prohibited forceful conversions and regulated a protocol for other conversions that would require a certificate of departure from priests of the abandoned religion, which were almost impossible to obtain.\(^{40}\)

In addition to these laws, however, the administration had secret agreements with the Church that made proselytism and the conversions easy in case of Catholicism.


\(^{39}\) Kraljačić, *Kalajev režim*, 322.

\(^{40}\) For policies and attitudes on conversions in the Ottoman Empire, pointing to similar attitudes of the state see, Selim Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
The Catholic Church headed by Archbishop Stadler expected a favored status in Bosnia Herzegovina from a Catholic Habsburg Monarchy and resented the policies it saw as favoring the Muslim notables, or the provincial laws on conversions that limited the activities of the Church in comparison with the freedom of proselytizing it had in other parts of the Monarchy. The archbishop continued his mission paying no heed to the administration and its plans. The Catholic Church even bought properties of emigrating Muslims in certain areas and populated them with Catholic residents.\textsuperscript{41}

The Habsburg policies in Bosnia Herzegovina relied on the Muslims as an element that would ultimately unite with the Catholics and secure long-term existence and acceptance of the Monarchy. For this reason, the administration considered individual conversion cases and activities of the Church as discouraging the Muslims’ union with the Catholics and creating distrust that could push them to cooperation with the Orthodox Christians, and eventually, the Serbian nationalist cause.\textsuperscript{42} The administrators considered conversion of Muslims a desirable outcome, but to be achieved in the future, when allegiance to the monarchy was firmly established among the population.\textsuperscript{43} The administration was so concerned not to cause public disapproval that it even engaged in bribing the local leaders and notables not to react to cases of conversion.\textsuperscript{44}

Archbishop Stadler’s religious zeal particularly expressed in his work on conversions, often diverged with the policies of the administration so much so that

\textsuperscript{41} Bandžović, 142.

\textsuperscript{42} Zoran Grijak, \textit{Politicka djelatnost vrhbosanskog nadbiskupa Josipa Stadlera} (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001), 573–79.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{44} As one archival document points to the case in Stolac, Herzegovina, in Kraljačić, \textit{Kalajev režim}, 323.
Minister Kállay attempted to remove him from the post several times, albeit unsuccessfully. The archbishop even converted Kallay’s wife and daughters, who were Protestant, and engaged in a number of conversions bringing him into personal conflict with Habsburg administrators, Orthodox Christian priests, Muslims, and even some Franciscans and local Catholic representatives who compared his behavior to the likes of an “African missionary.” Despite his efforts principally directed at Muslims, the number of converts from Islam to Catholic Christianity was negligible: official Habsburg data shows a conversion of only fifty individuals between the years 1878 and 1900.

The Ottoman consul in Dubrovnik reported in 1901 that Austrian pressures on Bosnian Muslims in the form of property appropriation, limitations on religious freedoms, and Catholic proselytism all forced them to migrate to the Ottoman Empire. The consul recommended Ottoman involvement by way of protecting the rights of the Muslims and sending teachers and religious officials for the purpose of educating the young who, in his opinion, were most susceptible to losing their tradition. The Austrian administration, on the other hand, blamed Ottoman encouragement and agitation as the primary reason for Bosnian Muslims’ emigration: Istanbul newspaper Tercuman-i Hakikat was banned in Bosnia Herzegovina in 1880, because it discussed the alleged injustice of Austrian authorities toward Muslims and Catholic proselytism in Bosnia Herzegovina, encouraging the Muslims to migrate to the Ottoman Empire.

\[45\] Ibid., 328–29.
\[46\] Ibid., 322.
\[47\] Ibid., 329.
\[48\] BOA, A.MTZ.BN. 1/13 (May 13, 1901).
\[49\] Bandžović, Iseljavanje Bošnjaka u Tursku, 139.
The proselytizing activities of the Catholic Church, although not very successful, carried weight as a symbol of religious prejudice and attempted assimilation. Catholic propaganda polarized the Muslim public opinion encouraging opposition and causing friction in the relationship between the administration and the Catholic establishment in Bosnia Herzegovina. Local profiteers used the threat of conversions to encourage emigration from Bosnia Herzegovina. Some observers from the Ottoman Empire likewise warned that conversions were the beginning of Muslims’ future in the Habsburg domains, and that the only solution was migration.

*Land Colonization*

As part of its project of improving the agrarian production system, the Habsburg administration settled colonists in Bosnia Herzegovina recruited throughout the Monarchy. The colonies, such as Windthorst, Rudolfstal, Franzjozefsfeld, and Kenigsfeld, and many smaller ones, were set up in northern Bosnia where most fertile land was available.\(^{50}\) In addition to the economic objective, the political goals of settling loyal peasants from the monarchy were aimed at diffusing suspicious Serbian oppositional activities among the Orthodox Christian peasantry.\(^{51}\) The Muslims, on the other hand, considered colonization as an attempt by the administration to weaken the Muslim landowner by distributing the land it had appropriated upon occupation.

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\(^{50}\) For colonists’ distribution, see Josef K. Heimfelsen, *Die Deutschen Kolonien in Bosnien* (Wien: Gerold, 1911).

The colonizing opportunities in Bosnia Herzegovina were advertised mostly through the church channels and presented as a modernizing and civilizing mission. The administration provided incentives for immigrants in the form of tax reductions, interest free loans, and rent-free land for the first three years, after which an affordable mortgage was available. The influence immigrants were supposed to project on their surroundings did not materialize since they lived isolated in colonies, while locals resented the settlers for the concessions they received from the government. In addition to agricultural colonizers, individuals employed in railroad, forestry, mining, and government, as well as investors, arrived and settled in Bosnia Herzegovina. They not only came from the Habsburg Monarchy but also Germany, Holland, and other regions of Europe. While the Habsburg colonization plans had a primary aim of influencing the political currents among the Orthodox Christian peasantry and encouraging agricultural improvements, it was the Muslims who took offense and saw it as an attack on their existence and future in Bosnia Herzegovina.

Emigration from Bosnia Herzegovina was also encouraged by various individuals who saw the confusion of the moment as an opportunity to make a profit by participating as agents in property sales. These were both locals and individuals who came from the Monarchy in search of easy financial gain. In certain cases recorded in northern and eastern Bosnia Herzegovina, local officials and notables encouraged the Muslims to sell

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52 For example, Frater Franz Pfaner, “Bosnien, ein Land für Ansiedlung,” *Weckstimmen für das katholische Volk* 9:11 (1878), 4. Frater Franz was a Trappist monk who founded the Kloster Maria Stern in 1869 near Banja Luka in Bosnia Herzegovina.


54 BOA, Y.EE.KP. 35/3433 (January 28, 1911).
their property and leave for the Ottoman Empire. In 1884, Ottoman language newspaper *Vatan* discussed Muslim migration and pointed out that in northwestern and western Bosnia aggressive attacks on the Muslims to sell their property caused the administration to intervene.

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Petitions from Bosnia Herzegovina to the Porte, reports of consuls, recommendations of officials, and public opinion, increasingly urged the Ottoman State to action. The Ottoman Empire was asked to insist with the Habsburgs on following the agreement protocols, while Sultan Abdülhamid II was urged to protect the legal rights of the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina. The petitioners increasingly expressed their helplessness and desperation seeing the only solution in migration to the Ottoman Empire. Still, the Ottoman administration considered the political significance of migration when faced with large quantities of petitions for migration. In one of its decisions the Ottoman Cabinet stressed that immigrants should be accepted only after the arrangements for their settlement were made; and more importantly, that such decisions should be made in light of political consequences that a complete evacuation of the Muslim population from Bosnia Herzegovina would have.

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55 Imamović, Pravni položaj, 110–11.

56 Esad Zgodić, Bosanska politička misao: Austrougarsko doba (Sarajevo: DES, 2003), 33.

57 On the Bosnian notables’ complaint about the ill-treatment and difficulties faced by the Muslims in Bosnia BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ 41/95 (April 18, 1901); on Dubrovnik consul’s elaborate assessment of problems and conditions of Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina and recommendations on precautions to be taken in order to prevent the Muslims’ loss of property and migration, Y.A.HUS.413/134 (March 17, 1901), A.MTZ.BN. 1/12 (May 11, 1901), and A.MTZ.BN. 1/13 (May 13, 1901).

58 BOA, MV 109/52 (June 7, 1904).
Local authorities, and later the Emigrants Commission, dealt with significant immigration into regions that comprise today’s Albania. Having to cross over non-Ottoman territory in Montenegro, the migrants spent time in these territories, their needs being subsidized by yearly Ottoman payments to the Montenegrin authorities.\(^5^9\)

Migration to the Americas was also recorded in the first decade of the twentieth century. In the accounts of her travel through the Balkans, Edith Durham mentions that immigration for economic reasons from Montenegro and other regions to the Americas was also taking place.\(^6^0\) The Ottoman authorities also took note of this trend, and the reports to the center often specified the religion of those leaving from various ports, emphasizing whether there were any Muslims boarding the ships to the Americas.\(^6^1\)

Muslim migration was not beneficial for the image the Habsburgs were maintaining in the European diplomatic circles either. It could have been seen as a failure of the Habsburg ability to solve the pressing Eastern Question, the very reason for the occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina. Creating an exemplary colony in Bosnia Herzegovina was also to be a showcase of the multicultural nature of the monarchy, especially considering that the notion of its brand of multiculturalism was being challenged on many levels, not only in Europe but also in the Dual Monarchy itself.

Furthermore, weakening of the Muslim sociopolitical strength, and the population numerically, was to create an imbalance in Bosnia Herzegovina necessary for restraining

\(^5^9\) BOA, Y.A.HUS. 380/11 (December 28, 1897): the arrangement (400 lira per year) seems to have been beneficial to the authorities there, and the Montenegrin prince petitioned and complained to the Ottoman authorities at times when the payment was late—while the local Montenegrin Muslims were being persecuted and forcibly converted on many occasions during the same period; also, DH. MKT. 785/53 (November 2, 1903); DH.MKT 1026/59 (November 22, 1905).


\(^6^1\) BOA, Y.PRK. HR. 17/40 (June 29, 1893), and Y.A.HUS. 407/9 (June 1, 1900).
the forces of nationalism, vociferous among the Catholic and Orthodox Christian population and encouraged by outside propaganda. Minister Kállay, in one meeting with the Ottoman ambassador in Vienna, called upon the Ottoman administration to lend moral support in preventing migration which he considered harmful for both empires.\textsuperscript{62}

The Habsburg administration, in an effort to slow down emigration and keep track of the population in its domains, issued laws that specified the status and rights of those who emigrated, accepted foreign citizenship, or lived outside of Bosnia Herzegovina for an extended period of time, while the act of encouraging migration became punishable by imprisonment.\textsuperscript{63} These policies were aimed at limiting the activities of migrants who maintained residence in Bosnia Herzegovina and the Ottoman Empire, especially having in mind the developing émigré community, the students in the Ottoman Empire, and those banished by the Habsburg administration who lobbied with the Ottoman government against the Habsburg Empire.\textsuperscript{64} One of the ways to interrupt the ties with the Ottoman Empire was to limit the interactions with the opposition in Istanbul and make the decision to migrate more complex as it involved risk: prospects in the Ottoman Empire were unknown, while it was more difficult to return or preserve property in Bosnia Herzegovina.

\textit{Migration after the Annexation}

\textsuperscript{62} BOA, Y.A. HUS. 426/15 (March 15, 1903).

\textsuperscript{63} Nusret Šehić, \textit{Autonomni pokret Muslimana}, 142–43.

\textsuperscript{64} Such were the mufti of Taslidža who organized resistance against the Habsburgs, and whom the Ottoman Empire “invited” to settle in Istanbul; and the mufti of Mostar, Džabić, the instigator and leader of the movement for autonomy, who was banned by Austria-Hungary from returning to Bosnia during one of his visits to Istanbul. Also, on difficulties of the Ottoman citizens traveling to Bosnia: BOA, HR.HMŞ.IŞO. 20/28 (February 26, 1904).
By the first decade of the twentieth century, Bosnians spent almost thirty years under the Habsburg rule. The administration throughout these years attempted to incorporate its new province into the Monarchy, reacting to their strategic and security necessities in the Balkans, as well as projecting a cultural mission, comparable to those of other European colonies around the world. The Habsburg administration made inroads in its attempts to come close to the Bosnian Muslims through their religious leaders, intellectuals, and notables. The act of annexation changed the Muslim attitude in understanding their legal position between the two empires, and was a crucial event for the migratory movement from Bosnia Herzegovina to the Ottoman Empire.

Political developments in the Ottoman Empire such as Pan-Islamism and the constitutional movement of the Young Turks had an important influence on Muslims’ understanding of their position in relation to the Ottoman Empire. This is why when the Young Turk Revolution took place in July 1908, the Habsburg administration quickly organized for annexation, both to exploit the turmoil in the Ottoman Empire—which would not be able to respond to this act—as well as to make sure that the request from Bosnia Herzegovina for a constitution would not reinforce its relationship with the Ottoman Empire. With the Young Turk regime’s acceptance of the annexation in 1909, the hopes of ever rejoining the Ottoman Empire were shattered in Bosnia Herzegovina. Hoping for the reinvigoration of the Ottoman Empire with the Young Turk regime, which would have also solved their particular situation, the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina found themselves in shock by a quick act of annexation and an even swifter acceptance of it by the Young Turks.
Already in October 1908, the Ottoman consul in Cetinje (Montenegro) requested instructions on what to do with the many petitions by Bosnian Muslims for resettlement to the Ottoman Empire. The response by the Ottoman Cabinet was that it was not politically acceptable for Muslims to leave Bosnia Herzegovina and that they should be advised that it is more advantageous for them to stay put.\(^{65}\) Regardless, the migration started. Numerous false stories circulated following the news of annexation that caused mainly rural migration. The stories resonated with the Muslim segment of society: that the government would bring the solution to the agrarian issue unfavorable to Muslim landowners by enforcing low-price buyout for tenants; that religious and cultural restrictions which the Habsburg administration could not enforce before the annexation due to the Ottoman sovereignty clause would be implemented; and that the authorities would not allow migration after a certain time period.

Worried by rumors about a Serbian and Montenegrin takeover of Yeni Pazar after the Habsburg withdrawal, some Bosnian migrants residing there received approval from the Habsburg consulate to return to Bosnia in 1909.\(^{66}\) Having had a majority Muslim Bosnian population, reinforced by many immigrants from Bosnia Herzegovina, the news of annexation caused unrest in Yeni Pazar Sanjak. The tension was so high that they even organized voluntary units that were ready to go to war against the Ottoman enemies to take back the lost territories—not only Bosnia Herzegovina, but even Crete lost to the Ottoman Empire at the same time.\(^{67}\)

\(^{65}\) BOA, MV. 121/15 (October 21, 1908).

\(^{66}\) Bandžović, 191.

\(^{67}\) Ibid., 190–91.
The Muslim migration in the first decades of the twentieth century was also encouraged by nationalist agitation of Croatian and Serbian movements, both seeing Bosnia Herzegovina as part of their ancestral land. Both movements thought that a void created by Muslim migration should be filled by settling Croatian or Serbian population respectively. The Catholic and Croatian organizations already bought properties of emigrants principally in Herzegovina. The Habsburg administration noted that the Orthodox Christian population was systematically taking advantage of and even encouraged Muslim emigration. They had the help of Serbian national institutions providing loans for buyout of emigrants’ properties targeting the Muslim unorganized and uninformed village population.68

By 1910, more than 17,000 Muslims emigrated, 86 percent of those being free peasants and farmers.69 According to one Bosnian administrative report, out of 3,098 heads of households and 217 single men who emigrated, 19 were landowners, 2,413 free peasants, 25 tenant-peasants (kmeti), 436 agricultural workers, 37 merchants, 120 craftsmen, 192 workers and servants, and 73 individuals of other occupations.70 Another statistic showed emigration of 30,000 individuals between 1909 and 1912.71 According to the Habsburg census of 1879, 38.73 percent of the total population in Bosnia Herzegovina was Muslim and made up 70.7 percent of city dwellers. The 1910 census showed a drop in the Muslim population to 32.25 percent, and 50.75 percent in the

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68 Ibid., 146.

69 Дžевад Јузбашић, “О избегавану из Босне и Херцеговине после анексије 1908. године” in Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina: Naučni skup Migracioni procesi i Bosna i Hercegovina od ranog srednjeg vijeka do najnovijih dana--njihov uticaj i posljedice na demografska kretanja i promjene u našoj zemlji, održan 1989, ed. Nusret Šehić, (Sarajevo: Institut za Istoriju, 1990), 617.

70 Jarak, 41.

71 Bandžović, 149.
cities. Some authors concluded that the migration in this period was a passive form of political dissatisfaction.

The Austrian authorities attempted to organize and document, and sometimes even restrict the migrations. As the agreement between the two empires after the annexation allowed for migration of Bosnians through a specific procedure that involved obtaining a specific set of documents, and only after certain legal obligations toward the Habsburg state were met, the Ottoman administration found itself in a difficult position when Bosnian citizens arrived in the Ottoman Empire and applied for citizenship without the necessary “migrant passport.”

A memorandum of the Sublime Porte’s Legal Counsel (Hukuk Müşavirliği) proposed steps to be taken in such cases, and legal consequences for the Ottoman State and the individuals in response to a citizenship application of a certain Mehmet, son of Ali Efendi, who emigrated from Bosnia in this way. The Legal Counsel concluded that accepting migrants without the migrant passport was in breach of the third article of the agreement with Austria-Hungary referring to the appropriate migration process, but that there were no consequences for the Ottoman State even if it did accept such immigrants. For the applicants, however, it meant loss of legal rights in Bosnia Herzegovina, such as property ownership. The Legal Counsel suggested that the Cabinet should produce a decision on this matter, and that responses to immigrants’ applications should include the

72 Ibid.

73 Šačir Filandra, Bošnjačka politika u XX. stoljeću (Sarajevo: Sejtarija, 1998), 29.
translation of the Austrian rules for emigration, as well as relevant Bosnian laws so the
migrants could make informed decisions.\(^\text{74}\)

The Ottoman Empire was open to accepting these “illegal” migrants, especially
after the ambassador in Vienna confirmed that the requirements of the mentioned
agreement practically only referred to military service for young men.\(^\text{75}\) Therefore, those
that arrived without the “migrant passport” needed to prove that they had completed
military service and subsequently maintained residence in the Ottoman Empire for a
period of time proving their intention to settle, in order to be naturalized.\(^\text{76}\)

Accepting illegal migrants became a problem when more and more individuals
crossed into the Ottoman Empire and asked for its protection and ultimately citizenship,
without completing the Habsburg requirements. They were not returned, but the Legal
Counsel of the Sublime Porte observed that if these individuals addressed the Habsburg
authorities or consulates after they had become Ottoman citizens, the Ottoman Empire
could be called upon for breaking the treaty. For this reason, the Counsel recommended
that the article about the migration in the agreement between empires be amended.\(^\text{77}\)

A certain Seyyid Agić Agan had arrived with his family with an “ordinary”
passport but applied for Ottoman citizenship as an immigrant. He was advised to ask for a
“migrant passport” from the administration in Bosnia Herzegovina, as required by the
Habsburg-Ottoman agreement on this matter.\(^\text{78}\) That way, he would be able to dispose of

\(^{74}\) BOA, HR.HMŞ.İSO.29/2-4, 20/1 a, b (September 10, 1910), in Bosna ile ilgili arsiv belgeleri, 315–16.

\(^{75}\) BOA, HR.HMŞ.İSO. 29/2-4, 18/2 a, b (October 11, 1910), in ibid., 317–18.

\(^{76}\) Ibid.

\(^{77}\) BOA, HR.HMŞ.İSO. 29/2-4, 1 a, b, c (1 December 1911), in ibid., 321–23.

\(^{78}\) BOA, HR.HMŞ. İSO. 29/2-1, 14/1, 2 (January 2, 1913), in ibid., 323–25.
his property (in the value of two hundred krone)\textsuperscript{79} that remained in Bosnia Herzegovina as he wished. A great number of people past the age of conscription most likely did not request the migrant passport simply because of ignorance of the rules and laws regarding migration.

For Austria, insisting on completion of military service was a way to discourage migration, as military service would in many ways affect one’s loyalty and identification with the state. Many Bosnian Muslims had participated in the Habsburg armed forces since the 1880s. For some of them, however, identification with the Ottoman Empire weighted down in deciding their loyalty after all: Deserting from the Austrian military and settling in Adapazari, Fehim wanted to serve in the Ottoman forces but was given a civilian job within the military;\textsuperscript{80} Originally from Banja Luka, Abdullah Efendi, a student at the Vienna Military Academy, came to Izmir petitioning to be admitted to the Military Academy there;\textsuperscript{81} Sulejman, son of Salih, a trumpeter sergeant in the Austrian Army in Bosnia Herzegovina, arrived in Istanbul with twelve others and was given a rank of sergeant in the gendarmerie of Hüdavendigar (Bursa) province;\textsuperscript{82} A certain Milan Ropović, officer in the Austrian army, escaped to the Ottoman Empire, converted to Islam, and settled in Ankara and then Eskişehir.\textsuperscript{83}

\textit{Return}

\textsuperscript{79} BOA, HR.HMŞ. ISO. 29/2-1, 16/1, 2 (October 1, 1912), in ibid., 325-27.

\textsuperscript{80} BOA, BEO 44/3262 (August 4, 1892).

\textsuperscript{81} BOA, Y.MTV. 137/68 (February 25, 1896).

\textsuperscript{82} BOA, BEO. 2314/173503 (April 16, 1904).

\textsuperscript{83} BOA, DH.EUM.EMN. 15/26 (January 6, 1913).
The return from the Ottoman Empire took place at the same time as the migration, albeit on a much lesser scale. The return movement is illustrative of several important facts about migration and its reasons. Most of the returnees from the Ottoman Empire were affected by the economic situation there. Poverty and inability to adjust to a new environment—a different climate, terrain, and language—were most often cited as the reasons for return. The fact that the Bosnian migrants had a chance and a place to return was significant, putting them in an advantageous position compared to others arriving in the Ottoman Empire. Return also points to the fact that many returnees evaluated their prospects in Bosnia Herzegovina as better. Finally, one might conclude that a number of returnees were disappointed after moving to the Ottoman domains and decided to return, pointing to the changes in sentiment and loyalties toward an ideal that existed in the minds of Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina about the Ottoman Empire. A letter by migrants in the Ottoman Empire describing difficult conditions there was promptly used by the Austrian authorities that published it in the local press in the hope that these personal accounts would discourage migration.\textsuperscript{84}

According to the Habsburg archival records in Bosnia Herzegovina, only in the years 1902, 1903, and 1904 was the number of returnees higher than the emigrants: in 1902 there were 305 emigrants and 1031 returnees; in 1903, 194 emigrants and 453 returnees; and in 1904, 155 emigrants and 246 returnees.\textsuperscript{85} Considering that these years were the time when the Habsburg administration was relatively settled in Bosnia

\textsuperscript{84} Donia, 166.

\textsuperscript{85} Tomislav Kraljačić, “Povratak muslimanskih iseljenika iz Bosne i Herzegovine u toku prvog balkanskog rata” in Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina, 151.
Herzegovina, it could be said that the migrants who returned were most likely the ones who migrated due to uncertainty and volatility in the early years of occupation.

After the annexation, when Bosnia Herzegovina also legally became Habsburg, the return procedure was clarified in a decision of the Sublime Porte’s Legal Counsel, instructing the relevant administrative branches on how to treat those immigrants in the Ottoman Empire who wished to return to Bosnia Herzegovina.\textsuperscript{86} Based on the Habsburg-Ottoman agreement, those who came to the Ottoman Empire before annexation carrying a Habsburg issued passport, and who had not resided in the Ottoman Empire for more than a year, would be treated as Habsburg citizens; and those who had resided in the Ottoman Empire for more than a year, or were not in possession of a passport issued in Bosnia Herzegovina, were to be considered Ottoman citizens.\textsuperscript{87} In peacetime, the reasons for return were most often economic, and the Ottoman authorities made an effort to settle, house, and employ the migrants. They actively discouraged return, and the authorities instructed local administrators to solve the problems that were the cause of the migrants’ decisions to return.\textsuperscript{88}

The Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913 were instigative of larger return movements of Bosnian migrants from the Ottoman Empire. The returnees were mostly the migrants who had settled in the Ottoman Balkan lands where war operations took place. The Muslim population in these regions was the target in war activities of official army and paramilitary units. The many migrants whom the Ottoman Emigrants Commission settled

\textsuperscript{86} BOA, HR.HMŞ. IŞO. 29/2-1, 23 a, b (February 13, 1911), in Bosna ile ilgili arsiv belgeleri, 319–20.

\textsuperscript{87} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{88} BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 513/12 (April 21, 1901).
in these regions, precisely to counter the plans of Greek, Bulgarian, and Serbian nationalists after 1908, found themselves under attack and many fled.

The Bosnian immigrants who had been settled there fled in two directions: some applied for repatriation to Bosnia Herzegovina with the Habsburg consulates in the Ottoman capitals, and others fled eastward to the Ottoman Empire, resettling once again, mainly in Anatolia. The Habsburg consul in Salonica recommended repatriation of all those who applied in 1912, feeling pity for the deplorable state they were in, and suggesting the acceptance of even the undesirables, since after all the suffering, they were “forever cured” from migrating again.89

Being careful to avoid conflict with the Ottoman authorities, the Habsburgs accepted Bosnians who wished to return transporting them by sea to Trieste, so they could pass through quarantine and be sent by train to Bosnia Herzegovina.90 When in 1913 the number of those applying for repatriation reached 50,000, the authorities unable to financially support it ended free transportation.91 Some crossed into Bosnia Herzegovina illegally via its eastern border: one report cited several thousand Muslims from Kosovo escaping to Bosnia Herzegovina in 1913.92 According to the Habsburg consul in Salonica, Ottoman agents worked to persuade the Bosnians in Macedonia not to return to Bosnian Herzegovina, but were organizing their travel to Izmir and settling them

89 Kraljačić, “Povratak muslimanskih iseljenika iz Bosne i Herzegovine u toku prvog balkanskog rata,” 152–53.

90 Ibid., 154.

91 Ibid., 155.

throughout Anatolia. As a consequence, more than 1,200 migrants withdrew their applications for repatriation from the consulate in January 1913.\footnote{Kraljačić, “Povratak muslimanskih iseljenika iz Bosne i Herzegovine u toku prvog balkanskog rata,” 157.}

Muslim officials and the public in Bosnia Herzegovina petitioned the Habsburg administration to help their compatriots and even offered the \textit{vakuf} (pious endowment) land for settling the returnees. Sarajevo newspapers reported many charitable and fundraising events in the first half of 1913, when money and clothing was collected for the exhausted returnees in Trieste.\footnote{Ibid., 158.} The Muslim political leadership in Bosnia Herzegovina realized that the return of migrants from the Ottoman Empire would be beneficial for strengthening the Muslim position under nationally and religiously divided political circumstances and worked to facilitate its realization.

\textit{Effects of Migrations in the Ottoman Empire}

Already by the end of the eighteenth century, the Ottoman loss of Crimea to Russia left a sizable Muslim population under Russian rule. The migration to the Ottoman Empire continued throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century following further losses in the Balkans, and to Russia and European colonial powers. This extensive migration influenced the demographic, religious, social, and political aspects of the Ottoman society and how it treated the migrant issue domestically. It also had a direct effect on the Ottoman diplomatic and political course internationally.

In response to the flow of migrants from the Russian occupied territories the Ottoman government created the \textit{Muhacirin Komisyonyu} (Emigrants Commission) in 1860.
to manage the flow of migrants that became unbearable to local governments handling
the refugees until that time.\textsuperscript{95} The incoming migrants arriving in Istanbul and other major
cities in the Empire, such as Izmir, Bursa, and Salonica, became more visible as their
numbers increased to the point that the authorities were not able to transport or house
them upon arrival. Hunger was a real threat, and many reports and appeals painted a
picture of towns dotted with \textit{muhacir} neighborhoods, streets crowded with beggars
waiting for food in front of mosques, and receiving aid from charitable endowments.\textsuperscript{96}

Sometimes the presence of large numbers of immigrants disturbed public safety
and order, and army units had to be called in to help reestablish it.\textsuperscript{97} At one point in 1880,
establishment of a bank that would lend money to immigrants was suggested as a solution
to a population of 60,000 immigrants in Istanbul and more than 200,000 already sent to
Anatolia for whom housing and jobs needed to be found.\textsuperscript{98} Finding shelter in the city’s
mosques, schools, \textit{tekkes}, caravanserais, and other public and private buildings, or around
them, in tents and improvised shacks, the migrants’ presence and conditions became an
embarrassment for the administration, and an additional reason for public discontent with
the government’s inability to protect its subjects and safeguard its territories.

The Ottoman policy toward immigrants, Muslims or non-Muslims (as were the
Arabs or Jews from Spain; or later, Jews from Russia, or political exiles from various
European countries), was always liberal. However, European economic and political

\textsuperscript{95} See David Cuthell, “The Muhacirin Komisyonu: An Agent in the Transformation of Ottoman Anatolia

\textsuperscript{96} BOA, Y.EE. 44/124 (December 4, 1879); Y.PRK.AZJ 12/76 (January 27, 1888); Y.PRK.AZJ 28/58
(May 4, 1894).

\textsuperscript{97} BOA, Y.EE. 14/13 (May 31, 1899).

\textsuperscript{98} BOA, Y.EE. 43/70 (January 23, 1880).
Intrusion in the nineteenth century polarized Ottoman public opinion and influenced the attitudes of the government. The encroaching European economic interests impoverished the Muslim merchants while the local Christian merchants, whom the Europeans preferred as intermediaries, economically prospered throughout the nineteenth century creating a stark class and religious divide. The same economic circumstances affected artisans and craftsmen who were not able to compete with inexpensive European goods, an influx of which was a consequence of Ottoman trade agreements and concessions.\textsuperscript{99}

Combined with lost wars and territories followed by the influx of destitute Muslim migrants, this situation created dissatisfaction on many levels in the Ottoman society. The seriousness and scale of the events in Rumelia in 1877 and 1878, in particular in Bulgaria where over a million Muslims were expelled and several hundred thousand killed by Bulgarian and Russian units, was a turning point for the Ottoman government which had started advocating on behalf of the Muslims and attempting to protect them,\textsuperscript{100} as was the case with Bosnia Herzegovina after the Berlin Congress.

The geopolitical transformation was a significant defining moment: the territorial losses to Russia and in the Balkans by the late 1870s, and even more by 1908, changed the Empire’s confessional and ethnic profile. With immigrants arriving from all sides to every port and station, the demographic picture of the Ottoman Empire was altered to a Muslim majority. Reflecting this situation, the \textit{Muhacirin Komisyonu} (Emigrants Commission) was later reorganized under the name \textit{Muhacirin-i İslamiye Komisyonu Alisi} (High Islamic Emigrants Commission). Gradually, the state gave up the policy of


\textsuperscript{100}Kemal Karpat, “The Migration of the Bosnian Muslims to the Ottoman State, 1878–1914,” 128.
Ottomanism had been following since the beginning of the Tanzimat reforms as a policy of maintaining the Empire. Ottamanism ceased to be a major unifying identity promoted by the state, mainly because there was no need to seek allegiance of the large Christian population that remained in the lost territories.

The migrations affected Sultan Abdülhamid II’s change of course and the adoption of the so-called Islamic policy. Threatened by European imperialism Muslim self-definition was being politicized, further promoting a united Muslim stand represented in the Ottoman State and the caliph as its leader. Migrants to the Ottoman Empire, as well as Muslims in the lost Ottoman territories as potential migrants, directly influenced Ottoman policies.

In 1887, the Şeyhülislam wrote to Sultan Abdülhamid II that life for Muslims under non-Muslim rule had become intolerable and that Muslims from the lost Ottoman lands should migrate and settle in the Ottoman Empire. This was the first instance where an official openly encouraged migration, despite the unchanging observations of the administration that the Empire would not benefit from it strategically (when there was thought of re-conquest); and that migration would be a burden on the Treasury.

In 1894, Sultan Abdülhamid II requested the drawing up of administrative and financial measures and policies that would enable resettlement of all Muslims from the

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101 On the late Ottoman policies, see Yusuf Akçura, “Uç Tarz-ı Siyaset” (Three Policies) Türk (1904): 23–34; The other two policies besides Ottomanism that Akçura evaluated were Islamism and Turkism, concluding that the only viable one was Turkism.


104 Karpat, “The Hijra from Russia and the Balkans,” 137.
lost Ottoman lands to the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{105} The memorandum prepared for this purpose stressed the oppressive conditions for Muslims in places like Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia, and concluded that Muslims, unable to practice their faith, needed to be welcomed to the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{106} The case of Bosnia Herzegovina was also discussed in this memorandum, discrediting the religious reasoning for discouraging migration of the ulema (religious scholars and clerics) there. The Ottoman reasons were political though: the possibility that the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina could be used against the Ottomans in a war, as was the case in the war with Russia (1877–1878), was a serious concern.\textsuperscript{107}

While managing the resettlement and aid to immigrants, the state was also aware of their political and strategic significance. The geopolitical interests coincided with the Ottoman Empire’s focus on defending the existing territories and abandoning attempts to restore the old lands back. Even after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, the imperial policies of the Hamidian regime focused on achieving a Muslim majority in the religiously mixed regions took on a new, more persistent character. With a framework of a developing national ideology, the Young Turk efforts, advanced by activities of belligerent neighbors and European policies, homogenized the remainder of the Ottoman Empire. Eventually, nationalism from the peripheries that fragmented the Empire throughout the nineteenth century turned out to be the solution coming from the center for ultimately preserving the state. The migrants from the lost Ottoman lands played a

\textsuperscript{105} Karpat, “Migration of Bosnian Muslims to the Ottoman State, 1878–1914,” 134.

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 134, 135, and note 40.
key role in the consolidation of an emerging Muslim-Ottoman identity.\textsuperscript{108} the Young Turk members were mostly non-Turks from the Balkans, while some of the most important ideologues of Turkish nationalism were originally from Russia.

\textsuperscript{108} Karpat, “The Hijra from Russia and the Balkans,” 138–41.
In 1909, Rashid Rida, an Islamist reformer and the editor of the Egyptian journal *al-Manar*, published an article titled “On Hijra and its Rules Regarding the Muslims of Bosnia,” as a response to a question sent by a *medresa* student from Travnik in Bosnia Herzegovina. The reader asked Rida to clarify the status of Bosnia after it was annexed by the Habsburg Empire in 1908. The student explained that a visiting preacher (*vaiz*) from Istanbul alarmed the town’s Muslims claiming that the communal prayers, fast, alms, and legal affairs such as marriage were all invalid in Bosnia Herzegovina since it had become *dar al-harb* (the abode of war) after the annexation. The preacher also advised that the Muslims needed to migrate to the Ottoman Empire in order to live under a Muslim ruler.

Rida dismissed the logic of the preacher basing his response on earlier scholarly opinions, the Qur’an and the hadith. Rida also reviewed various scholarly opinions throughout the Islamic history on this topic. Although their conclusions differed, Rida found that most scholars agreed on two cases when hijra (migration) is obligatory: one, when Muslims, as individuals or a group, are unable to perform the duties of their faith and are being forced to convert; and second, if they need to participate in the defense of the Muslim community (jihad). Since neither was the case with the Bosnian Muslims, this brought him to conclude that the preacher who made people doubt the validity of their religious rites was erroneous.

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In his reformist approach Rida further elaborated on different scenarios in Bosnian situation: hijra with an aim of necessary education, where an individual would travel to educate oneself and return to teach others also fell in the first category. Another situation of obligatory hijra would be when an individual was unable to prevent actions forbidden by religion. However, continued Rida, those would be applicable to individuals—if there was a group able to overcome these obstacles, then doing just that would be their primary obligation, rather than hijra.

This response in an important international journal touched upon a critical issue that increasingly concerned Muslims in the nineteenth and twentieth century: whether the validity of one’s religious practice could, or should, be related to the status of the state. In an ever-shrinking Muslim-ruled world, new circumstances required Muslims to consider their continued existence, and even further development, within states and empires in which they were not rulers, or were a minority.

The content of the letter, the fact that there were subscribers to *al-Manar*, and that Rida’s opinion was held in esteem in Bosnia\(^2\) shows that after over 30 years of Habsburg occupation, the nature of the relationship to the Sultan-Caliph, and the affiliation with the rest of the *umma* in thinking of Muslim existence in Bosnia Herzegovina was still seriously considered. As the previous chapter shows, the reasons for individual and group migrations were many and often influenced by practical circumstances and occasions. However, those debating migration used religious reasoning, rhetoric, and symbolism to discourage or promote migration to the Ottoman Empire. The Pan-Islamic ideas

\(^2\) The student who sent the question, Muhammed Zahirudin Tarabar (1882–1957), is an example of this generation. He was a graduate of Fejzija medresa in Travnik and was fluent in Arabic, Turkish, and Persian, subscribing to a number of international journals from the Muslim world. He held religious, teaching, and scholarly posts; in Fikret Karčić and Mustafa Jahić, “Jedna vazna fetva o pitanju iseljavanja bosanskih Muslimana u vrieme austrougarske uprave” *Prilozi Instituta za Istoriju* 27 (1991): 41–48.
spreading throughout the Muslim world through press, the effects of the Ottoman political situation, as well as the rise of nationalism in the Balkans influenced the ways in which Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina looked upon their existence and identity in between the two empires. Most importantly, it affected the ways in which sentiments and loyalties decided political allegiances.

Interest in debates on migration in the works in Bosnian language rose during the war in Bosnia Herzegovina in the 1990s, where migration, in addition to ethnic cleansing, created some of the same concerns for the Bosnian Muslims as those at the turn of the twentieth century. Decrease in Muslim population in Bosnia Herzegovina once again threatened to weaken the community and render Muslims a minority, making their political survival under new circumstances even more difficult. Literature on these debates often repeated the Habsburg accusations of the Ottomans, who also stressed “Muslims fanaticism” and Muslim inability to adjust to European societal norms to have been at the root of migration.

A closer look at the debates on migration during the Habsburg period, however, reveals a more complex picture. The Ottoman Pan-Islamic policies were not as consistent as the Ottoman adversaries feared them to be. Ottoman officials were more concerned with avoiding the logistical and financial problems they encountered while handling the almost continuous flow of migrants into the imperial domains in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Ottoman diplomatic goals, too, did not find encouragement of Bosnian migration as beneficial to the maintenance of the Ottoman spheres of influence in Habsburg Bosnia and the Balkans, which rested on Muslim loyalties in the region.
Regional political consideration also played a role in debates about Muslim migrations. While grand national plans usually aimed at achieving ethnically and religiously homogenous territories for new nation-states in the Balkans, the particular religious balance in Bosnia Herzegovina, the fact that its Muslims were Slavs, as well as Bosnia’s political situation under the Habsburg rule, encouraged a range of especially Serbian efforts at discouraging migration. Muslim intellectuals in Bosnia Herzegovina fiercely criticized migration as a step in the wrong direction and detrimental even to those who stayed. They engaged in debates on migration supporting their positions with religious reasoning and rhetoric, evocative of the influences of the Muslim reform movement, of which aforementioned Rida was an admired proponent.

In this chapter, I explore the question of the desirability of migration from various vantage points: from Istanbul to Belgrade to Sarajevo, to find that, strikingly, they all converged on the same conclusion—that migration was unfavorable—albeit for very different reasons. Theoretical religious considerations and the apparent appeal of the religiously infused political idea of ‘returning’ to the Sultan-Caliph, seems not to be the majority view.

*Hijra as an Islamic Concept*

Bosnia Herzegovina was part of the Ottoman sociopolitical system for centuries. The system of Ottoman administration and courts guided by Ottoman kanunnames (edicts) represented a rather uniform structure throughout the imperial realm that was at the same time adaptable to local conditions. These civil laws formally conformed to the Islamic law, the shari’a, through the rulings of the religious establishment headed by the
Şeyhülislam, who was in turn appointed by the Sultan. Although the Islam of the Muslims was broadly reflected in social customs and cultural rites that varied throughout the vast areas of the Empire, the legal framework materialized in the network of courts brought about a degree of uniformity in public affairs. Communal Friday prayers in which the Sultan was mentioned as the protector, religious holidays, pilgrimages, Sufi communal organizations, birth, marriage and death ceremonies, public order, and trade laws and associations were all part of an Ottoman religious and administrative system well-entrenched in the Bosnian social structure. The Ottoman sociopolitical legal framework was based on Islamic textual tradition and relied on the religious rulings that confirmed the civil laws.

For Habsburg Bosnia Herzegovina in particular, the fact that Ottoman sovereignty over this province was structured in religious context, and that the link to the Ottoman Empire was spelled out in the relationship with the Muslim (but also Orthodox Christian) spiritual leaders, added to the weight of religious rulings. The centuries long status of Bosnia Herzegovina as a border region (serhat), and its inhabitants as the defenders of the Ottoman Empire, solidified their identity and motivation entrenched in the Ottoman concept of din ü devlet (Islam and the State). Waging war and being in close proximity to the Ottoman enemies contributed to an extensive consideration of Islamic concepts such as dar al-harb, dar al-Islam and jihad, especially entertained in the works of the Bosnian ulema.³

The legal views of jurists relating to the problems of occupation of Muslim lands, or Muslims living outside of the areas ruled by a Muslim ruler existed since the early

times of Islam. The very fact that the Prophet Muhammad performed hijra from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE because the survival of Muslims and their way of life was endangered, marked all future discussions on this issue due to the nature of the Islamic law’s reliance on the tenets of the Qur’an and the sunna (practice of the Prophet). The migration from Mecca to Medina was obligatory for all Muslims, while an earlier migration to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) was not. There are quite a few Qur’anic verses, as well as hadith on the notion of hijra, and they became the basis for later discussions and scholarly work on this notion. While hijra is mentioned in the Qur’an on many occasions,⁴ the verses most often cited are the following:

When angels take the souls of those who die in sin against their souls, they say: "In what (plight) were ye?" They reply: "Weak and oppressed were we in the earth." They say: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (From evil)?" Such men will find their abode in Hell—What an evil refuge! Except those who are (really) weak and oppressed—men, women, and children—who have no means in their power, nor (a guide-post) to their way. For these, there is hope that Allah will forgive: For Allah doth blot out (sins) and forgive again and again.

He who forsakes his home in the cause of Allah, finds in the earth many a refuge, wide and spacious: Should he die as a refugee from home for Allah and His Messenger, his reward becomes due and sure with Allah: And Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.⁵

and,

Those who believed, and adopted exile, and fought for the Faith, with their property and their persons, in the cause of Allah, as well as those who gave (them) asylum and aid, these are (all) friends and protectors, one of another. As to those who believed but came not into exile, ye owe no duty of protection to them until they come into exile; but if they seek your aid in religion, it is your duty to help them, except against a people with whom ye have a treaty of mutual alliance. And (remember) Allah seeth all that ye do.⁶

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⁴ Masud, 32.


⁶ Qur’an (8:72).
In the many references to hijra in hadith literature, that can be interpreted both to support and discourage the necessity of hijra, most notable is the account of the Prophet transmitted by his wife, Aisha, which states that: “There is no hijra after the liberation of Mecca,” (*la hijrata ba’d al fathî*).

The issue of hijra, and when or whether Muslims are obliged to perform it, came up throughout history and was judged differently depending on the circumstances, and by various legal schools considering the actual viability of such a move. Whether it was Spain, or Central Asia, or several centuries later, India and West Africa, the basic question for jurists engaged in rulings on hijra was whether a territory was part of the *dar al-Islam* (the abode of Islam) or the *dar al-harb* (the abode of war). The fundamental principle was that the righteous existence was possible only within a system that upholds shariʿa law and where life could be led under its guidance, which defined *dar al-Islam*. However, scholars throughout the centuries differed on what constitutes such a setting, while the reality of Muslim existence in non-Muslim societies continued to challenge the rigid division of the world into two separate entities and its definitions. After all, the earliest Muslims emigrated to Christian Abyssinia, where practice of their faith was allowed. Hence, a definite universal ruling was never established.

In the nineteenth century, with Muslims becoming subjects of various non-Muslim rulers, theologians and Muslim thinkers entertained the works of earlier scholars and instigated religious rulings regarding the existence of Muslims under non-Muslim

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rule. Increasingly, those who did not adhere to conservative, insular policy in the face of weakening Muslim empires dismissed a dichotomous division of the world and initiated new ways of thinking, suitable to the situations of the time, that provided a new overarching Muslim identity, still based on the concept of *umma* but reflecting new circumstances. The debates regarding migration existed in areas of the world where Muslims lived: not just in the periphery of the Ottoman Empire or its lost territories, but also in areas of the Muslim world that were never a part of the Ottoman Empire. Muslim countries and communities threatened by European expansion and colonialism looked to the Sultan-Caliph and the Ottoman Empire, as the strongest independent Muslim country left in the world, for guidance and help.

Migration played a crucial role in the formation of the Ottoman Empire, throughout its existence, as well as in its late stages, forming a basis for the Turkish Republic. The Ottoman intellectual tradition was naturally influenced by the earlier Muslim scholars, and the important notion of hijra was placed within the discussions of social order and the relationships between the state and its subjects. The Ottoman scholars adhered to the Hanafi School of jurisprudence, with a general view that although the *dar al-Islam* was considered a territory ruled by a Muslim ruler, the outside territory was not necessarily considered *dar al-harb*. Usually, the freedom and ability to perform congregational prayers, together with a presence of a shari’a judge, were enough for a territory to be considered *dar al-Islam*, and thus, did not necessitate the obligation of

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10 Masud, 40.
hijra. Because of the centrality of hijra in Islamic history, admitting migrants (muhajirin) had an additional sense of a religious obligation beyond humanitarian action. The use of the names hijra and muhajir (hicret and muhacir in Turkish) indicated that the process of migration and the migrants had a symbolic link with the experience of the early Muslim community. As much as they were at times strategic tools of the government, Ottoman policies and treatment of migrants throughout its existence originated in Islamic tradition and its special reference to acceptance and care of migrants.

**Ottoman Attitudes Toward Bosnian Migration**

Despite grand plans of settling all the Muslims in the remaining Ottoman territories, the realities on the ground, as well as various other policy considerations, played an important role in the modification of original attitudes toward migration. The Bosnian case seems to have been a particular exception, mainly because of the uncertain legal status of Bosnia Herzegovina until 1908. The Ottoman Cabinet, considering petitions from Bosnian Muslims and Ottoman administrative reports, concluded that although migration was useful to increase the Muslim population in the Ottoman Empire, migration from Bosnia Herzegovina should not be encouraged. In 1904, in response to a large number of applications for migration, the Ottoman Cabinet once again concluded

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11 The Hijri Islamic calendar starts with the migration of the Prophet in 622 CE.

12 Masud, 33–34.


14 BOA, Y.A.RES. 117/77 (August 14, 1902).
that completely vacating Bosnia Herzegovina was not politically sound and that these petitions should be considered while keeping this in mind.\(^{15}\)

Perhaps, the best intentions of Ottoman officials regarding Bosnian migration were summarized in the recommendations of the Ottoman consul in Dubrovnik. He communicated his concerns regarding migration of Bosnian Muslims and revealed in his correspondence Ottoman attitudes toward immigrants from Bosnia Herzegovina as, first, a humanitarian act towards the poor and tyranny-afflicted Muslims; and second, as a way to increase and strengthen the Ottoman population. The consul continued to say that although Bosnian immigrants are “useful people,” and had never been opposed to, or disconnected from the Ottoman State, migration from this province should not be encouraged. He reasoned that Bosnia Herzegovina was considered part of the Ottoman Empire under temporary foreign occupation, and that the Muslims maintained a strong connection to the Ottoman Empire, even hoping that this province would once again be a part of it.\(^{16}\)

He stressed the numbers, unity, and adherence to faith as important characteristics of Muslims from Bosnia Herzegovina. In addition, he recommended that the population of closely 400,000 Bosnian Muslims devoted to the Sultan and ready to sacrifice for faith and fellow countrymen should be increased, and not decreased because they were the key to Ottoman continuity and influence in this region. The consul recommended that it would be practical to discourage migration and help out those in need by peacefully resolving their problems; The Ottoman Empire should protect the Bosnian Muslims and make sure their legal rights were respected while at the same time maintain friendly

\(^{15}\) BOA, MV. 109/52 (June 7, 1904).

\(^{16}\) BOA, Y.A.HUS. 413/134 (March 17, 1901).
relations with Austria. The consul concluded that the Ottoman Empire could maintain its sphere of influence in this key province by relying on the loyalty and Ottoman sentiments of its Muslims, seeing it as more beneficial than their migration would have been. Although not prohibiting, Ottoman policy discouraged migration from Bosnia Herzegovina. Migrants poured in regardless, and the policies were adjusted to situations as they arose.

In addition to the aforementioned political and strategic reasons, an important consideration for the Ottoman authorities was the sheer cost of transporting and settling the Bosnian migrants. Ottoman consul in Belgrade, Ibrahim Fethi, for instance, addressed the authorities in Istanbul asking for funds to be assigned to facilitate Bosnian Muslims’ travel expenses from Belgrade to at least Skopje. He wrote that since his arrival in Serbia, a great number of despairing Muslim migrants applied to the Ottoman consulate for help, but because of the consulate’s lack of funds, and relying on a prior decision of the Emigrants Commission (not to encourage migration), their requests were not really met.

Seeing that these destitute migrants then became a tool in Serbian propaganda, or returned home, the consul began unofficially aiding the migrants from consulate funds, as well with as his own money. Not being able to continue this, he requested a monthly budget allocation for transporting the migrants to Skopje. Funds were ultimately assigned for migrant travel from Belgrade as the most fitting solution to this issue, but the migrants financial problems seem to have continued, and the consul requested permission to give allowance to migrants traveling to the Ottoman domains the following year.

17 Ibid.

18 BOA, Y.MTV. 175/183 (May 4, 1898), in Bosna ile ilgili arsiv belgleri, 127–30.
Similarly, in 1901, the governor of Salonica asked for financial help for the migrants from Bosnia Herzegovina, “who have been arriving for five-six months in 3–4 convoys weekly, each consisting of 300–400 people.”\textsuperscript{20} Once they arrived the migrants needed to be housed and employed: to illustrate, the cost of settling 1,469 Bosnian migrants in 283 houses in Ankara province was 1,688,575.50 kuruş.\textsuperscript{21} The Ottoman Cabinet concluded that 2,000 lira per month and an additional 8,000 for housing, tools, animals, food, and seeds were needed only in financial sources to settle Bosnian migrants along the Anatolian railroad.\textsuperscript{22} Local population and migrants themselves were employed in building houses.\textsuperscript{23} As much as the financial and material help that was provided by the state was encouraging migration, the difficulties of travel, disease, and poverty must have been as much of a deterrent for those considering a move to the Ottoman lands.

Sometimes individuals would petition the authorities, describing their predicament and asked for assistance in reaching Ottoman lands, or help once they were there. A certain Abdülkerim, a migrant from Bosnia Herzegovina who could only afford to migrate himself to Istanbul, petitioned the Ottoman authorities for help in bringing his family to the Ottoman Empire, and was subsequently awarded a gift from the Sultan (\textit{atiyye-i seniyye}) in the amount of 1,400 kuruş.\textsuperscript{24} The sense of responsibility for the immigrants in need was discernible in many petitions to the authorities and the Sultan,

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{20} BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 512/5 (January 17, 1901).


\textsuperscript{22} BOA, MV. 101/36 (December 20, 1900).

\textsuperscript{23} BOA, Y.PRK.MYD. 24/5 (May 14, 1901).

\textsuperscript{24} BOA, DH.MKT. 1567/61 (October 22, 1888).
where petitioners, sometimes with no other explanation but need, sought monetary help, jobs, housing, or other support, and in most cases received a positive reply.

Another prospect the Ottoman government had in the migration movement was manpower and potential military recruits. However, it seems that the Ottoman authorities were first and foremost concerned with settling and integrating the incoming population. For this purpose, the Ottoman government provided tax and military service exemptions. The tax exemptions were reflected in agricultural, trade, and artisan activities of immigrants ranging at different times from 10 to six to 1 year in duration.\(^{25}\) Similar logic was applied to the military service exemption, especially considering that the men were the family breadwinners. Families without men to work the land or earn a wage were usually destined to continuously depend on government aid and charities.

The military service exemption was generally six years in duration, pointing to the fact that the Ottoman government was more concerned with integrating the immigrants into society than fulfilling its need for military manpower. The Bosnians who crossed over to Kosovo and volunteered to serve in the army in 1897, for instance, were first to be settled as immigrants before their army service could be considered. The same year, a number of war volunteers arrived from Bosnia Herzegovina to Işkodra, prompting the local government to telegraph Istanbul asking what to do with them.\(^{26}\) The answer was the same—they were to be treated as other migrants.\(^{27}\) When the Ottoman Empire entered World War I, many Bosnian migrants wanted to register with the military, but


\(^{26}\) BOA, BEO 966/72388 (June 17, 1897); BEO 965/72333 (June 16, 1897).

\(^{27}\) BOA, BEO 967/72525 (June 22, 1897).
their ambiguous status initiated exchange across Ottoman Naturalization Department, Legal Counsel, Ministry of War, and the State Council, debating the possible solutions. Even in war, it was decided that those Muslims who arrived from Bosnia Herzegovina without the necessary documentation from the Habsburg authorities, attainable only after they had completed military service, were to become Ottoman citizens after they had resided in the Ottoman Empire for five years with good conduct. They were to be strongly cautioned not to contact the Austrian consulate for any reason, or the aid and benefits, including land and housing that was given to them and their families, would be taken away and they would be expelled from the Ottoman domains.\textsuperscript{28}

The Ottoman administration was often accused of encouraging migration, especially by the Austrians. Although there was no proof of such action, there were preachers, employing religious rhetoric, who called upon the population to migrate and live under the rule of a Muslim Sultan-Caliph. A number of papers and journals ran articles criticizing the Habsburg treatment of Muslims, or openly advised Muslim migration. The public opinion as reflected in the press was welcoming of migrants showing compassion for their plight they endured just for being Muslim, but also critical and discouraging of migration from Bosnia Herzegovina.

The Ottoman paper \textit{Muhacir} (Emigrant) criticized the “bogus” religious preachers making migration a religious issue in Bosnia Herzegovina, and convincing the gullible poor and rural population to flee. The paper further blamed the rich Bosnian Muslims for not helping out the poor, and thus allowing for their migration to happen.\textsuperscript{29} The same paper, in another article named “To Migrate or Not,” stressed that if the migration

\textsuperscript{28} BOA, HR.HMS.ISO. 36/4 (October 27, 1915), in \textit{Bosna ile ilgili arşiv belgeleri}, 327–36. 
\textsuperscript{29} Emgili, 201–202.
continued there would be no Bosnians left: “Maybe in a hundred years Bosniak name would be no more, and the historians would refer to them by saying: once upon a time…” ³⁰ *Ittihat ve Terraki* (Union and Progress) paper considered the consequences a Bosnian Muslim migration would have on Habsburg efforts to increase its sphere of influence in the region, mentioning the practice of settling Catholic population on the land Muslims abandoned, as the most obvious. The article warned that if the Bosnians were to abandon their home, there would be no hope for their future and their homeland would be lost forever. ³¹

**Nationalism and Migration: Serbian Attitudes**

The Serbian approach to the question of Muslim migration from Bosnia Herzegovina was situated in the context of its regional politics with aspirations of incorporating Bosnia Herzegovina in its domains. Muslims were seen by some as ethnically Serb, and therefore naturally a part of the Serbian cause; and by others as partners to the Orthodox Christian population in Bosnia Herzegovina against the Habsburg occupation. In either case, the consideration was that their migration would open way for colonizing an emptied land, and move Bosnia Herzegovina closer to permanently staying within the Habsburg Empire. ³² For these reasons the Serbian government, activists, and the press all closely followed the events in Bosnia

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³⁰ Ibid., 237.
³¹ Ibid., 271.
Herzegovina and worked on discouraging Muslim migration, often in collaboration with the Bosnian Muslim diasporas.

Especially after 1889, when the Serbian King Milan Obrenović abdicated and the Serbian agreement with Austria-Hungary about prevention of anti-Habsburg activity ceased to be in effect, Serbian nationalist organizations and the government itself began openly supporting the oppositional currents in Bosnia Herzegovina and the Bosnian immigrants in Serbia, some of whom were Muslim. The Muslim migratory movement and its prevention became one of the critical issues for the Serbian national and political program.

The immigrants from Bosnia Herzegovina established an association in Belgrade in 1889 with the aim of organizing and helping the oppositional movement inside Bosnia Herzegovina.\textsuperscript{33} Serbian nationalist papers, often illegally brought to Bosnia Herzegovina, contributed to the work of Serbian teachers and priests in spreading the nationalist idea among both the Orthodox and the Muslim population there, influencing the Serbian affiliation of a number of Muslims.\textsuperscript{34} These papers, often discussing migration and discouraging it whenever possible, strongly appealed to readers. Habsburg authorities were continuously attacked in the Serbian press for encouraging Muslim migration so the colonists from the Monarchy could be resettled in their place. Ties with the Bosnian Muslim diaspora in Istanbul were created mostly through students and the Serbian consulate there.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{33} Kraljačić, 142.

\textsuperscript{34} Muhsin Rizvić, \textit{Bosansko-muslimanska književnost u doba preporoda (1887–1918)} (Sarajevo: El-Kalem, 1990), 149–50.

\textsuperscript{35} Rizvić, 151.
Bosnian emigrants in Serbia issued a number of publications critical of the Habsburg administration, some of which were written by Muslims. In 1895, Derviš beg Ljubović issued a brochure titled: “O stanju B.i H. posvećeno madžarskim patriotima” (On Conditions in Bosnia Herzegovina Dedicated to the Hungarian Patriots), addressing the Bosnian people and referring to Bosnia as Serbian land.\(^{36}\) Another book published in Novi Sad in 1901, was authored by Ehli-Islam, (People of Islam).\(^{37}\) In the foreword of this work titled *Misrule of the Occupational Administration in Bosnia Herzegovina*, the authors were defined as The Muslim Committee for Bosnia Herzegovina\(^{38}\) and they stated that this was the third in a series of issues documenting the tyranny of the occupational regime. The material published described violations in various regions of Bosnia Herzegovina, naming the abusive Habsburg officials and their victims some of whom were left with no choice but to emigrate. The authors stated that their activity would not cease until Bosnia Herzegovina was restored to the Ottoman Empire, or was given self-rule.\(^{39}\) They also considered the fact that legally the rule still belonged to the Sultan-Caliph important, not just for Bosnia Herzegovina but also for all the Balkan peoples,\(^{40}\) criticizing Habsburg inability to satisfy the fundamental needs of the Muslim and Orthodox populations under its rule.

A significant migratory pattern took place over Serbian territory into the Ottoman Empire. Some migrants remained in Belgrade for periods of time, having no means to

\(^{36}\) Ibid.


\(^{38}\) Salih Kazazović, a writer, was arrested in relation to the publication of this booklet; Esad Zgodić, *Bosanska politička misao: austrougarsko doba* (Sarajevo: DES, 2003), 318.

\(^{39}\) *Bezakonja*, 9.

\(^{40}\) Ibid., 10.
continue their travel by train to Salonica. The Serbian government, advising their diplomats abroad to publicize the migration catastrophe as the fault of the Habsburg regime in Bosnia Herzegovina, further stated that “out of humanity and brotherly compassion” it was offering these migrants, who “deluded by religious feelings go to Istanbul,” aid in the form of discounted train tickets.\(^4\) Segments of Serbian nationalists ideologically saw Muslims as converted Serbs, and in their publications and statements discouraged the idea of Muslim migration from Bosnia Herzegovina. A Serbian scientist analyzing Muslim migrations, many of which took place over Serbia and through the Belgrade train station, wrote at the time that Muslim migrants were “forever lost to Serbian nationhood.”\(^4\)

A number of emigrants even requested to settle in Serbia, as it was close to Bosnia Herzegovina, and most likely because they shared the same language and geography. However, these requests were denied by the Serbian government justified by the lack of means for carrying out such resettlement.\(^4\) One such request came from Jašar-beg Kapetanović who had migrated from Počitelj in Herzegovina and settled in the province of Manastir in Macedonia. He wrote to the Serbian Ministry of Foreign Affairs asking for permission to settle in Serbia, explaining that the poverty and even hunger they were enduring was unbearable. In the letter, he described that “Migration, that contagious disease that devastated my exhausted homeland, did not spare my hometown with its surrounding. Eighty families of hardworking farmers migrated from there to Turkey, 

\(^4\) Bandžović, 131.


thinking that, after thirty years of oppression, we would find the sanctuary among our coreligionists as the Turkish press continuously depicted.”

*Migration Debate in Bosnia Herzegovina*

The principal reason for many of the emigrants leaving Bosnia Herzegovina was their understanding of Islam and the difficulty of practicing it within a non-Muslim state. All of the previously discussed reasons for migration were understood as stemming from the religious differences between the ruler and the ruled, and the discrimination against the Muslims, ultimately concluding that Muslim survival under non-Muslim rule was impossible. Nevertheless, many Muslims in other areas of the world already lived under non-Muslim rule, and there were a number of religious rulings regarding the question of Muslim existence under non-Muslim rulers.

The first responses to this issue in Bosnia Herzegovina appeared in 1884. Muhamed Emin Hadžijahić published a number of articles discouraging migration in the Ottoman Turkish language paper *Vatan*, published in Bosnia Herzegovina. He was a Qur’an teacher at the Gazi Husrev Beg Medresa with appointments in two of Sarajevo’s major mosques, Begova and Careva. After the Habsburgs closed and turned many mosques into depots following the occupation, he found himself out of work and traveled to Istanbul to protest these acts. Upon return, however, he was active in dispelling illusions about Bosnia’s future as part of the Ottoman Empire, and criticized and

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45 *Vatan*, issues 4, 15–18, 1301/1884.

discouraged migration from a variety of perspectives including economic, social, as well as religious.

His concern over migration was that it reduced, and therefore weakened the Muslim community in Bosnia Herzegovina, which in turn lessened its importance and rendered it a minority. He rejected the idea that Bosnia Herzegovina became *dar al-harb* just because the provincial administration changed, and reminded the readers that communal prayers, calls to prayer, and other religious practices were undisturbed. Hadžijahić wrote against the idea of migration as a religious obligation, claiming that it was just the opposite: migration would contribute to the disappearance of Islam from Bosnia Herzegovina “a sin before God and shame before the rest of the Muslim world” for which the migrants themselves would be responsible. Love of the homeland and its protection are in the writings of Hadžijahić a religious obligation and a base for preservation of faith.⁴⁷

In addition to dismissing the religious reasoning for migrations, Hadžijahić analyzed the social and political reading of the circumstances that drove the Muslim population to migration. In his articles, he stressed the safety and legal rights guaranteed by the Habsburg administration and encouraged those who were wronged in any way to seek justice with the courts and even the Emperor.⁴⁸ When it came to conscription, he dismissed it as a rational reason since there was no place in the world where military service is not required, and added that at least “our military is not to defend foreign

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⁴⁷ Zgodić, 30–32.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 31–32.
countries, but is for the protection of the homeland." 49 He advised that the safety and freedoms guaranteed by the Habsburg administration in Bosnia Herzegovina are far more promising than the uncertainty, destitute, and foreignness of language and customs that awaits the migrants on the long journey to the Ottoman Empire. 50

Also in 1884, the mufti of Tuzla, Mehmed Teufik Azapagić—later to become the second Reis ul-ulema of Habsburg Bosnia Herzegovina—wrote a treatise, *Risala fi al-hijra*, in Arabic. It was published in Ottoman Turkish two years later, and only in 1990 it was translated to Bosnian. 51 The treatise was written in Arabic because it was originally meant for the ulema of Bosnia Herzegovina, 52 who were not unanimous on the issue of hijra but were able to reach the public through weekly Friday sermons. Its later Ottoman Turkish version was intended to reach a wider literate public.

From the point of view of *fikh* (Islamic jurisprudence), Mufti Azapagić disproved claims that Bosnia became *dar al-harb* after the Habsburg occupation using the Qur’an, hadith, and other scholarly work that existed on the topic. Azapagić divided the treatise in three parts where he examined the notion of hijra, *dar al harb* and *dar al-islam* and how it reflected on the belief that the migration from Bosnia Herzegovina is religiously mandated. His approach was based on the perception that the issue needed to be viewed in the prism of its own time and circumstance.

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49 Ibid., 33.

50 Ibid., 30–34.

51 Mehmed Teufik Azapagić. “Risala o Hidžri.” Osman Lavić, trans. Anali Gazi Husrev-begove Biblioteke 16-17 (Sarajevo, 1990): 197–222. The manuscript of this treatise in Arabic (R1343) is in Gazi Husrev-Beg Library in Sarajevo.

52 Karcić, 112.
He refuted the analogy between the hijra of the Prophet and that of the Bosnian Muslims by analyzing the period in which these two processes took place: the hijra of the Prophet took place in the early period of Islam and was a necessary step for further development of the community and its ultimate victory. The hijra of the Muslims from Bosnia Herzegovina, on the other hand, was taking place under different circumstances for the Muslim community. In an effort to clear the confusion about the status of Bosnia Herzegovina that followed the occupation of an Ottoman territory by a non-Muslim Habsburg Empire, Azapagić referred to a body of works by Islamic scholars on the notions of dar al-harb and dar al-islam. He showed that a region where Friday and Eid congregational prayers were performed, travel to perform the hajj, and the recitation of the public call to prayer (adhan) were allowed; and where the application of Islamic law existed through the appointment of a shari’a judge, even by a non-Muslim ruler—all of which was the case in Bosnia Herzegovina—could not be considered dar al-harb. Therefore, the need for hijra from such a region is not religiously sanctioned. Azapagić cited the hadith “There is no hijra after the liberation of Mecca,” to support his claim, while he analyzed other Qur’anic verses and hadith that dealt with the notion of hijra as an obligation, to have a symbolic and spiritual meaning.

Azapagić began the treatise with a hadith: hubb al watan min al iman—“Love of the homeland is part of the faith,” that became popular with Muslim activists discouraging hijra in other areas of the world where Muslim migration was under way,

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53 Lavić, 202–203.

54 Ibid., 200, 221.

55 Although soundness of this hadith is disputed, its mention is found as early as 1595 in an endowment charter from Bosnia Herzegovina, where an Ottoman benefactor cited this hadith as motivation for building a major complex in his hometown; in Vakufname iz Bosne i Hercegovine (XV i XVI vijek), ed. Lejla Gazić (Sarajevo: Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu, 1985), 15–16.
and later as a religious validation in nationalist movements. Although the treatise drew on the history and tradition of the Islamic legal argumentation, the conclusion was spelled out in practical terms: migration was perilous for the individual; it weakened the Muslim community; and resulted in loss of property and livelihood, only to gain a precarious future that would most likely result in defeat.

There were those who advocated migration, usually migrants themselves who appealed to Bosnian Muslims to do the same. A religious scholar of Bosnian origin, Bosnali Hilmi Baba (Hilmi ibn Huseyn Taslica), residing in Medina, wrote a *Risala fi al-hijra wa al-muhajirin* (Treatise on the Hijra and Muhajirin) in 1885,\(^{56}\) advocating migration as a religious obligation for Bosnian Muslims and comparing it to the migration of the Prophet Muhammad. He went even further, recommending migration to eastern parts of the Ottoman Empire, to Damascus, Aleppo, or Urfa, since Istanbul and its surrounding areas, due to the Ottoman reform and modernization efforts, which he saw as imitation of Europe, had become just as “un-Islamic” as the *dar al-harb*.\(^{57}\) Bosnian politician, Šerif Arnautović depicted instigators of migration wandering in Bosnia Herzegovina as profiteers who wanted to buy Muslim properties under value; and those who “bought a preacher’s garb” (as opposed to earning the status), both encouraging naïve people to migrate. For him, these men were the reason for increased migration especially after the annexation, even though the situation and opportunities for Muslims had improved.\(^{58}\)

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\(^{56}\) Fikret Karčić, *Bosniaks and the Challenges of Modernity*, 116. This manuscript is in Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul, Ibrahim Efendi Collection, no. 421.

\(^{57}\) Ibid., 117.

\(^{58}\) BOA, Y. Kamil Pasa Evraki 3433 (January 29, 1910).
The forming intelligentsia in Bosnia Herzegovina, comprised mostly of writers, began appealing to the Muslim public against migration they considered detrimental to society. They did so first in the Ottoman language papers, and later in Bosnian papers, brochures, and didactical novels that criticized the lack of Muslim engagement in education and economy, seeking escape in the Ottoman Empire from the inevitable change (and “progress”), not realizing that their imagined sanctuary was transforming along similar lines as well.

Foremost among them was Mehmed Beg Kapetanović Ljubušak who wrote against migration finding support in three perspectives: the landowner-notables, Bosnians, and Muslims. Reaching back into pre-Ottoman and pre-Islamic history of Bosnia Herzegovina, Ljubušak appealed to the connection between the notables and their land possessions in Bosnia Herzegovina reminding that they did not opt to leave upon Ottoman conquest and wondered why the Habsburg occupation would be a cause for migration.⁵⁹ Stressing the continuity of the medieval Bosnian population with the Ottoman Muslim subjects, he asked if it would not be a shame for them to migrate after they had protected their homeland “since the times of the Bosnian kings.”⁶⁰ Not losing sight of the Bosnian Muslim identity, however, he also claimed the contradiction between leaving one’s homeland and Islamic discourse, repeating the hadith: “Love of the homeland is part of faith.”⁶¹

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⁵⁹ Mehmed Beg Kapetanović Ljubušak, Šta misle mukamedanci u Bosni (Sarajevo, 1886), 15.
⁶⁰ Ibid., 17.
⁶¹ Mehmed Beg Kapetanović Ljubušak, Budućnost ili napredak mukamedanaca u Bosni i Hercegovini (Sarajevo, 1893), 25.
Muslims who remained in Bosnia Herzegovina recognized migration as one of the main problems for Muslims interests there. A decreasing Muslim population and weakening of their social and economic strength reinforced the issues that pushed many to migrate to the Ottoman Empire. Muslim opposition, continuously warning in their petitions that Muslims would have to migrate in case their situation did not improve, described their dilemma in a letter published in Pester Lloyd, saying: “If the administration in our homeland was bearable (kabil-i tahammul), we would not leave our homes and wonder about in foreign lands like vagabonds.”

After the annexation, however, when the opposition’s demands were met, migration ceased to be a part of the petitions. They engaged in propaganda against migration and sought Ottoman help to deter it. Director of the Pious Foundations Administration, Šerif Arnautović, wrote to an Ottoman official that after the annexation, due to the spread of false information about the Habsburg-Ottoman agreement that would ban migration and delay property sales, ignorant population mostly in the villages, rose up to migrate again. “In addition to attempts to deny such information through the press as we are doing,” and since there was no provision in the Habsburg-Ottoman agreement banning migration, he requested a statement from the Ottoman administration to this cause. The statement would be published in the local press and finally settle the migration issue once and for all. Arnautović wrote that half the Muslims from Bosnia Herzegovina would not be able to migrate to the Ottoman Empire anyway, and would be rendered a minority, which would mean their end. The migrants would sell their property

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62 BOA, Y.A. HUS. 510/76 (March 31, 1907).
63 BOA, Y. Kamil Pasa Evraki 3433 (January 29, 1910).
well below value, while the Austrians would colonize the abandoned land with the Catholic population.\textsuperscript{64}

Furthermore, he added that those who already migrated caused more damage to the Ottoman state than provide benefit: “Half of them, for various reasons, became ruined and hit bottom, while a quarter returned to Bosnia in a state deserving of charity. The rest are helpless because they do not speak the language.” He also emphasized the effect the poverty had on the moral standards of the migrants hearing stories about immigrant prostitutes in Ankara and Skopje. Arnautović concluded the plea to the Ottoman authorities with an observation that the migrants just as they harm the land they leave, become a burden to the Ottoman State as well.\textsuperscript{65}

The Balkan Wars, however, had a significant impact on the migration debate in Bosnia Herzegovina and the Ottoman Empire. The most obvious outcome of the wars was that the territorial continuity Bosnia Herzegovina had with the Ottoman Empire was severed. This fact caused opposing reactions in the migratory movement: some saw it as a final act in separation from the Empire. The territorial losses Ottomans suffered in these wars, together with their inability to prevent the atrocities over Muslims affected Ottoman prestige, leaving Muslims who sought its protection disappointed and abandoned. For others, it was a signal and a final chance to hold onto the Ottoman ideal by migrating.

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid.
Chapter 4

Ottoman Spheres of Influence in Bosnia Herzegovina

The Ottoman Empire was interested in nurturing sentiments, loyalties, and political allegiances of the Bosnian Muslims. Ottoman sovereignty in the province, acknowledged by Austria-Hungary during the Berlin Congress, provided the basis for Ottoman claims over Bosnia Herzegovina. Emphasizing protection of the Bosnian Muslims and their interests became part of changing directions in Ottoman foreign policy and an important segment in its public image at home and abroad. The Habsburgs, firmly grounded in Bosnia, also claimed the province and desired allegiance of its subjects seeing it as a test of the Monarchy’s multicultural image. The fact that for both empires the international image was at stake further enhanced the role of diplomatic exchanges.

After coming to the realization that a complete Ottoman restoration was impossible, the Muslims continued to insist on maintaining relationships with the Ottoman Empire that also served as leverage in negotiating their position with the Habsburg administration. As they began participating in the Habsburg system, aware of the diplomatic influence they could achieve, the Muslims engaged the Ottoman consuls in the Habsburg Monarchy. Since there were no Ottoman representatives in Bosnia Herzegovina until the annexation, the Ottoman consuls in Vienna, Pest, and Dubrovnik became the primary address for Muslims, but also Sublime Porte’s point of contact with (former) subjects.

Due to the ambiguous nature of the Bosnian occupation, where the old sovereign was still sovereign, but the population was expected to show allegiance to the new ruler
and participate in the new system of administration, the Muslims had opportunities at consuming various disparate legal protections, choices of which did not necessarily exclude the others. For the period from 1878–1908 certainly, the choice of allegiance was not singular and the Muslims were able to, and did, navigate the possibilities of belonging to the Ottoman Empire, the Muslim umma, and the Habsburg Monarchy in addition to a myriad of local and regional arrangements that often affected one’s loyalties. The Bosnian Muslims petitioned for rights as Ottomans, as Muslims, and as Habsburg subjects, aware of protections offered in exchange for political recognition, imperial legitimacy, and diplomatic influence. Their loyalties and political allegiances developed along the multiplicity of sovereignty, legitimacy, and subjecthood that intersected in Bosnia Herzegovina.

By examining a variety of sources, my goal in this chapter is to investigate the strategies the Ottoman Empire employed in relation to their claim over Bosnia Herzegovina and its Muslims, and the ways in which the Bosnian Muslims interacted with the Ottoman and Habsburg states, that is, what legal and diplomatic opportunities they used in order to draw conclusions about their understanding of subjecthood/citizenship, sovereignty, legitimacy, and loyalty.

**Continuation of Ottoman Relationships**

Already by 1885 it seemed to many in Bosnia Herzegovina that the Habsburgs were there to stay, and they had naively written to the Ottomans about their fear of

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1 Although the distinction between subject and citizen especially in the Ottoman context is a topic of ongoing scholarly debates, in this work I generally use the term subject, and alternate between *subject* and *citizen*. 
separation from the Ottoman Empire. In 1903, a detailed petition to the Porte regarding grievances against the Habsburg authorities in Bosnia Herzegovina stressed that if the Sublime State left them alone, it would put the Muslims in a very difficult position.

Later, in 1905, a certain Muharrem son of Mahmud petitioned the Ottoman authorities to allow resettlement for him and his family, as well as 113 other individuals, citing, among other reasons, that the liberation of Bosnia Herzegovina from Austria-Hungary seemed impossible. At the time, Bosnia Herzegovina had already been under Habsburg administration for 27 years. Although accepting and working within the Habsburg administration, the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina still maintained links to the Ottoman Empire and hoped for its support and protection, pledging allegiance to the Sultan and allowing for overlap of Ottoman and Habsburg spheres of influence. The Bosnian Muslims engaged with both empires using legal opportunities available to them and developing strategies by exploiting their preferred status and their province’s ambiguous position.

Reorganization of the religious hierarchy, pious endowments, educational institutions, and implementation of conscription were occasions that made the Bosnian population realize they were becoming part of the Habsburg Monarchy. Many readily participated in the new institutions and administration. At the same time, the relationships with the Ottoman Empire continued through family and business connections, education, contact with Ottoman officials, and Ottoman consuls in the Habsburg Monarchy.

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2 BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ. 10/67 (September 9, 1885).
3 BOA, DH.MKT. 640/25 (January 25, 1903).
4 BOA, BEO. 2526/189429 (April 26, 1905).
The Bosnian border became international after the Habsburg occupation, but the cross border activity and relationship continued as family, trade, pastoral, and agricultural exchanges were not interrupted immediately. Bosnian inhabitants maintained relationships with their family members who migrated to the Ottoman Empire. Some of those settled in the Ottoman territories still had properties in Bosnia and had them maintained by representatives, who took care of the land, agricultural production, and collected dues, traveling between Bosnia and the Ottoman lands. Istanbul, Edirne, and Bursa were renowned for their educational institutions, and many continued to seek education in Ottoman schools. Theology universities in particular remained central for higher religious education well after the Empire collapsed.5

Bosnian Muslims also maintained contact with the Ottoman officials in neighboring regions who reported on the conditions in Bosnia Herzegovina to Istanbul. The Taşlıca chief administrative officer was particularly engaged with Bosnian matters and had reported that the Bosnian notables secretly asked him if the Ottomans wanted them to migrate to the Ottoman Empire.6 The same official sent a report based on his observations and intelligence, concluding that neither Muslims nor Christians were content with the Austrian rule in Bosnia Herzegovina.7

The Bosnian diaspora in Istanbul was active in lobbying the Ottoman administration for the Bosnian cause. They wrote petitions, or submitted them on behalf of petitioners in Bosnia Herzegovina, and informally met with the members of the Ottoman administration pushing for a more active Ottoman involvement in defending the

5 Only to be replaced by Cairo after the 1950s.
6 BOA, Y.PRK.MYD. 4/35 (May 9, 1885).
7 BOA, Y.PRK.MYD. 6/5 (January 9, 1887).
rights of the Bosnian Muslims, with the ultimate goal of taking this province back into
the Ottoman domains. They used their influence and connections through networks based
on their Bosnian origin of students and arriving immigrants, as well as reliance on
sympathy of various officials and the Sultan himself for the fate of Bosnia Herzegovina.
At different times they cooperated with various other informal groups such as the Serbian
diaspora, or later, the Young Turks.

One petition from Bosnia that might have been drafted by the Bosnian Muslim
diaspora in Istanbul (likely with the help of Ottoman bureaucrats) suggested appointing
an Ottoman official who would reside in Bosnia Herzegovina and protect the Muslims’
legal rights: “Similar to a foreign state’s consuls who protect their citizens in the Ottoman
Empire, we want an official from our own state (devlet) in our native region (memleket)
who would protect us and keep an eye on our situation.”8 If that was not possible, the
Bosnian Muslims who signed this petition asked for permission to migrate to the
Ottoman domains. When the request was submitted to the Porte, the Sadrazam responded
that the political climate was not yet suitable for such action. The request for finding a
suitable place for Bosnian immigrants was also denied.

Disappointed with the unresponsive Porte, one Bosnian notable, speaking
informally to an Ottoman official in Istanbul, expressed his frustration by saying that
Bosnians, not being able to receive something as simple as a representative from the
Ottoman Empire with which they shared “religion and nature,” would try to petition the
Russian Empire, with which they shared a language. However, he stressed that he knew
that such an act would equal surrender to a sworn enemy. A call for foreign intervention
in contrast with professed loyalties was not necessarily an act of betrayal but a theatrical

8 BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ. 31/32 (June 23, 1895).
act, just like the continuous threats of mass migration—a dramatic communication of a sense of urgency in their petitions.

The Ottoman official who reported the encounter responded by summarizing the Ottoman stand on the Bosnian situation: the Porte did not allow complete migration because the Muslims would lose their right to property and land—the majority of which was in their hands—and with all the Muslims gone from Bosnia Herzegovina Ottoman claims to this province would become baseless. His response also shed light on the confined space and dependence on Great Power support in which Ottoman diplomacy was functioning: he related that appointing an official would take diplomatic effort, and acquiring support from some of the European states, all of which would take time.\(^9\)

Sending a representative, such as a consul, would mean Ottoman abandonment of any, even nominal, sovereign rights in Bosnia Herzegovina. But for the local Muslims, having a representative sent for the purpose of protecting their rights meant reinforcement of their relationship with the Ottoman Empire. Considerations of Ottoman representation in Bosnia Herzegovina, however, indicated that the Muslims understood the limits of imperial borders and their trans-imperial claims.

\textit{Ottoman Laws, Habsburg Religious Authority}

The Habsburgs treaded carefully around sensitive issues that previously caused problems for the Ottoman administration, but at the same time wanted to establish a firm grip over the province that would strengthen their position in the Balkan Peninsula. This required them to make certain unpopular steps on the one hand, as well as closely follow established Ottoman laws and local practice on the other. The Ottoman policies adopted

\(^9\) Ibid.
by the Habsburgs—in essence continuing the Ottoman ways until opportunity arose for a better solution—created a possibility for Muslims to continue their orientation toward the Ottoman Empire, and interpret and create new relationships.

The swift transfer from one empire to another, combined with the belief of temporary occupation and hope of reverting back to the Ottoman fold, caused lack of any social or political interaction of Muslims with the Habsburg administration in the first several years of occupation.\(^\text{10}\) The only organized movement among the Muslim population, as one historian noticed, was migration to the Ottoman Empire that continued throughout the Habsburg occupation.\(^\text{11}\)

Upon the occupation, Habsburg military officials circulated a message in Ottoman Turkish and Bosnian through print and public announcements. It addressed the people directly and emphasized that the Habsburgs were not coming to forcefully occupy their homeland; on the contrary, they were there with the pure intention of ridding Bosnia Herzegovina of its problems and detrimental conditions, improving trade and agriculture, repairing roads, and bringing a general relief for the various peoples living there. In addition, religions and various languages were to be honored, while Ottoman laws were to be enforced.\(^\text{12}\)

The new administration in Bosnia Herzegovina was selective about the Ottoman laws it was to uphold: the constitutional law of 1876 calling for an assembly on the

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\(^\text{10}\) Although petitions were written to Habsburg authorities objecting to specific local situations or individual abuses; in Donia, \textit{Islam under the Double Eagle}, 30.

\(^\text{11}\) Mustafa Imamović, \textit{Pravni položaj i unutrašnjo-politički razvitak BiH od 1878–1914} (Sarajevo: Bosanski Kulturni Centar, 1997), 104.

\(^\text{12}\) BOA, HR.SYS. 256/2 (May 11, 1880).
provincial level, for example, was out of the question. The Austro-Hungarian administration in Bosnia was careful not to disturb the delicate situation between the landowners (agas and begs) and their tenant peasants (kmet), that might cause further opposition to its rule from the Muslim landowners whose support was considered important for the Habsburg plans in the province. Therefore, they enforced the two relevant Ottoman laws pertaining to agrarian issues: the Law of Ramazan, or the Land Law of 1858, and the Law of Sefer of 1859, regulating land ownership and agrarian relationships. In addition, the 1876 constitutional crisis in the Ottoman Empire introduced confusion on which laws were applicable to the Ottoman subjects themselves, and upholding which of those laws would signify being Ottoman.

Safvet Pasha, foreign minister and a former Sadrazam, observed that the only real change in the Austrian reform in Bosnian Herzegovina was the abolition of the tax Christian subjects paid in lieu of military service, whereas the ‘tenth’ tax and other administrative institutions were sustained. Up until 1910, the legal sources in Bosnia included: 1) Laws and decisions of the Habsburg Land Administration in Bosnia; 2) Ottoman and Islamic laws (only if they were practiced in Bosnia Herzegovina); 3) Family law of Catholic, Orthodox Christian, and Jewish faiths; and 4) Customary law based on old Slavic customs modified by Croatian, Hungarian, Venetian, and Ottoman laws. The Habsburg administration continued to treat Bosnian subjects as religious, rather than ethnic or national groups, essentially continuing the Ottoman millet system, in an attempt

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13 Imamović, Pravni položaj, 61.

14 BOA, Y.EE. 43/73 (August 22, 1882).

15 Imamović, Historija države i prava, 224.
to curtail Slav nationalism and control the three groups through religious hierarchies that it wanted to bind to the Habsburg state.

The Habsburg policy of a continuation of Ottoman structures, as well as fostering of religious organization, further assisted in the transformation of the relationship of the Bosnian Muslims with the Sultan-Caliph and the Ottoman Empire. Even though more pronounced in the early stages of the occupation, Ottoman continuities helped keep the hope of Ottoman restoration alive. Creation and inclusion of the religious hierarchy into the Habsburg system, however, caused the Muslims to anxiously try and hold onto the ties with the Ottoman Empire.

The Habsburgs worked to minimize Ottoman involvement with the province by focusing on severing ties with the religious hierarchy of primarily Muslims and Orthodox Christians, whose Şeyhülislam and Patriarch respectively were based in Istanbul. Annulling the crucial item of the 1879 Yeni Pazar Convention that specified the ties with the Ottoman religious authorities, and instead engaging the population to consider the Habsburg Monarch, and not the Sultan, as their protector, was a priority of Habsburg policy in its preparations for full annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina.

The Habsburg administration began with the two Christian hierarchies in Bosnia Herzegovina. Fearing an independent Serbian church that was likely to include Bosnia Herzegovina in its realm, Austria-Hungary carefully worked on separating Bosnia from the fold of the Phanar Ecumenical Patriarchate, and connecting it to the monarchy’s Orthodox Christian center in Karlowitz established in 1691. The Patriarchate in Istanbul already faced difficulties asserting its sphere of influence after the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate (1870) and worried about the newly independent Serbia’s demands
for an autonomous church based on the medieval Peć Patriarchy. It did not take a lot of persuasion to come to an agreement with the Patriarchate concluded in 1880. The Bosnian Orthodox bishops were kept in their positions after the agreement with the Patriarch, while the emperor reserved the right to replace them with candidates of his choosing. Likewise, after the 1881 Habsburg agreement with the Vatican, the Catholic hierarchy in Bosnia Herzegovina was to be appointed by the Austrian Emperor. Even the changes in the Catholic hierarchy were not accepted as smoothly as the Austrians had hoped. The new Catholic presence, although welcomed by the Catholic population and the establishment, introduced new power centers in a traditionally Franciscan dominated Catholic presence in Bosnia Herzegovina.

With Catholic and Orthodox Christian hierarchies under its control, the Habsburg administration turned to draw the Muslim religious establishment into the Monarchy’s sphere. The Yeni Pazar Convention between the Ottoman and Habsburg empires explicitly stated that the relationship of Muslims with their spiritual leaders in Istanbul was to be unimpeded, preventing any official interference by the Habsburg administration. This agreement remained an important base for the Bosnian Muslims’ appeals to Ottoman and Habsburg governments. The Habsburg administration, however, decided to unofficially encourage the Bosnian Muslims to propose their own religious leadership structure separate from the Ottoman authorities, and sponsored petitions to this aim.

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The Habsburg Monarchy, having experience with heterogeneous populations, but for the first time having Muslim subjects, worked to devise a policy for their incorporation into the Empire. They actively investigated the ways in which other empires treated their Muslim subjects and the tactics and policies they used to control the religious hierarchies. The Habsburgs analyzed the Russian rule of their Muslim subjects: Russia, like the Ottoman Empire, used religious hierarchies to associate the communities to imperial rule, and as an instrument in legitimating its authority in these communities. Similarly to the Habsburgs, the Russians were concerned that their Muslim subjects could look to the Ottoman Sultan, rather than the tsar for protection, and they officially recognized Islam and other non-Orthodox Christian religions making them the basis for allegiance and discipline. The Russian Empire had formulated a system of institutions that slowly gained access into local Muslim communities and incited the Muslims, who did not have an ecclesiastical structure, to create their own institutions and receive state patronage. Other European colonial powers also sought legitimacy and an affirmation of their authority over the colonial Muslim population in religion and its hierarchies. From Napoleon’s campaign in Egypt, and British rule over Indian Muslims, to Japan’s pan-Asian claims, protection of Muslim populations and a link with Islam was articulated in many innovative ways.

The Ottoman organization of Islamic religious affairs entailed a hierarchy headed by a Şeyhülislam whose role developed over several centuries to include political and administrative, in addition to spiritual, affairs. This loose hierarchy had more of an

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administrative than ecclesiastical role in the Ottoman Empire. Himself appointed by the Ottoman Sultan, the Şeyhülislam had the authority to appoint religious scholars to posts of provincial muftis seated in regional capitals, had power over the work of pious endowments and educational institutions, and controlled the ways in which judges interpreted and applied the shari’a law. On the provincial level, the mufti represented the Şeyhülislam and issued religious rulings on relevant subjects.

The extent to which the Bosnian religious scholars were part of the Ottoman world is illustrated in the fact that a Bosnian, Mehmed Refik Hadžiabdić, was named Şeyhülislam as recently as 1866. 20 Ahmet Cevdet Pasha described the Bosnian Muslims in his memoire as honest and religious people, but found that they looked up to the ulema too much. 21 In Bosnia Herzegovina, the role and the rulings by religious scholars were taken seriously in respect to the issues Muslims faced, especially during the transitional periods in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Such issues ranged from the approval of the Ottoman Tanzimat reforms condemned as un-Islamic in Bosnia Herzegovina; to whether it is religiously permissible for Muslims to live under non-Muslim Habsburg rule and obey its conscription laws—an introduction of which provoked a rebellion in 1882. The Habsburg authorities realized that cutting ties with the religious establishment in Istanbul would necessitate diplomatic skill, as the relationship between the Bosnian Muslims and their religious representatives with the Ottoman institutions entailed more than just a spiritual bond.

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21 Ahmet Cevdet, 25.
The Habsburg administration reacted to the Ottoman appointment of the Bosnian mufti in 1880 clearly aware of the current developments in the colonized territories with Muslim populations. The Habsburgs prevented the arrival of the newly appointed mufti, Ahmed Şükrü Efendi, stressing their role as administrators of Bosnia Herzegovina who did not interfere in the religious affairs of Muslims, but also did not allow others to do so. They supported their argument with an example of Tunisia, where the local Bey, and not the Sultan, appointed the mufti. Therefore, the authority to appoint muftis lay with the regional administration, which was Habsburg in the case of Bosnia Herzegovina.\textsuperscript{22} After a prolonged diplomatic exchange between the two empires, the Ottoman Şeyhülislam appointed the existing mufti of Sarajevo, Mustafa Hilmi Omerović, to a new post of mufti of Bosnia in 1881, most likely to avoid direct confrontation that it had a chance to lose, and maintain at least some contribution in the religious life of Bosnia Herzegovina. The mufti of Bosnia Herzegovina had an authorization from the Şeyhülislam to appoint the religious officials including the shari’ā court judges throughout the province.

Habsburg joint minister of finance in charge of Bosnian administration, Benjamin Kállay, seized this opportunity to realize Austria’s goal of separating the Muslims of Bosnia Herzegovina from the religious leaders in Istanbul. He worked out an appointment of the Bosnian Mufti Omerović to a newly created position of \textit{Reis ul-ulema} of Bosnia Herzegovina by the Habsburg Emperor. He knew that the Şeyhülislam would not oppose Omerović, who was already appointed by him to the mufti post. At the same time, a four member \textit{Meclis-i ulema}\textsuperscript{23} (council of religious scholars) was created, while the regional mufti posts remained in place. In this manner, Austria-Hungary created its

\textsuperscript{22} Imamović, \textit{Pravni položaj}, 107–108.

\textsuperscript{23} Also known as \textit{Ulema medžlis}. 
own Muslim hierarchy with an entirely new position of *Reis ul-ulema* at its helm that came to be known as the Rijaset. The administration hoped that it would draw the Muslims into the Habsburg system where the hierarchy had the support and backing of the Habsburg Monarchy.

The title *Reis ul-ulema* was used for the first time in the case of Bosnia to signify a post, rather than a title as was the case in earlier Ottoman practice where a Şeyhülislam was usually described as the *Reis ul-ulema* (head of the ulema) as early as the fifteenth century.\(^2^4\) Other Ottoman provinces that became independent, or were colonized, maintained the regional mufti system where, after an agreement with the Ottoman Empire, a head mufti was appointed, receiving confirmation from the Şeyhülislam. Choosing this lavish title was also a challenge to the Ottoman Empire and the Sultan’s claim to protection of Muslims worldwide.\(^2^5\) It could also have been a title attractive to Muslims themselves, who could have seen it as a sign of high honor shown to them by Austria-Hungary. Having had success creating a substitute hierarchy for the Orthodox Christians in its Monarchy (The Karlowitz Patriarchy), the Habsburgs were confident that the Muslim hierarchy in Bosnia would become an alternative to Istanbul.

The Habsburg Emperor was to appoint the *Reis ul-ulema* and the *Meclis-i ulema*, while other religious officials and judges were appointed by the provincial Habsburg administration. This arrangement caused dissatisfaction by the Muslims and the Ottomans, as they had no say in the religious appointments. What was even more

\(^{2^4}\) At a later date, the Rumeli Kadiasker (Chief Military Judge for Rumeli) was also noted to have this title, Ismail Hakki Uzunçarşıli, *Osmanlı devletinin ilmiye teşkilatı*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1988), 159.

\(^{2^5}\) Habsburg handling of the Muslims’ religious organization was most likely the example for the British solution in Palestine after its occupation in 1920. There, too, the hierarchy was established in the same manner, lead by the *Reis ul-ulema*, who was also the mufti of Jerusalem. Fikret Karčić, *Studije o šerijatskom pravu* (Zenica: Bemust, 1997), 173.
worrisome for the religious authorities was that the religious officials, previously appointed after passing relevant examinations, were being appointed by Habsburg administrators without assessment of their religious knowledge and experience. The legality of the \textit{Reis ul-ulema} remained an important issue of contention because the Muslims who requested that the Şeyhülislam in Istanbul issue a document of appointment, the \textit{Menşura (Menşur)}, specifying the details of the service and responsibilities of the \textit{Reis ul-ulema}. This act was important to legitimize the position of the \textit{Reis ul-ulema}, and the Bosnian hierarchy as a whole in the eyes of Muslims, as well as maintain a link, even nominal, to the Ottoman Empire and the Sultan-Caliph.

The religious authority became the critical issue between the Bosnian Muslims, the Habsburg administration, and the Ottoman Empire. The Muslims, whether they were the ones who accepted the Habsburg administration from the start or those who were in its opposition, all recognized the new hierarchical organization. The issue arose over the legitimacy of \textit{Reis ul-ulema}, that is, whether he had authorization from the caliph and Şeyhülislam in Istanbul, and the participation of Muslims in the hierarchy’s elections and functions. The Habsburgs were in essence successful in establishing a new hierarchy and a new Islamic institution.

Muslim acceptance of the hierarchy, while only questioning its endorsements, put them in a new position in relation to Istanbul. Religious considerations were the basis of seeking the hierarchy’s legitimacy. However, maintaining a connection with the Ottoman religious establishment would have given the Muslims political leverage and a degree of independence in their religious and communal affairs. The situation also points to divided loyalties of Bosnian Muslims: they not only accepted the new administration and its

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26 BOA, A.MTZ.BN. 1/20 (July 18, 1903).
features, but also actively participated in its institutions. Still, they were not able to let go of their ties with the Ottoman Empire.

*Petitioning the Sublime State*

After the Habsburg takeover, one continuous way the Muslims maintained the relationship with the Ottoman State was through petitioning. Petitions had a significant role in the Ottoman system of justice. Through petitions the subjects could address the Sultan or other representatives of the state with their grievances drawing on common understanding of rights, justice, and public good. Coming from this Ottoman tradition, the Bosnian Muslims employed petitioning strategies for new demands revealing their understanding of the Sultan’s responsibilities and rights. Theirs was a unique situation where the subjects were not in fact being ruled by the Sultan, and had ultimately become subjects of another imperial domain. Bosnian petitioners presented their grievances and demands as being of utmost urgency for the Sublime State. The petitions reveal a certain sense of political negotiation where they affirmed their loyalty, demanded their rights and protections, and in the event their expectations were not met, declared their intention to migrate to the Ottoman domains as the only remaining alternative.

The petitioners followed the traditional Ottoman petition formula where the Sultan was addressed by a number of honorific titles, followed by a prayer for the sultan and the Ottoman State. After the description of the problem, the petition entailed a direct request for resolving the issue, always mentioning that the final decision was in the hands of the authority petitioned (*emr ü ferman hazret-ı veliyyü’l-emrindir*). The seals of the petitioners, sometimes dated, followed. In addition to the Sultan, the Muslims from
Bosnia wrote petitions to the Sadrazam and other officials down the bureaucratic ladder, asking for diplomatic pressure on Austria-Hungary, sometimes even suggesting steps to be taken.

Although the formulaic structure and titles were almost identical in many of the petitions, language reflected awareness of state practice and Ottoman concerns using particular elements that would appeal to the Ottoman Sultan and statesmen. Abdülhamid II requested that the officials refer to him as “The Shelter of the Caliphate” (*Hilafetpenah*), and this title, along with such references to the Sultan as “the sole refuge and protection of the entire Muslim world” (*bütün alem-i İslamiyyetin melce ve penah-i yeganesi*) became the standard in petition writing.

Bosnian Muslims in effect ceased to be part of the Ottoman administrative structure after the Habsburg takeover, but they stressed the rights of the Ottoman State in Bosnia Herzegovina, and theirs by extension as Ottoman subjects. They articulated demands based on international agreements relevant to Bosnia Herzegovina, contemporary “civilized norms,” and universal “natural rights” of individuals under “civilized governments.” They also expected the Sultan’s protection as Muslims, which they made clear from the language employed in petitions that corresponded with Sultan Abdülhamid II’s claims as caliph. Finally, the sophistication of the petitioners’ exploitation of contemporary politics is evident in the ways in which they presented their grievances formulated as violations of Ottoman sovereignty and rights in the region, trampling of Islam and the Holy Law, and slander of Ottoman reputation and public image.

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27 Hanioglu, 128.

28 BOA, HR.SYS. 259/1 66 (April 22, 1902).
Because of the absence of local Ottoman administrative bodies in Habsburg Bosnia Herzegovina the petitioners found innovative ways of sending their petitions to Istanbul: by way of Ottoman visitors to Bosnia often part of family networks, engaging the Bosnian diaspora in Istanbul to submit petitions through their patronage networks, through Ottoman consuls in the Habsburg Monarchy, or even Ottoman officials in the regions neighboring Bosnia Herzegovina.

The petitions were written by religious leaders, such as the mufti of Mostar being the most outspoken until he was exiled in 1902, and the provincial notables who, although often having disparate interests, managed to rally behind a common threat to their status and independence they worked hard to preserve during Ottoman rule. In petitions to the Ottoman and Habsburg administrations, religious officials and notables specified that they represented the Muslim people in Bosnia Herzegovina. To which extend they truly did so is questionable. However, their activities seen as efforts to preserve Islam and its symbols in Bosnia earned them popular support and prestige in the province, proven in local protest activities and later in provincial elections. This was an important consideration for the politically engaged notables who made sure their demands always included a discourse of preservation of Islam and its features in the province.
Signs of some regional joint effort and solidarity among the notables faced with the features of the Habsburg administration were beginning to be noticed in petitions sent to the Ottoman Empire complaining of their predicament. Already in 1879, twelve notables from different parts of Bosnia Herzegovina stated that the life for Muslims has become unbearable as the Austrian oppression increased, and that the Muslims were the only ones targeted. They asked for a guarantee that the agreement between the states (Berlin Treaty and the Yeni Pazar Convention) would be respected—in the opposite case, they asked for permission to immigrate to the Ottoman domains.\(^{29}\) A petition sent to the Sultan just two months earlier, signed by twenty-three notables, requested straightforwardly for an appropriate place to be designated in Anatolia for settlement of the Bosnian Muslims who were the victims of Austrian unjust treatment, and asked for

\(^{29}\) BOA, Y. PRK. BŞK. 2/27 (July 15, 1879).
their property to be protected. Likewise, seals of over 300 signatories appear on a petition listing grievances against the Habsburg administration informing that if its rule continued, it would mean the end for Muslims.

The petitioners sought the protection of the Ottoman Empire aware of diplomatic trends at the time, realizing they had no prospect without backing of one of the Great Powers. They acknowledged their loyalty by referring to Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina as “faithful subjects of the Sublime State” (tebe’-a-i sadıka-yi Devlet-i Aliye), and sometimes even drawing attention to the Bosnian Muslims’ illustrious past as part of the Ottoman Empire: “the Muslims of Bosnia Herzegovina who had been successful in attaining a distinguished position among other imperial subjects by devotion to, and every kind of self-sacrifice for the Sublime Sultanate of the August sovereign, for five hundred years…”

At the same time, they put their faith in international agreements and understood them as assurances of their rights. Calling upon the Ottoman Empire to guarantee the treaties and protect the rights and positions of Muslims was a novel situation in the Bosnian Muslims’ relationship with the Ottoman Empire. The faith and reliance on the Empire seems to have been high because the majority of these petitions involved a final option of migration to the Ottoman domains. The petitioners saw the Ottoman Empire as the ultimate refuge for Muslims and even demanded financial assistance in case of such undertaking, pointing to an understanding that the Ottoman Empire was responsible for the fate of its former Muslim subjects.

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30 BOA, Y. PRK. BŞK. 2/13 (April 26, 1879).
31 BOA, Y. PRK. AZJ. 4/75 (June 23, 1881).
32 BOA, HR. SYS. 259/1 66 (April 22, 1902).
In 1880, a petition was prepared and given to an Ottoman military official, Mirliva Hüsnü Paşa, who had returned from Bosnia to Istanbul. The petition was signed by forty-one religious officials (ulema ve meşayih) and other “representatives of the people.” One of the earliest accounts of the Muslims’ experiences with the Habsburg rule, this petition gives details about the Muslims’ understanding of relevant treaties, Habsburg administration and its aims, expectations from the Ottoman Empire, and understanding of place and future of Muslims under new circumstances. They divided their grievances into religious ones and matters of the “worldly law.” The petitioners stated that they were writing about the temporary occupation allowed at the Berlin Congress, evaluating it as a result of “activities of those with bad intentions” who “betrayed the just Sublime State” by vilifying it and inviting foreign intervention.

The first grievance referred to the message that the Habsburg military announced to the people of Bosnia Herzegovina, emphasizing their benevolent intentions. These assurances were used only to prevent public opposition, stated the petition, and “none of them were observed after the occupation.” They wrote: “[the Habsburgs] did not respect honor, integrity, or justice, and exercised cruelty and torture to the level hearts cannot bear.” The petitioners continued on to say that the Habsburg authorities did nothing to please the people; that they put to death many innocent Muslims including women and children “against the civilized norms of the nineteenth century:” the Austrians executed religious leaders, notables, and prominent civilians, even after they had surrendered; thousands of people were taken away as alleged war prisoners, many of them perished due to beatings and those who made it back were incapacitated. Furthermore, even though Sarajevo’s military barracks were capable of holding a considerable number of

\[33\] BOA, HR.SYS. 256/2 (May 11, 1880).
soldiers, the Austrians settled their soldiers and officers in people’s houses, who completely destroyed the properties.

As for the promised religious freedoms, the petitioners complained that their religion was being devastated by this “disorderly tyranny.” The new authorities were seizing religious schools and even the major mosques, and pork and alcohol were being stored there, thus making them ritually unclean. In this manner, their religion was being ruined in both material and spiritual sense. When it came to education—another matter considered religious—the letter explained that Muslim children were accepted to Austrian schools but were taught in the Austrian and Croatian languages (as opposed to Turkish) by Austrian and Croatian teachers whose intention was “obviously” to stream the children toward Catholic beliefs and detach them from their “true religion.”

Moving onto the issues of “worldly law,” the objections in the petition focused on the issues of landlords who were not able to collect their dues: “We are not successful in obtaining one tenth’s tenth of the yield from the land and farms we fully own.” When the notables appealed to the courts, they received a “despicable” rejection: “The temporary Austrian administration does not look at our official documentation [of ownership] to bring justice along.” In addition, unlike the “reasonable taxes” of the Ottoman period, the Austrian ones were fifteen times higher and the possessions of those unable to pay were sold to fulfill the tax requirements. “If the above mentioned administration continues this reform and bad organization, it will result in the ruin of the Muslim people,” concluded the petitioners. Finally, it was only the fact that Bosnia Herzegovina was formally still an Ottoman province that compelled the Muslims to stay put and not migrate to the Ottoman
Empire: “However, not a whiff of the holy [Ottoman] law is seen here.”  

Russian consular reports gave a similar picture of Austrian behavior toward Muslims citing acquisition of private homes for soldiers, mosques for storage, Austrian officials’ disregard and high taxes, along with a symbolically significant disrespect of religious objects to which alcohol and pork were introduced.

The Muslim leaders wanted to go even further by appealing to other European powers. A petition on behalf of the Bosnian people was brought to Istanbul, along with copies, listing accusations against Austria-Hungary. The petition demanded removal of the Austrian forces from Bosnia Herzegovina, and if that was not going to happen, to allow the people to migrate to the Ottoman Empire. The petitioners planned to send copies to ministers of foreign affairs across Europe, and they asked the Ottoman administration if such action was appropriate.

Although the majority of the population did not belong to the notable class or had a clear opinion on religious appointments on higher levels, their discontent stemmed from acts that were changing their immediate economic circumstances and traditional practices. One petition written by more than forty Bosnian Orthodox Christian students addressing the Austrian Parliament listed cases that agitated the population in their provincial hometowns and villages: the alienation of arable fields by a local commander in a village in southeast Herzegovina left eleven families without land, and therefore, without sustenance; Muslims were required to pay 66 percent or sometimes even more in

34 Ibid.


36 BOA, Y.PRK. AZJ. 4/87 (June 7, 1881).
taxes, although they could only afford to give about a third of that—unable to pay, they lived in utmost poverty; a certain Ahmed Efendi owed thirty krone in taxes, so the officers seized his cooking set valued at hundred and thirty krone and sold it only for the amount owed in taxes; gendarmes who toured the countryside were especially brutal toward the Muslims and even arrested the prominent among them to extort money. Incidents such as these provided wide support to oppositional activities and petitions, and were also the main cause of migration to the Ottoman Empire.

Ottoman sovereignty in the province, no matter how nominal, was the basis of the Muslims’ appeals, as well as their attitudes toward the new administration. Belonging to the Ottoman Empire, taken for granted until the occupation, became a fact to be proven and defended in the eyes of those petitioning the Ottoman, and increasingly the Habsburg Empire. The transformation of the Ottoman Empire and its policies aimed at advancing its power beyond Ottoman borders by consciously promoting the Sultan’s position as caliph also had a role in the development of these attitudes, which the petitioners strategically exploited to advance their appeals for protection.

Petitioning for the defense of Muslim rights created a discourse that resulted in a formation of a new relationship between the Ottoman Empire and its (former) subjects in Bosnia Herzegovina. Petitions focused on issues of religion, education, pious foundations, and landowners’ difficulties of collecting dues or keeping the ownership of their land. However, the underlying premise that arose was that being Ottoman would somehow protect the Muslims and their social and economic standing under new circumstances, and that the Ottoman Empire had a responsibility to defend the Muslims’ rights.

37 BOA, HR. SYS. 259/1, 26-31 (June 27, 1906); petition is from 1902.
Most petitions sent from Bosnia Herzegovina to Istanbul in the first years of the Habsburg period considered the new administration temporary and were rather suspicious of their reform projects and possibility of success. The petitioners were firm in their stands and sounded almost inflexible about their demands, ending each petition with a desire to migrate en masse if their demands were not met. Furthermore, they seemed to have believed in Ottoman power and thought the Empire was, or could have been, much more influential in resolving their immediate problems. They insisted on their rights as Ottoman subjects, and their province as Ottoman, as much as it was becoming clear that it was not the case on the ground.

As time passed and the Habsburg administration became increasingly settled in Bosnia Herzegovina, the hope of an Ottoman restoration began to fade away. The Muslims relationship with the Ottoman Empire, however, continued on a different level: the Muslims persisted in calling upon Ottoman sovereignty in Bosnia Herzegovina by asking for Ottoman protection of their rights through diplomatic channels with the Habsburg Empire. There were even suggestions for the appointment of an Ottoman official in Bosnia Herzegovina, or entrusting Ottoman administrators closest to the province with monitoring and ensuring that Muslims’ rights were being respected.

The Ottoman Empire became the Great Power patron of Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina. Although there was not much room for maneuver, the Ottomans as well as Bosnian Muslims exploited the claim of Ottoman sovereignty and religious protection as an opportunity for both to stay involved in decisions of their respective futures. With an understanding of the limits of imperial borders, the focus on the Islamic dimension of the
Bosnian Muslim community and its political leader, the caliph, became more pronounced.

Not discouraged in petitioning the Sultan, they also addressed the emperor. By the last decade of the nineteenth century, organized movements for religious and educational autonomy that had emerged among the Muslim and Orthodox Christian subjects in Bosnia Herzegovina based their demands on Ottoman laws and practices, international treaties and agreements, and even Hungarian laws\(^{38}\) as reference in their protests and demands. The discourse of civilization, citizen rights, and international norms increasingly became part of the traditional petitioning system for Bosnians in both the Ottoman and Habsburg empires corresponding to claims and efforts these empires tried to project.

**Consuls**

After the Habsburg-Ottoman wars of the eighteenth century, the relations between the two empires were amicable for the rest of their existence, in spite of occupation and annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina. In fact, Austria more often than other European powers supported Ottoman diplomatic positions. One of the earliest permanent Ottoman diplomatic posts in Europe, Vienna was also one of the most important along embassies in London, Paris, and Berlin.\(^{39}\) It served not only as a central point for the physical passage of Ottoman personages and documents in Europe, but also as an intelligence

\(^{38}\) BOA, Y.A. HUS. 510/76 (March 31, 1907).

center covering the Balkans and Russia. The Austrian and Ottoman officials sometimes exchanged such information, as both states were apprehensive of nationalist movements, Pan-Slavism, and Russian machinations, all intersecting in the Balkans. The ambassador in Vienna reported on the Habsburg developments to Istanbul and represented the attitudes and views of the Sultan to the emperor in Vienna. Once the Habsburg Monarchy occupied Bosnia Herzegovina, the embassy in Vienna and the consulates in Dubrovnik and Pest regularly reported on this province.

Ottoman diplomats in the Habsburg Empire and other European capitals were primarily concerned with the image of the Ottoman Empire and worked to influence European public opinion. Permanent Ottoman diplomatic activity to this purpose in Europe was established during the reign of Mahmud II (1808–1839), to counterbalance negative propaganda and inform the European public of Ottoman reform. The events in the Ottoman Empire and Bosnia Herzegovina at the turn of the century received attention of European newspapers and the Austrian handling of the issues in Bosnia Herzegovina was closely examined. References to efkar-i umumiye (public opinion) in reports to Istanbul increased with each crisis reported on in the European press, signaling to the Ottoman concern with and importance of public opinion in diplomacy of the time.

Austria’s opponents often scrutinized the Habsburg policies as solutions to the Eastern

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40 Davison, 254–56.

41 Ibid., 256.

42 The Ottoman consuls reported on public opinion and discussions in newspapers of European capitals, to which the Ottoman government and Sultan Abdülhamid II paid special attention. Examples of reports on Austrian occupation of Bosnia in European press: BOA, Y.PRK.TKM. 2/17 (August 6, 1878) – Le Monde; Y.A. HUS 179/129 (October 9, 1884) – British press; 180/27 (November 15, 1882) – reports in the French, Italian, Belgian and Egyptian press regarding diplomatic arrangements planned for dividing up Ottoman territories; 187/38 (January 15, 1886) – Vienna’s Fremdenblatt and Prag’s Politik on Bosnia and Crete; 203/47 (June 8, 1887) – Allemagne du Nord, British press; 210/39 (January 29, 1888) – St. Petersburg’s Novoye Vremya; 235/25 (May 5, 1890) – Coresspoundance Gazette; Y.PRK.TKM 9/38 (January 12 , 1886) – Rome’s Diritto.
Question, which the Ottoman diplomats saw as a cue for action and even an opportunity for renegotiation. Realizing the value and importance of public opinion, Sultan Abdülhamid II even ordered an investigation into publishing an influential newspaper that would support Ottoman policies.43

Upholding Ottoman authority and influence in Bosnia Herzegovina was seen as an important policy, not only for this province, but also for the Ottoman presence in the Balkans and prestige in Europe. Most importantly, with the occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina, a province with a large Muslim population, the Ottoman Empire was able to contest the Habsburg ability to protect the rights and serve the interests of Muslims in its domains. By doing so, the Ottomans were in fact challenging European claims of protecting Ottoman “oppressed” Christian populations, which allowed them to interfere in Ottoman domestic affairs for most of the nineteenth century.

Show of paternal care for the subjects in Bosnia Herzegovina was one of the goals of the diplomatic corps in the Habsburg centers when dealing with the Bosnian issue. Receiving petitions and grievances; meeting with the opposition leaders, notables and religious officials; and offering them advice and recommendations in claiming their rights were all envisioned to position the Ottomans as guardians of the Bosnian interests. The Bosnian subjects would also continue to address the Ottoman government, meet the Ottoman representatives to discuss important decisions, and ask for advice when making political choices.

Muslim and Orthodox Christian deputies from Bosnia Herzegovina, who petitioned and requested audience with the Habsburg Emperor or the parliaments in Vienna and Pest, most often met with the Ottoman representatives in these cities to report

43 BOA, Y. PRK. BŞK. 35/44 (March 6, 1894).
on and discuss their political activity. In interactions with the Bosnians, the consular employees were able to manifest the Sultan’s concern for their well-being and also remind them of allegiance to the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, they “monitored” loyalty and alerted Istanbul of possible infringement on Ottoman sovereign rights in the province.

The Ottoman embassy in Vienna was one of the earliest permanent embassies in Europe, whereas its ambassadors were former or future foreign ministers or grand viziers testifying to the importance of this European post and the experience it demanded.44 Vienna was also an Ottoman intelligence center in Europe, and a “Bosnia-watcher” after the Habsburg occupation, often sending spies to Bosnia Herzegovina for reliable information.45

One report from Vienna reflected the ambassador’s understanding of the Bosnian problem: “in my opinion, the state of the Muslims today in the mentioned region is exactly the same as the situation of the Muslims in the regions that are not under Ottoman administration—according to the official explanation maybe a little better.” In response to the Muslims’ petitions, he thought that, although completely denied by the Austrian officials, Muslim complaints about double standard in the administration of justice were not completely baseless, but could have been exaggerated.46

Likewise, in a response to Istanbul regarding the grievances about the ambassador’s inactivity in the matter of Muslims’ rights in Bosnia Herzegovina, the ambassador annoyingly explained that they were a summary of the petitions the embassy

44 Davison, “Vienna As a Major Ottoman Diplomatic Post in the Nineteenth Century,” 251–81, 254, 262.
45 Ibid., 255. BOA, Y.PRK.HR. 3/84 (December 23, 1878); Y.PRK.HR. 5/7 (July 22, 1880).
46 BOA, HR. SYS. 259/1-78-80 (July 7, 1903), in Bosna ile ilgili arşiv belgeleri, 201–203.
received “all the time,” and that he was engaged in pressing the Habsburg authorities on this issue more than it was presumed. He advised that the Habsburg assurances were enough for the time being, and he would engage in urging the authorities at a politically appropriate time again, adding that he was doubtful of an affirmative solution.\footnote{BOA, HR. SYS. 259/1-63, 64 (April 21, 1903).}

The long tenure of the ambassadors and the embassy staff\footnote{Mahmud Nedim, for instance, was ambassador to Vienna from 1896 to 1907. Davison, 261.} might have accounted for their views that were more in tune with the official Habsburg vision and Viennese opinions on Bosnia Herzegovina. The embassy in Vienna was staffed by a group of Ottoman officials that included secretaries, counselors, attachés, and dragomans in addition to the ambassador. Some were promoted within the ranks of the embassy and had lengthy careers spanning at times more than a decade, while some of the positions were even passed on in the family.\footnote{Ibid., 267–68.} The physical distance of Vienna from Bosnia Herzegovina and less interaction with the Bosnian subjects in general could have contributed to the same. Although in one report from Vienna the ambassador referred to the Bosnian Muslims as “our brothers in faith” (\textit{ihvan-i dinimiz}),\footnote{BOA, Y.A. HUS. 408/22 (July 9, 1900).} his views were affected by his position at the heart of the Habsburg Monarchy, but also the centrality of Vienna in the Ottoman diplomatic activity in Europe, where the Bosnian issue was just one among the many.

The consulate in Pest, a much smaller operation, keenly reported on the public opinion, as well as Habsburg’s oppositional activity. The Hungarian half of the Monarchy was less enthusiastic about Bosnian occupation, while some reports show that the public
was opposed to it. Once Bosnia Herzegovina became part of the Dual Monarchy, the
oppositionists from Bosnia visited Pest and entertained possibilities of cooperating with
the opposition there on several occasions. The Habsburg Serbian opposition was also
based in Hungary and was ready to work with the Bosnian Muslims, stirring concern
among Ottomans and Habsburgs about the Bosnian Muslims’ attraction to Pan-Slavism.
Pest consuls who reported on all these events often received their information directly
from the Bosnians who did not fail to visit the Ottoman consulate on their trips, even
when they were continuing on to Vienna to meet Ottoman representatives at the embassy
there.

Perhaps because of his proximity to Bosnia Herzegovina and frequent
communication with the population and its representatives, the Ottoman consul in
Dubrovnik (Ragusa) seems to have had a far more detailed picture of the situation than
the other two, and he ardently recommended Ottoman action in the province. His
comprehensive reports to Istanbul included assessment of the situation and policy
recommendations.

He straightforwardly proposed appointing an official with extensive powers and
duties that would include protecting the Sultan’s subjects, making sure their rights were
respected and justice administered, as well as maintaining the prestige and influence of
the Ottoman Empire in the region. If that was not doable, he recommended that these
duties should be transferred to officials in the nearest Ottoman province. A realization
that a complete return to the Ottoman Empire was highly unlikely motivated the

51 For reference, approximate air distance from Sarajevo to Dubrovnik is 84 miles (135 km), and from
Mostar to Dubrovnik, 50 miles (80 km); whereas the distance from Sarajevo to Vienna is 315 miles (507
km), and to Pest, 254 miles (409 km).

52 BOA, HR.SYS. 259/1 (April 8, 1901).
Ottomans, as well as the locals, to find other ways of extending their influence and maintaining leverage in the province.

In one of the many reports he sent frequently, the consul broke down the Austrian policy into two choices: to attract the Bosnian Muslims or to destroy them in order to maintain the grip of the province, as they represented significant force against Austria.53 “. . . After seeing that they would not be able to attract the Muslims and rule them, the Austrian State changed its mind and decided to destroy or force them to migrate, by forcefully suppressing their rights so neither their lives or property, nor their honor were safe anymore.”54

He confirmed the petitioners’ complaints that the Austrian administration worked to sow division among the people by sending missionaries, opening schools in which Muslims were educated in Christian intellectual tradition, and instilling antagonism toward the Sublime State: “The Muslim peoples’ pious endowments were taken away from them, land forcefully appropriated, trade cruelly taken from their hands, craftsmanship ruined, their girls kidnapped, and family honor tarnished.”55 Muslims were prevented from openly worshiping; religious scholars were not permitted to preach, counsel, and teach religion; and preachers in major mosques were not allowed to mention the Sultan’s name in their Friday sermons. “. . . Loyal and honorable religious scholars have been taken down from their posts and in their place ambitious and seditious

53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
opportunists who would serve Austria’s intentions, actions, and recognition have been appointed.”56

This report from the Dubrovnik consul summarized that the Muslims of Bosnia Herzegovina were condemned to either abandon and forget their religion, identity, and the Sultan; or to endure Austria’s oppression and injustice deprived of civil rights; or yet, to entirely abandon their homes for good, in which case, Austria would have gotten rid of them. In another report, the same consul advised discouragement of Muslim migration and providing them with Ottoman protection, observing that the Muslims of Bosnia were a valuable asset in the region.57 Urging action, the consul appealed to Ottoman sentiments: “... surely, the sultan would not allow for half a million of Ottoman most renowned subjects, who have been guarding the Ottoman border toward Europe for five hundred years, to be destroyed...”58

The similarity of the consul’s reports to the Muslims’ petitions makes one wonder if the consul had cooperated with the petitioners in drafting them or had used petitions as the basis for his reports. The reports form the consul in Dubrovnik reflect profound concern for the situation, and he seems to have spent a lot of time and energy to relay his views and offer solutions that would be most beneficial to the Ottoman interests. He was concerned about the continuation of the Ottoman presence in the Balkans as a whole: Persistence of the Habsburgs’ divisive policies would cause further dissatisfaction among the population and spread to other regions, “setting the Balkans on fire.”59 He foresaw a

56 BOA, HR.SYS. 259/1 (April 8, 1901).
57 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 413/134 (March 17, 1901).
58 Ibid.
59 BOA, HR. SYS. 259/1 (April 8, 1901).
situation in which the Ottoman Empire would intervene to prevent violence, but by that point, it would be too late. A little over a decade later, his predictions were to some extent realized in the Balkan Wars.

Finally, in order to maintain and enhance Ottoman influence in the region, the consul suggested taking advantage of the amicable relationship with the Austrians at the time and negotiate two important points: first, to have the mufti and the religious officials appointed by the Ottoman religious authorities, or at least elected among the religious scholars in Bosnia Herzegovina by the Muslims (who are loyal to the Ottoman State); and second, for the Ottoman State to become the helper and protector of its subjects and the place they appeal and take refuge in. For that, he recommended appointing an Ottoman official in charge of Bosnia Herzegovina as mentioned earlier; sending teachers who would teach religion and the Ottoman language in Bosnia Herzegovina; and providing free education for Bosnian Muslims in the Ottoman Empire.60

This policy recommendation was something the Ottomans experienced in their own domains: Christian-populated Ottoman territories had officials or commissions appointed by the Great Powers to protect and support the Ottoman Christians, and directly interfere with internal politics of the Empire. The Ottoman statesmen and diplomats were turning tables on the Great Powers by claiming protection and a permanent bond with the Muslims in the lands ruled by these states. Efforts of the Russian ambassador in Istanbul, N. P. Ignatieff, who worked to forge an ideological bond with the Slav population of the Ottoman Empire through Pan-Slavism, became the image

60 Ibid.
of Russian infiltration into the Ottoman Balkans, and some Ottoman officials saw an opportunity of doing the same by relying on Muslim loyalties.

Ottoman statesmen and diplomats might have had his activities in mind, but were unable to achieve his success, if for nothing else, then for the sheer frequency of crises that arose for the Ottomans preventing any consistency in their efforts toward this goal, and more importantly, focusing the imperial resources, energy, and diplomatic weight on the issues that had more of a chance for resolution and positive outcome for the Ottoman Empire. After all, the Habsburgs had no intention of ever giving Bosnia Herzegovina back to the Ottomans, who had to content with maintaining a sphere of influence through the Muslims there.

My preliminary conclusions in trying to assess the effectiveness of the consular apparatus, as well as the Ottoman statesmen in preserving allegiance of the Bosnian Muslims to the Ottoman Empire, reveal a picture of the Ottoman bid to uphold its prestige, regional spheres of influence, and a careful consideration and pursuit of achievable aims in a given situation. The activities of the consular apparatus and the diplomatic corps were two-directional: positioning themselves as the protectors of the Muslims before the Habsburgs by pressing for their rights and representing their interest; and, nurturing and encouraging Ottoman sentiments and loyalties of the Muslims (as well as, at times, of the Orthodox Christians) and making sure they realized that it was the

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62 Since the consular correspondence in Ottoman archives is classified by topic and not by point of origin, I was not able to examine the entire consular documentation for the period researched by city of origin and assess the Ottoman diplomats’ attitudes and opinions, and compare the change, if any, over time.
Ottoman State and its representatives in the Habsburg Monarchy that protected them and accepted their petitions and listened to their grievances.

It is evident from the consular correspondence, as well as diplomatic documentation I analyzed, that the Ottoman statesmen realized that Bosnia Herzegovina would not be restored to the Ottoman Empire in its previous form, and that the Ottoman sovereignty in this province was a mere formality the Habsburg were preparing to do away with. However, maintaining the allegiance of the Muslims was important for the Ottoman Empire: firstly, because they were former subjects who petitioned for help, and an Ottoman response was an issue of earning their loyalty, and a matter of imperial prestige; and secondly, the Muslims’ allegiance was a valuable bargaining chip in diplomatic dealings with the Habsburgs, balancing Ottoman spheres of influence in the Balkans.

The Ottoman inability to take Bosnia back, or even the criticism for not doing “enough” for the Bosnian cause, should not necessarily be viewed as a sign of overall Ottoman weakness and decline. According to a recent study of Ottoman policies in its eastern and southern frontiers during the same time period, the Ottoman Empire was “assertive, competitive, and at times aggressive” in its bid to expand its claim in these regions.  

Carefully weighing their options, Ottoman statesmen realized the Empire’s limitation in Bosnia Herzegovina and worked to maintain the Muslim allegiances to the Ottoman Empire. Cultivated Ottoman loyalties increasingly became important with mass political mobilization and left a permanent mark on the sociopolitical life in Bosnia Herzegovina.

Chapter 5

Mobilization and Politics: Movement for Autonomy, Party Politics, and the Caliphate

As the Habsburg administration was consolidating its power in Bosnia Herzegovina with a series of centralizing policies, a crystallization of an oppositional activity among Muslims was taking place converging around the issues of appointments of religious officials, education, pious endowments administration (vakuf),¹ property ownership, and Muslims’ role in managing their own communal affairs. The concern for preserving religion, traditional practices, property, economic relationships, and social and political status was an instigating factor for the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina to mobilize and find ways to negotiate their place and function under new circumstances.

These concerns were at the same time the motivation for insisting on their Muslim self-definition and maintaining links with the Ottoman Empire. The organization of the movement for autonomous administration of religious and educational institutions among the Muslims came as a reaction to what they saw as immediate threats to their rights and positions established under Ottoman rule. Their claims were based on seeking religious rights and Ottoman legal sovereignty in the province. Muslim leaders articulated their relationship with the Ottoman Empire and integrated it into their political demands.

In this chapter, I explain how the Muslims found themselves in the world of political activism and analyzed the opportunities they seized to mobilize in defense of their rights and positions. The formation of the movement for religious and educational autonomy, and Muslim oppositional and political activity was directly related to a particular position of the province under nominal Ottoman sovereignty up to the

¹ Vakuf is Bosnian for Turkish vakif and Arabic waqf.
annexation, and Habsburg’s need for local acceptance and support in administering the province. A major issue of the movement, self-limited to religious rights, was insistence on maintaining official ties with the Sultan-Caliph and Şeyhülislam, infringing on political sovereignty in the province. In addition to purely religious reasons of legitimacy for the religious hierarchy, the Muslims understood the connection with the Sultan and protection of the Ottoman Empire as an important leverage they had in the political context of the Habsburg administration.

Detailed studies of the Muslim movement for religious and educational autonomy were published by Bosnian and other historians, drawing on Bosnian and Austrian archival documentation and discussing the particular issues that motivated Muslim political mobilization. In this chapter, I try to contribute to this discussion by highlighting the ways in which the Muslims understood their opportunities as Habsburg subjects, demanding their rights and protections, and learning to work within the political system of the Monarchy, and as Ottoman (former) subjects and Muslims seeking the protection of the Sultan-Caliph. The period of mobilization, that emerged in the last decade of the nineteenth century led to Muslims’ participation in the Habsburg, Ottoman, and international political arena, culminating in the formation of political parties and the provincial parliament in 1910.

The Muslims skillfully engaged with both empires in claiming their trans-imperial rights and protections. The Habsburgs considered the Muslim appeal for the monarchy’s strategic and political benefit, but they were also motivated by issue of imperial

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legitimacy and recognition in Bosnia Herzegovina relevant domestically in Austria-Hungary, as well as the ways in which Austrian policies were reflected in the European public opinion. Muslims petitioned the Ottomans for protection based on the nominal sovereignty of the Sultan in the province from the time of the Berlin Treaty to the annexation in 1908—a claim even the Serbian associations resorted to in their political activities. At the same time, the Muslims addressed the sultan as their caliph, pleading for his protection as the political leader of the universal Islamic community. The Ottoman Sultan entertained Bosnian petitions and continuously positioned himself as the leader and protector of the Muslims, further stimulating pan-Muslim sentiments. But, there was little room for Ottoman activity on this matter, despite the wishes of the Sultan and eagerness of some of the Ottoman statesmen and their Bosnian lobbyists.

In this chapter, I draw mostly on petitions and Ottoman consular reports that concern the movement for autonomy and the Muslims’ political activity in Bosnia Herzegovina. These sources reveal the petitioners’ expectations from the Ottoman Empire in their struggle, as well as their sophistication in understanding the international implications of their position and the various sources they could base their claims on, whether it was the “civilized norms of the nineteenth century,” their “right” to reform and progress, or simply legal rights and “people’s well-being,” provision of which was considered the responsibility of the ruler.

The Muslim notables gathered around the movement for religious and educational autonomy and gradually included their economic interests as part of the agenda. They managed to position themselves as the ultimate defenders of all-inclusive Muslim interests in Bosnia Herzegovina. Centralization measures affecting the realm of religious
institutions, as well as economic circumstances in the province were at the root of changes that Muslim activists opposed, and in the face of which they insisted on preserving the Ottoman order. Habsburg-introduced modernization and reform processes in Bosnia were taking place almost comparatively to similar movements in the Ottoman Empire. Monetization of the economy, rational system of tax assessment, industrialization, development of a banking system, and centralization were all features the Bosnian landlords and merchants would have faced in the Ottoman Empire. However, they would not have had a chance to politically mobilize around these issues, presenting them as inextricable from religious ones, as they did in the Habsburg Empire; nor would their grievances ever assume an international dimension and carry diplomatic weight.

**Emergence of the Movement for Autonomy**

It can be said that political activity in regards to the Habsburg administration started already in the weeks preceding the Habsburg takeover. Although locals organized to resist the invading Habsburg army, the notables, especially those in Sarajevo who represented the most powerful provincial elite in the last years of the Ottoman period, worked to downplay the intensity of plans to fight back the occupation before withdrawing when the armed resistance began. These notables hoped that they would be able to maintain their influence under the new regime, and they did not want to engage in an unequal armed fight they were likely to lose along with their positions. Soon after the occupation, their hopes were met with the Austrian need to establish order and create

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3 Such as standardization of taxes based on agricultural production average introduced in Bosnia in 1905.
provincial administration through an alliance with the Bosnian notables. Religious officials and notables, represented in local town councils, and in effect, government employees, first voiced their dissatisfactions over religious issues, followed by concerns regarding their property under a new administration.

Cases of conversion to Catholicism, touching upon private family sentiments, were the most inflammatory among Muslims. These random cases, often in rural areas, involving bride kidnappings frequently supported by Catholic clergy, irritated Muslim public opinion, more than they were a real threat to Islam or the Muslims in Bosnia. Nevertheless, the irritation, combined with uncertainty about their future under a new Christian administration, kept the Muslims vigilant. The protests and petitions submitted to the authorities, after the civil administration was established, were often incited by such cases having widespread popular support. The first organized action happened in 1899 in Mostar, where a group of Muslims had gathered to voice their protest at yet another girl’s conversion.

The group elected a board, with Mostar Mufti Ali Fehmi Džabić at its head, to communicate their grievances to the Habsburg administration. Mufti Džabić was already known to the administration for his vocal opposition to Habsburg policies in the years before. With considerable backing from the aggravated Mostar population, the mufti petitioned the local, and then provincial administration to take measures concerning the growing Catholic proselytism in Bosnia Herzegovina. When the administration yet again

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ignored the petitions, adding an arrogant remark that the conversions were a consequence of a weak religious upbringing of Muslims, the support for the movement grew wider.\(^6\)

Sparked by conversion incidents, the opposition members included other grievances in their petitions. Muslim representatives submitted a plan for organizing the system of schools, pious endowments, and the religious hierarchy in Bosnia Herzegovina to the Austrian authorities. The plan suggested a system autonomous from the administration, claiming that the weak religious education was the fault of the Habsburg administration that controlled educational institutions (and the pious endowments that financed them), and appointed incompetent individuals to religious posts that controlled the schools and *vakufs*.\(^7\) The petition was presented to the Joint Minister of Finance Benjamin Kállay and the Emperor Franz Joseph, but was quickly rejected.

The activists prominent in petitioning the administration were also government employees: for example, the mayor of Travnik, Muharem-Beg Teskeredžić, had a leading role in landowners’ petitions, while the above-mentioned mufti of Mostar energetically worked in asserting the Muslims’ religious rights. A number of notables in city councils maintained links with family in Istanbul, and were encouraged by the diaspora there to petition the Habsburg authorities.\(^8\) Both leaders, in addition to others who worked in the local administration, were removed from their posts for their oppositional attitude. Since they worked within the government framework, the administration’s dismissal was seen as a disregard for the Muslims’ requests, and ignited further support for the growing movement that steadily spread throughout Bosnia Herzegovina becoming a common

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7 Imamović, 241–42.

8 Donia, 75–76.
cause for Muslims of different regions and classes.\(^9\) The fact that Džabić, a renowned religious scholar, was dismissed by the Austrians, polarized the situation as a struggle for religious freedoms, earning the movement support and igniting fears for the future of Islam in Bosnia Herzegovina.

The Muslims, led by a determined Ali Fehmi Džabić, decided to take the movement outside the borders of Bosnia Herzegovina, not only in the direction of the Ottoman Empire, hoping for the support of the Sultan and the Sublime Porte, but also to the Habsburg Empire by traveling to Vienna and Pest to lobby with the emperor and the parliaments. Džabić led the group that was to submit a petition to the emperor while he was visiting Pest. The main grievance of the group was the activity of the Catholic Propaganda Society, which had been active in Herzegovina since 1882 in converting Muslims to Catholic Christianity. The petition even contained the list of Muslim women abducted and converted to Christianity.\(^10\)

However, not having any success in reaching the emperor, the delegation traveled to Vienna, where they met with the Ottoman ambassador and relayed to him that the entire population of Herzegovina would migrate (to the Ottoman Empire) if they were unsuccessful. The same threat of Muslim migration to the Ottoman Empire was often used in petitions to the Habsburgs as well.\(^11\) The ambassador spoke to the Austrian minister of foreign affairs about the complaints, but the minister dismissed such events as coincidence and denied any support of the state to proselytizing activities, adding that Austria was treating its Muslims as equal to other subjects. The Ottoman ambassador

\(^9\) Teskeredžić, for instance, following his dismissal emigrated to the Ottoman Empire.

\(^10\) BOA, Y.A. HUS. 408/22 (July 9, 1900).

\(^11\) Donia, 97.
managed only to get a nominal promise out of the minister of foreign affairs that he would look into the Muslim complaints.\textsuperscript{12}

Through its consuls in Vienna and Pest, the Ottoman administration closely followed the developments in Bosnia, whereas the Muslims themselves met with and reported to the consuls at each visit. They received help and support with petitions, contacts, and publications from the Ottoman representatives in the Habsburg capitals. The Habsburgs had information that the oppositional leaders were in touch with a Mostar native, Mehmet Fazıl, in service of the Ottoman embassy in Vienna.\textsuperscript{13} Likewise, the Austrians suspected that Ottoman administrators were behind some of the petitions, especially those calling for the appointment of Ottoman officials for Bosnia Herzegovina, based on the example of Egypt or Bulgaria.\textsuperscript{14}

In 1900, the Bosnian five-day opposition congress was organized in Pest. Present at this congress were thirty-five representatives\textsuperscript{15} from various districts of Bosnia Herzegovina presided over by Mostar Mufti Džabić.\textsuperscript{16} A statute for religious and educational autonomy together with a memorandum detailing Muslims’ complaints against the Habsburg authorities was drafted and was to be given to Minister Kállay. In case that no positive response was to be received within two months, the representatives decided to submit the memorandum to the emperor for the last time. The ambassador also reported that the members of the Hungarian Parliament were present at a meeting of the

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{12}] BOA, Y.A. HUS. 408/22 (July 9, 1900).
\item[\textsuperscript{13}] Donia, 97.
\item[\textsuperscript{14}] Ibid., 74.
\item[\textsuperscript{15}] Austrian sources cite eighty-three participants, in Donia, 133.
\item[\textsuperscript{16}] BOA, Y.A. HUS 412/8 (December 26, 1900).
\end{itemize}
Bosnian opposition, and that some of them even suggested incorporation of Bosnia Herzegovina into the Hungarian Kingdom where they would have all their requests honored.\footnote{Ibid.} Džabić was noted to have rejected the offer, saying that the Muslims were concerned with religious and not political issues.\footnote{Donia, 134.} Although such an arrangement was unlikely, it kept the Austrians watchful of the Muslims’ possible political alliances.

After the congress, the Muslim representatives set up permanent office in Pest largely funded by Bosnian notables. The Serbian lobby, experienced in oppositional activity within the Monarchy, lent them support.\footnote{Donia, 134; Imamović, Historija države i prava, 243.} Bosnian Muslims decided to try and influence the public opinion in the Habsburg Empire and Europe. In August 1900, an article appeared in Revue d’Orient explaining the Muslims’ grievances, as well as their aspirations within the Habsburg Empire stressing the need for autonomy in religious and educational matters.\footnote{BOA, Y.A. HUS 411/115 (October 30, 1900).} The Ottoman consul in Pest reported that the article was the work of the Bosnian Muslim committee in the same city. The two reasons that pushed the Muslims into opposition were explained in the article as fierce Catholic proselytism, especially in Herzegovina, and the Habsburg-controlled religious hierarchy headed by Reis ul-ulema responsible for the low quality of education for the Muslims, poor state of its institutions, and incompetent, underpaid teachers.\footnote{Ibid.}

A letter from Bosnia Herzegovina about the difficult conditions of Muslims was published in response to the Joint Minister of Finance Benjamin Kallay’s article in

\begin{itemize}
  \item \footnote{Ibid.} \footnote{Donia, 134.} \footnote{Donia, 134; Imamović, Historija države i prava, 243.} \footnote{BOA, Y.A. HUS 411/115 (October 30, 1900).} \footnote{Ibid.}
\end{itemize}
Budapesti Szemle, the paper of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, in the same year praising the success of the Habsburg administration. According to the ambassador in Vienna, the fact that Kallay was a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, made his argument “more scientific,” so much so that another Pest daily paper (Pester Lloyd) reprinted parts of it in an “elaborate, serious article” reiterating and interpreting some of its ideas.

Another article written by the Muslim committee and printed in several European newspapers focused on grievances of the Bosnian Muslims in greater detail, and was more explicit in criticizing the Habsburg administration and Minister Kallay. The Habsburgs were accused of using the occupation sanctioned by the Berlin Treaty as a pretext to fully incorporate Bosnia Herzegovina in its domains without regard to people’s legal rights and their well-being (ahalinin hukuk-i müktesebesiyle saadet hali kat’an nazar-i itibara alınıyor); that Minister Kállay in particular was using the matter of religious organization of the Muslims and Orthodox Christians to exercise power; and that the Kállay-appointed religious authority in Bosnia—the Reis ul-ulema, and the members of his council, the Meclis-i ulema—were completely subservient to the wishes and orders of the administration which was working on severing the ties with the caliphate and the Şeyhülislam. “As if that was not enough,” the article continued to explain that the Habsburg administration took control of the religious pious endowments and appropriated 600,000 francs of its income. It further said that between the Habsburg religious organization and the pious endowments’ control, the Muslims’ religious and

22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 413/8 (January 28, 1901).
educational circumstances were under pressure and any attempts at reform were hindered by the Habsburg administration (ahali-i İslamiyyesinin mekteplerini tensik ve islah eylemelerine asla müsade etmedigini).

This article touched upon the property issues in Bosnia as well. It mentioned Habsburg treatment of the land and agrarian issues as an attempt to weaken the landowners and diminish the influence of the wealthy Muslims so they would be in no position to oppose the Austro-Hungarian administration. They complained about the fact that the land was appropriated by the state despite landowners’ documentation and witnesses of private ownership, that no appeals were taken into consideration by the local authorities, and that the property values fell lower than they were before the occupation. Finally, a Habsburg policy seen as damaging for both the Muslims and Orthodox Christians was the colonization of land “taken away from the Muslims” (Müslumanlardan nez olunan) by immigrants (colonizers) from the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Alman ve Leh muhaciri), assisted in every way by the administration to provide for their material and spiritual well-being. In conclusion, the letter stated that the Muslims of Bosnia Herzegovina were convinced that the continuation of their society and way of life was threatened, and that autonomy in religious and educational matters would provide protection for their future and development. Muslim representatives realized the trends of international politics at the time: they knew that they had to publicize their situation and grievances internationally, and hoped for Ottoman diplomatic support in negotiations with the Habsburg authorities.

\[25\] Ibid.

\[26\] Ibid.
In response to negative publicity in the press the Habsburg officials communicated disclaimers to the Ottoman ambassador in Vienna asserting that there was no government involvement in proselytism in Bosnia Herzegovina. They claimed that if the Habsburg Monarchy was eager to convert anyone, it would have done so with its Jewish population already. The Habsburg Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasized the beneficial treatment of the Muslim subjects in the Habsburg Monarchy in comparison to any other Muslim population under Christian rule worldwide. Austrian officials were correct in their comparison of the treatment of the Muslims, and that there was at least no active state sponsorship of proselytism, at any rate not in the manner that Bosnian Archbishop Strossmayer conducted his holy mission. Nevertheless, their justification to the Ottomans also revealed that their image and good relations with the Ottomans were important, and supportive of Habsburg legitimacy in the province. Public opinion in the Monarchy and in Europe also mattered, and they allowed for the following meetings of the now fully formed movement to take place in Bosnia, to avoid the publicity of such oppositional activity in Pest.

Parallel to the Muslims’ requests for autonomy in their religious and educational affairs, a movement for church and educational autonomy of the Orthodox Christians was also in development. Representatives of the Orthodox Christian community in Bosnia Herzegovina traveled to Vienna to ask the emperor to continue the Ottoman treatment of religious communities and government involvement in religious and educational matters. They, too, met with the Ottoman ambassador after the emperor refused audience and complained about their conditions under Habsburg rule.

27 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 411/115 (October 30, 1900).
There was also cooperation among the petitioners: A group of Muslims and Orthodox Christian Bosnians went to Vienna the following year to protest the actions of the provincial administration.29 Although the Habsburg administration repeatedly rejected their petitions as baseless, there were fears of joint action between the Muslims and the Orthodox Christians. The Orthodox Christian diaspora in Istanbul also lobbied with the Porte and gave support to the Bosnian cause: A certain priest, by the name of Žarko, suggested in a letter to an Ottoman official ways for the Muslims and Orthodox Christians to cooperate and defend Bosnia Herzegovina from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.30

Two Muslim notables, Derviš-Beg Miralem and Ali Firdevsi, who traveled to Vienna and Pest, confided to the Ottoman ambassador that the Muslims were not seeing results of their appeals to the Habsburg administration and the emperor, and decided to accept the invitation from the Bosnian Orthodox Christian committee striving for the same goals for their community under the Habsburgs. The joint Muslim and Orthodox Christian committee, they reasoned, would then represent a population of 1,200,000 which the Habsburgs would not be able to ignore. Their political goals would include acquiring a status of eyalet-i mümtaze (autonomous province) for Bosnia Herzegovina under the Ottoman Sultan, “as it used to be” and to alternate the governor and the vice-governor of Bosnia Herzegovina between Muslim and Orthodox Christian appointees.31 Even Džabić, ambitious to achieve autonomy for Muslims, looked favorably to the

28 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 364/34 (June 15, 1896).
29 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 367/2 (February 18, 1897).
30 BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ. 5/32 (May 6, 1882).
31 BOA, Y.A.HUS 413/8 (January 28, 1901).
possibility of joining forces with the Serbian movement. The Porte, however, was too
careful to support such action, although they knew of Džabić’s leanings and that he was
even part of a group received by the Serbian ruler.\textsuperscript{32}

The draft of the Muslim-Serbian agreement was obtained by the Habsburg
administration and published in the papers receiving especially harsh criticism in Croatia.
The Muslims were ridiculed for being duped by Serbian nationalists, whose true aim was
acquiring this province as part of Serbia.\textsuperscript{33} Earlier in 1898, a Bosnian writer and
intellectual, Osman Nuri Hadžić, derided the idea of Serbian efforts to reestablish
Ottoman rule in Bosnia Herzegovina claiming that the religious and political idea of
Serbianism is in complete opposition to “Mohammedan being, survival, and progress.”\textsuperscript{34}
The Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs later learned that the Serbs had also established
a committee in Bosnia Herzegovina with a central focus on attracting European attention,
especially the involvement of France, to Bosnia Herzegovina, aspiring to incorporate it
into the Serbian state.\textsuperscript{35}

While there was flirting between the Bosnian Orthodox Christian and Muslim
movements, as both saw the benefits of a joint front against the Habsburg centralization
policies, an agreement on cooperation was difficult to achieve. Basic differences were not
overcome: the Orthodox Christian movement was by this point overwhelmingly
nationalized and its demands incorporated items from the Serbian nationalist agenda,
such as insistence on Serbian as the official language and the use of Cyrillic script only.

\textsuperscript{32} BOA, Y.PRK.HR. 30/83 (June 11, 1901).

\textsuperscript{33} Obzor, 210:XLII (May 13, 1901), quoted in Šehić, 127–28.

\textsuperscript{34} Osman Nuri Hadžić, “Srpsko-muhamedanska sloga” Hrvatsko Pravo 790 (June 24, 1898).

\textsuperscript{35} BOA, Y.PRK. HR. 33/21 (1903–1904).
The gap between the Muslim and Serbian positions on the reform of agrarian relationships—between Muslim landowners and Christian peasants—was also not bridgeable.\textsuperscript{36} The attempts at cooperation continued despite disagreements and kept the Habsburg administration alert.

Considering the growing support for the movement in Bosnia Herzegovina even among the loyalists of the administration, and concerned over possible Muslim-Serbian cooperation, Benjamin Kállay, after receiving another petition by the Muslim representatives, decided to initiate negotiations with the Muslim representatives in 1901. The draft of the statute for Muslim religious and educational autonomy was submitted to the Habsburg administration, and it contained a detailed account of grievances regarding the state of Islamic religious and educational institutions, lack or poor training of religious officials and teachers, alienation of \textit{vakuf} properties, and migration of Muslims to the Ottoman Empire. The statute proposed solutions to these problems.\textsuperscript{37} The draft adopted the Habsburg regional organization of the endowments but insisted that the Muslims elect the administrative bodies up to the highest-level officials. Furthermore, the importance of maintaining a relationship between the existing religious authority, the \textit{Reis ul-ulema} and the \textit{Meclis-i ulema}, with the Şeyhülislam in Istanbul was reiterated.

Benjamin Kállay closely guided the negotiations with the Muslims. He was concerned that the draft contained elements that went beyond the basic Muslim requests regarding schools and endowments, and alluded to the political and national body of the

\textsuperscript{36} Imamović, \textit{Historija države i prava}, 244.

Muslims, which in no way could be allowed.\textsuperscript{38} Kállay’s instructions to the negotiating provincial administration were explicit about not allowing for any political attributes to the institutions that govern education and endowments, and that in no way should they represent the interest of Muslims in a political sense.\textsuperscript{39} The negotiation started with less contentious issues such as schools and pious endowments during which both sides allowed for compromise. The stumbling stone in the negotiations concerned the election of the religious leadership for Bosnia Herzegovina: the Habsburg policy was in the direction of minimizing the Ottoman involvement, whereas the Muslims wanted to strengthen and institutionalize their bond with the Sultan, intruding on the issues of political sovereignty in Bosnia Herzegovina. Three months and thirty sessions later, the negotiations were suspended.

Disappointed by failed negotiations, members of the movement once again looked up to Istanbul for support. The leader of the movement, Džabić, with a few others traveled to Istanbul. Resolved to end Džabić’s activities in Bosnia Herzegovina, and seeing that there was no way to win him over, Minister Kállay proclaimed the Istanbul-bound group “unlawful emigrants” by amending a law the administration announced earlier as a way to curb migration and political activity. The administration considered Ali Fehmi Džabić the most conservative and “fanatical” of the Muslim opposition and tried to portray him as an instigator of migration to the Ottoman Empire. The Habsburg administration was so concerned with the movement that they wanted to impede their activities even in Istanbul by trying to discredit Džabić and his companions as supporters

\textsuperscript{38} Kallay was concerned about the constitution of a political nation: “…zur Bildung eines politischen mohammedanischen Narod [people, nation] führen könnte.” in Šehić, Autonomni pokret Muslimana, 75.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
of the Young Turk movement.\textsuperscript{40} In the meantime, the administration tried first to sow division among the members, then offered incentives for their rejection of the movement, and finally intimidated and arrested some of them.

While in Istanbul, Džabić’s group petitioned the Sultan and explained that while they were being falsely accused of various crimes, all they were trying to do was to “maintain the link to the Caliphate and strengthen and uphold the right of the Sublime State over Bosnia Herzegovina.”\textsuperscript{41} The Ottoman Cabinet met to discuss his appeal that focused on the appointment of religious officials in Bosnia Herzegovina by the Habsburgs as contradictory to the Berlin Treaty, and the various abuses and repression that forced Muslims to migrate to the Ottoman Empire. They decided that the rights of Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina needed to be protected, and continuation of the Ottoman relationship with the region should be insisted upon with the Austrians. However, the decision does not spell out any immediate action to be taken.\textsuperscript{42} Džabić remained in Istanbul as a guest of the Sultan, and was even given an appointment later on, most likely as an outcome of diplomatic dealings between the two empires, both wanting to keep a close watch on his activities.

The same year, members of the movement addressed the Austrian and Hungarian parliament in a letter specifying their grievances against the administration in Bosnia Herzegovina after failed negotiations.\textsuperscript{43} The protest letter condemned the concentrated effort of the Habsburg administration to do away with the movement by exiling,

\textsuperscript{40} Šehić, 144.
\textsuperscript{41} BOA, HR.SYS. 259/1–66 (April 22, 1902).
\textsuperscript{42} BOA, Y.A.RES. 117/77 (August 14, 1902).
\textsuperscript{43} BOA, HR.SYS. 258/1 37–58 (August 26, 1902).
arresting, and intimidating its prominent members and banning the return of its leader Džabić from Istanbul. 44 Although the members of the movement continued to meet, no major activity was organized, nor could any of them assume leadership, partly because they lacked Džabić’s following, and partly because Džabić himself did not relinquish his leadership role for several years, hoping to be able to return and resume his activities.

Many of the petitions were transmitted further up the Ottoman administrative chain, but little action was suggested in the accompanying summaries and introductions that were commonly submitted with petitions by the receiving administrators. Although the Ottoman statesmen saw the importance of maintaining protection over the Bosnian Muslims ruled by Austrians, there was little they could do but protest through the Ambassador in Vienna, or advise and help the Muslims with the petitions and publications. In one such instance, instructed by the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the ambassador in Vienna met with the Habsburg officials, Foreign Minister Goluchowski, Joint Minister of Finance Kállay, and Governor of Bosnia Herzegovina Kutchera, to discuss the situation in Bosnia Herzegovina and the many petitions and reports the Ottoman administration received on the deteriorating conditions of the Muslims.

Denying the Muslims’ complaints, the officials praised the Habsburg administration claiming that the incomes of pious foundations increased during their tenure (their number rising from 300 to 950); that the administration provided for salaries of Muslim religious officials, teachers and judges; and that they built 150 mosques and repaired 117. In addition, they claimed that they were not hindering any relationship between the Muslims and the Şeyhülislam, that they had conducted negotiations with the

44 Ibid.
Muslims resolving most of the demands, and that they were waiting for the Muslims to reopen the negotiations again.\textsuperscript{45} Turning the table on the Ottoman ambassador, Kállay even asked the Ottomans to lend spiritual support to the Bosnian Muslims against migrations, which were harmful for both empires.

\textit{Outside Events, International Influences}

The standstill in negotiations in Bosnia Herzegovina was further exacerbated by events outside of its borders. The rise of nationalism and Pan-Slavism, the Ottoman Empire’s problems with nationalist movements and their handling of the issue, the reformist movement in the Islamic world, and the situation of former Ottoman Muslims in other regions were followed with interest in Bosnia Herzegovina through the press, but political activism from the neighboring regions also seeped into the province.

One of the prime regions of Serbian nationalist activity was Bosnia Herzegovina. Nationalist activists were sent to recruit the local Orthodox population as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, and had a slow but evolving effect among the population. With the new dynasty in Serbia as of 1903, full-fledged nationalist propaganda, supported by Russia, was aimed at the areas of its interest in the Balkans often assuming a hostile attitude toward the Habsburg Empire with which it competed for influence in the region. Similar national activity was on the rise in Croatia at the time where political convergence of Serbs and Croats encouraged sentiments of South Slav unity that also spilled over into Bosnia Herzegovina, albeit among the educated and the intellectuals. Nationalism was a driving force in all of these events, and it was naturally being felt in Bosnia Herzegovina. Croatian and Serbian nationalist activity was already

\textsuperscript{45} BOA, Y.A.HUS. 426/15 (March 15, 1903).
taking place despite Habsburg attempts to neutralize it. The administration slowly abandoned futile attempts to curtail nationalism, while the movements for autonomy increasingly assumed political character.

Finally, the Macedonian issue, culminating in the 1903 Ilinden revolt, seriously concerned both the Habsburgs and the Bosnian Muslims. The Habsburgs were worried these events would further embolden nationalist activity in Bosnia Herzegovina. They also wanted to maintain the balance of power in the Balkans, and did not want other Great Powers interfering in such proximity. For the Muslims, however, the fear was that if Macedonia were lost, the physical connection of Bosnia Herzegovina to the Ottoman Empire would be interrupted, together with the hope of ever rejoining the Ottoman domains in full capacity. Furthermore, the atrocities targeting the Muslim population in Macedonia added concern for the future of Muslims in the post-Ottoman world, which translated into clenching onto any kind of Ottoman link that would protect the interests of the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina.

The Muslims, affected by these currents in the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire, began to take on an ethnic and national character in the movement for autonomy and other associations in Bosnia Herzegovina. As much as the Croats looked up to Zagreb, and the Serbs to Belgrade, the Muslims looked up to Istanbul, but also to the wider Muslim world. Special attention was given to Muslim communities that were facing a similar situation, such as the Russian and Bulgarian Muslims, as well as Muslim religious and political organization in places such as Egypt and Cyprus. The Bosnian Muslims knew that in certain regions lost to the Ottoman Empire the Muslims were in charge of
their pious endowments. They also followed the ideas and efforts at modernizing education of Ismail Gasprinskii publicized in his widely popular paper *Tercüman*.

The Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina were aware of nationalism that was tearing the Ottoman Empire apart, but also had hopes for the Young Turk movement to bolster Ottoman power, with its own nationalism in the making. Ideas of the Islamic revivalist movement centered around Muhammad Abduh in Cairo, and had a great impact on the educated in Bosnia Herzegovina, a number of whom subscribed to his popular publication, *Al Manar*. Articles on reform were translated and published in the provincial papers. These ideas gave the Muslims, both those in opposition and the Habsburg loyalists, renewed energy to organize for their religious and cultural advancement. The European notions of progress and enlightenment reaching Bosnia Herzegovina through Austrian educational efforts also had an effect on the Muslims’ understanding of their own course of action and were often intertwined with the reforms and modernization taking place in the Ottoman Empire and elsewhere in the Muslim world.

**Negotiating Ties with the Caliphate**

Joint Minister of Finance Benjamin Kállay died in 1903 and was replaced by Istvan Burián (1903–1912), chosen for his “knowledge of the East.”\(^\text{46}\) He was determined to resolve the issue of Muslim religious and educational autonomy and was more practical in attaining that aim.\(^\text{47}\) The prominent members of the movement, who were persecuted, in prison, or under house arrest were released in subsequent years and took

\(^{46}\) *Sarajevski list*, 89 (July 31, 1903).

\(^{47}\) Much has been written on the Kállay regime, but less so on that of Istvan Burián. Robin Okey corrects this to some extent in his *Taming Balkan Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
over the leadership of the movement. Having opposed the Habsburg administration they were seen as more “credible” representatives, and Džabić finally ceded his leadership to them in 1906, never to return to Bosnia Herzegovina. Even the Muslims loyal to the administration supported steps toward resolving the leadership vacuum that would finally bring about a solution to religious and educational autonomy for Muslims.48

In order to consolidate and position themselves as the representatives of the people before the Habsburg administration, members of the movement for educational and religious autonomy founded the Muslim National Organization (Muslimanska narodna organizacija-MNO), in December 1906, taking advantage of Burián’s new policy that allowed for political organization and usage of national and ethnic names for provincial associations. The leaders voted Ali Beg Firdevs, a notable and a landowner, the president of its executive board. Elections for local boards of the Muslim People’s Organization were held in urban centers around Bosnia Herzegovina and its delegates met in Pest for the organization’s first convention where they entrusted the executive board to “represent the Muslim people in all matters.”49

The primary issues of the movement under the leadership of former Mufti Džabić were those of religious ties to the Caliphate, education, and endowments, and only secondary came issues of property ownership and agrarian relations, which, although deemed important, were to be pursued once autonomy in religious matters was achieved. The new leadership dominated by landowners brought their economic interests to the fore in the organization’s charter and made it inextricable from the religious issues. They

48 Bošnjak, 8 (February 22, 1906).

49 Imamović, Pravni položaj, 137.
continued to advocate religious and educational autonomy, as these were the issues that won them overwhelming support of the Muslims of all classes province wide.

The negotiations that started soon after the founding of the new Muslim party were conducted along two tracks focusing on religious and educational autonomy, and property laws. Along both, the issue of Ottoman sovereignty in Bosnia Herzegovina was the focal point for the Muslim negotiators. The religious autonomy was based on the relationship with the Şeyhülislam and the Sultan-Caliph who would have a final say in religious matters (potentially overriding Austrian authorities), and with an aim to enhance the importance of shari‘a law, making the decisions of the shari‘a family courts, already adopted into the Austrian provincial legal practice, enforceable. Thus, the acceptance of religious autonomy with the inclusion of Ottoman sovereignty—even if only in religious matters—was helpful in attaining the recognition of Ottoman continuity in Bosnia Herzegovina, that would further make way for the acceptance of other Ottoman practices, including property laws. Property issues were exclusively founded on the interpretation of Ottoman law codes—so much so that even the Habsburg authorities based their counter-arguments on interpretations of the Ottoman laws.

In negotiations between the Habsburg administration and the representatives of the movement for religious and educational autonomy in Bosnia Herzegovina, the issue of religious hierarchy was the most contested. Appointments by the Şeyhülislam that symbolized continuity with the Ottoman Islamic establishment were of primal importance to the Muslims. In addition to its symbolism, the Muslim representatives insisted that the institution of the Rijaset headed by the Reis ul-uлемa be independent, and in charge of
vast and profitable Bosnian pious endowments, which in turn financed education and other religious institutions.

While the Habsburg administration felt comfortable accepting most of the demands regarding education and administration of pious endowments, the stumbling rock in the negotiations that kept being renewed and postponed was, once again, the issue of the appointment and confirmation of the Reis ul-ulma by the Şeyhülislam in Istanbul. Since it blurred the issue of sovereignty in Bosnia Herzegovina, and made Habsburg plans for annexation more difficult, the administration was not ready to accept this request.

Established on the premise that Bosnia Herzegovina was an Ottoman province under temporary Habsburg administration, the MNO refused to continue negotiations without establishing religious appointments from Istanbul, which presented a symbol of belonging to the Ottoman Empire and had earned the MNO popular support. The organization’s paper, Musavat (Equality), published a full page on the occasion of the Cülüs-i Hümayun—Sultan Abdülhamid II’s accession to the throne, titled: Padişahım çok yaşa (Long Live Our Sultan), encouraging this celebration punishable by the authorities. Even the chief shari’a judge, Sulejman Šarac, (appointed by the Habsburg administration) published an opinion in Ottoman Turkish advising that only the Şeyhülislam is authorized to appoint the religious officials in Bosnia Herzegovina—a move that got him suspended.

Not to prolong the standstill which neither the Habsburg administration nor the Muslim National Organization saw as productive, a letter was sent to the Ottoman

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50 Musavat, 29 (August 30, 1907), text transmitted in Imamović, Pravni položaj, 141.

51 The printout of the statement by Šarac and the transcript of the opinion are in Kadić, Tarih-i Enveri, 412.
Şeyhülislam asking for guidance in the matter. The recommendation of the Şeyhülislam were published in the paper Sarajevski list, and although it reflected the Bosnian Muslims’ requests, the lobbying of the Habsburg diplomats made an impression as well. Şeyhülislam suggested a compromise: he proposed that the council, Meclis-i ulema, elect three members, out of whom the Emperor would select one, who would then be recommended to the Şeyhülislam for confirmation and presentation of the Menšura.\textsuperscript{52} As these events developed just days before the Young Turk revolution that served as a cue to the Habsburg Monarchy’s annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina, the Habsburg administration had no reason to object to the Muslims’ aspirations to have an association with the Şeyhülislam anymore. However, the arbitration of the Şeyhülislam in this matter speaks to the role, as well as perceived and accepted importance of the Ottomans in matters pertaining to Islam and Muslims’ concerns.

After the Habsburg Monarchy annexed Bosnia Herzegovina in 1908, this issue ceased to be important for the authorities, as the sovereignty of this province was finally resolved. The agreement was made regarding all of the suggested issues, and the Muslims’ autonomy in religious organizations was finally adopted in 1909. The Reis ul-ulema could not assume his post until he received the Menšura from the Şeyhülislam. Although symbolic, this document of appointment continued to be issued by the Şeyhülislam until the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924, and was ceremonially handed to the appointees in Sarajevo’s central mosque. The importance of this act was illustrated in the charter of the Islamic Community of Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918–1941), reacting to the abolition of the Caliphate and establishment of the Turkish Republic. A council of prominent members of ulema was instituted to name the Reis ul-ulema and issue the

\textsuperscript{52} Sarajevski List 118 (October 2, 1908).
document of appointment “until the reestablishment of the caliphate.” The Sultan-Caliph was mentioned in Friday prayers across Yugoslavia up until the 1970s, of which the communist authorities were unaware since the supplication was recited in Arabic. Even to this day, the document of appointment of the Reis ul-ulema is issued, and the ceremony is performed in attendance of religious officials, religious leaders of other confessions, and prominent representatives from other Muslim countries as a way of legitimizing the Bosnian religious hierarchy. As late as 2012, a fatwa of the Bosnian Reis ul-ulema began with a preamble that elucidated the power of the Reis ul-ulema based on the Menšura and “in the absence of universal caliph.”

As a product of negotiation between the Habsburgs, the Ottomans, as well as the local actors, the institution of the Rijaset ended up being a partially autonomous Habsburg institution, while its legitimacy was rooted in the Ottoman system. The Rijaset of the Islamic Community became a popularly accepted institution that regulated all aspects of official religious life, shari’a courts, pious endowments, and religious schools. Moreover, the Rijaset played a central role in the political participation of the Muslims. National identities in Bosnia Herzegovina developed in this period based on religious belonging: the Catholics and the Orthodox Christians became Croats and Serbs,

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53 Fikret Karčić, Šerijatski sudovi u Jugoslaviji, 1918–1941 (Sarajevo: Vrhovno starješinstvo Islamske zajednice u SFRJ, 1986), 83.

54 More in Omer Nakićević, Istorirski razvoj institucije Rijaseta (Sarajevo: Rijaset islamske zajednice u RBiH, 1996), 58.

respectively. For the Muslims however, the confessional identity became equivalent to
the national one. Under these circumstances, the Rijaset became an institution that in
addition to religious matters dealt with social and political issues of Muslims in Habsburg
Bosnia Herzegovina, and became a backdrop to Muslim political participation. Its role
continued through different state formations that succeeded Austria-Hungary and
included the Bosnian Muslim population. The symbolism of Ottoman imperial power did
not end with the abolition of the Caliphate or the establishment of the Turkish Republic.
The sentiment of loyalty to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, even if transformed,
subdued or abstract, continued to the present day.

*Party Politics*

The MNO was successful in attaining all of the goals in negotiations with the
Habsburg administration. Ottoman sovereignty ceased to be a problem for the Habsburgs
after the annexation, so the nature and shape of religious ties with the Sultan-Caliph and
the Şeyhülislam were accepted together with the autonomy of the Muslims’ religious and
educational affairs. The property laws were ultimately accepted over the following years,
but because of the long process of implementation and ratification, this triumph was
symbolic. However, it brought unprecedented prestige to the MNO, in such measure that
no other party had a chance at competing in the first parliamentary elections in 1910: the
MNO won all 24 seats.

The Muslims’ last attempt to hold onto the Ottoman connection in their political
activity was during the annexation crisis. The MNO held out for more than a year
refusing to accept Habsburg annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina, even though the Ottoman
Empire had accepted the act. Upon annexation, while the MNO’s rival Muslim party sent representatives to Vienna to thank the emperor for annexation hoping to position themselves as the representative of the Bosnian Muslims, MNO’s leader Ali Beg Firdevs traveled to Istanbul, seeking guidance and instruction in an effort to recover Bosnia Herzegovina from Austria-Hungary, and achieve some sort of autonomy under Ottoman suzerainty. However, the Young Turks were too busy trying to consolidate their rule to be able to lend a hand to the Bosnian Muslims who were already, in effect, lost to the Ottomans for thirty years. MNO leaders, realizing that the only way to politically participate under new circumstances was to acknowledge the reality of annexation, declared loyalty to the Monarchy in 1910.

Address by Ali Beg Firdevs, the first president of the Bosnian Parliament at the opening ceremony, 1910. After his death the same year, he was succeeded by Safvet Beg Bašagić, a prominent cultural reformist. (Source: ABH).

Up until the beginning of World War I, the Muslims’ political activity in Bosnia Herzegovina was expressed through work in the Bosnian Parliament. Other Muslim parties were created, but had a hard time competing with the MNO. The agrarian reform,
the most prevalent issue discussed in the parliamentary session, was at the same time the most sensitive topic for the landlords controlling the MNO, and for the Serbian party claiming to champion the interests of the peasants. The alliances created over this issue showed that the Muslim majority had an important role and that Muslims were able to exercise political power, however limited by the provincial parliament.\textsuperscript{56} In addition to the elected members, following Habsburg confessional politics, representatives of religious hierarchies also participated in the work of the parliament: the Reis ul-ulema, head of the Islamic pious endowments administration, and muftis of Sarajevo and Mostar; four Orthodox Christian Metropolitans and the president of the Orthodox Christian community; the Catholic Archbishop and Franciscan representatives; and the Jewish chief rabbi.

\textbf{Members of the parliament, June 15, 1910 (Source: ABH).}

\textsuperscript{56} On the work of the parliament see, Imamović, \textit{Pravni položaj i unutrašnjo-politički razvitak BiH}, Chapter 5.
An important development after the introduction of political parties and the functioning of the parliament was the coming together of Bosnian Muslim representative factions, namely the activists of the movement for autonomy and the intellectuals who were critical of the movement’s oppositional activity. The oppositionists, considered reactionary and conservative, rejected the intellectuals for their closeness to the regime, while the latter in turn criticized them for obstructing the advancement and modernization of the Muslim community. The conservatives soon understood the power of new forms of sociability and community organization as advocated by modern educated intellectuals, and quickly learned to utilize new social and cultural organizations for political mobilization. Writers, teachers, and provincial administrators, too, began active engagement in party politics, some even in the MNO, many becoming members of the parliament and regional party representatives.

Political mobilization in Bosnia Herzegovina during the Habsburg administration was sparked by conversions, opening up the question of Muslim religious organization in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The initial activities, in accordance with Kállay’s policies in the province, were limited to cultural and religious affairs. However, political implications were unavoidable. The Muslims, at first mobilized around a symbolic issue seen as a threat to the community, expanded their demands requesting autonomy in religious and educational affairs. The movement for autonomy developed into a national party, the MNO—its popularity resting in the achievement of the said autonomy.
The Muslim leaders capitalized on the fact that the sovereignty of the province was still legally Ottoman: to the Habsburgs, they insisted on ties with the Sultan-Caliph, enforcement of Ottoman laws and codes existing in the province, and Turkish language for school instruction. To the Ottomans, they appealed for protection of their religious rights as part of the umma, and as Sultan’s faithful subjects, stimulating Ottoman diplomatic activity in their direction, and often trying to attract international attention.

The notables inserted their economic interests and positioned themselves as defenders of the Muslims of all classes for the duration of the Habsburg period. For them, the Habsburg regime turned out to be “the best guarantor of the landlord privileges that the Muslims could have hoped for.”⁵⁷ Considering the processes of modernization and reforms conducted in the Ottoman Empire, most of which were fully implemented after Bosnia Herzegovina fell under the Habsburg rule, it was likely that the Bosnian notables would not have had the opportunity to hold onto as much of their privileges had they remained in the Ottoman Empire. However, it was the Ottoman backing that they relied on when attempting to preserve their privileges, and at least in the early period of the Habsburg administration, hoped to reintegrate into the Ottoman Empire.

Political activity of the Bosnian Muslims during the Habsburg administration shows that they took advantage of their status and the ambiguous political position of the province to advance their political and economic claims. Far from being passive observers, the Muslims engaged both empires on different levels. They used Habsburg institutions and petitioning system to pursue their aims. By doing this, the Muslims legitimized the Habsburg administration in Bosnia Herzegovina and at least to some extent saw the Habsburg Monarchy as protector of their rights—the emperor did not

⁵⁷ Donia, 194.
become the protector of Islam, but was definitely called upon to defend the Bosnian Muslims’ religious and legal rights.

While petitioning the Ottoman Sultan, using the religious connection and Ottoman sovereignty in Bosnia Herzegovina to seek protection, diplomatic activity, and even restoration into the Ottoman Empire, the Muslims engaged the Habsburg legal and political system and international standards of the time. The Ottoman response was rather consistent but restrained, although the Ottoman policy of protecting the Muslim interests in Bosnia Herzegovina was adopted. Petitions were considered at the highest levels, and the Ottoman statesmen and administrators reacted when they could, some rather enthusiastically. The Ottoman diplomatic influence with the Austrians, as well as internationally, continued to diminish, and so did their sway in political activities in and regarding Bosnia Herzegovina. Correspondingly, the Muslim activists in Bosnia Herzegovina began to rely on their own devices in preserving rights and gaining political ground, while still insisting on Ottoman continuities that guaranteed those claims.
Chapter 6
Allegiances and Final Separation

Bosnia Herzegovina officially became a Habsburg province after the annexation in 1908 and remained so until the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1918. The annexation put an end to speculations, hopes, and fleeting dreams of return to the Ottoman fold. The legal basis of the Muslims’ claims to Ottoman protection of the previous thirty years ceased to be valid. However, although short, this period was characterized by a continuation of relationships between the Muslims of Bosnia Herzegovina and the Ottoman Empire, as well as Ottoman involvement with the province even after it had no official claims over its former territory.

Muslims became subjects of another multicultural empire, but still carried over their Ottoman loyalties even though the political basis of such loyalty collapsed and the ambiguous status of the province became clear. Ottoman loyalties and sentiments continued, and in many ways the Muslims persisted in seeing the Ottoman State as the protector of Muslim interests. Bosnian Muslim sentiment toward the Ottoman Empire and the Ottoman attitude toward Bosnia Herzegovina were relevant for the continuation and nature of relationships that materialized after the final separation form the Ottoman Empire. This chapter looks at the continuity and transformation of these relationships after 1908, a world in many ways different from the initial years of Bosnian occupation, mainly because of the widespread press and greater associational life, both in Bosnia Herzegovina and the Ottoman Empire, in which the Bosnian Muslims readily participated.
The Separation

After the oppositional activities of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), also known as the Young Turks, culminated in a revolution in 1908, establishing an Ottoman constitutional regime, Muslim and Serbian national organizations presented a joint request to Minister Burián for a Bosnian constitution based on Bosnia’s status as an Ottoman province. The Habsburg Monarchy, fearing a reinvigorated Ottoman Empire that might dispute their control of Bosnia Herzegovina, announced the annexation of the province. Representatives of the two Bosnian parties were planning to push for their demands in Pest when the news of annexation reached them. The annexation came as a shock to Muslims, who, aware of the Young Turk movement and its intentions at revitalizing the Empire, hoped for Ottoman repossession of Bosnia Herzegovina.

The Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina were divided over how to react to annexation. The prevalent and influential Muslim National Organization (MNO) advised the public through its official paper and announcements not to react, and hoped for an international conference that would correct Austria’s breach of the Berlin Treaty.¹ Another organization, the Muslim Progressive Party, expressed support for the annexation through its publication, and called onto people to accept the new situation having been hopelessly “captivated for thirty years with thoughts of Istanbul and the Ottoman State.”²

Still hoping for an Ottoman reaction, MNO’s President Ali Beg Firdevs traveled to Istanbul to press the Bosnian case with the Young Turks. According to Austrian intelligence reports, he asked the Young Turks on behalf of the MNO whether to “stay

¹ Imamović, Pravni položaj, 191–92.
² Ibid., 194.
put, migrate, or accept administration’s offer to negotiate.”³ The former leader of the movement for autonomy, Džabić, still banished from Bosnia Herzegovina and residing in Istanbul, addressed the members of the newly formed Ottoman Parliament hoping for their rejection of the Habsburg annexation, and proposing international arbitration and even war before accepting it. Both suggested coming up with a solution for Bosnia Herzegovina that would involve Ottoman administration. However, the Young Turk acceptance of annexation and a subsequent Ottoman-Habsburg agreement ended such speculations.

The agreement between Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire was signed in February 1909 by the new newly appointed Sadrazam Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha and interim Foreign Affairs Minister Gabriyel Noradonkyan Efendi on the Ottoman side, and the Austrian envoy Pallavicini. The articles addressed Bosnians’ citizenship and property ownership rights; religious rights, including official appointments of the religious hierarchy in Bosnia Herzegovina by the Şeyhülislam in Istanbul, and permission to mention the Sultan’s name in the Friday sermons; monetary compensation to the Ottoman Empire in the amount of 2.5 million Ottoman lira; and trade, postal, and customs agreements.⁴

A Memorandum by the People of Bosnia Herzegovina⁵ was submitted to the Ottoman Parliament that same month expressing shock and disappointment at the “shameful sale” of “faithful subjects” for a few millions, extolling Bosnian history as part of the Ottoman State, and their continuous readiness to sacrifice for the Ottoman Empire

³ Ibid., 196.
⁴ BOA, HR.HMŞ.IŞO. 36/4-9 (February 26, 1909), BOA, HR.HMŞ.IŞO. 36/4-8 (April 26, 1909).
⁵ A copy of this Memorandum is in Gazi Husrev-Beg Library.
and Islam. The document warned that by annexing Bosnia Herzegovina, the Austrian intention was to give “mortal blows” to the Ottoman state and completely destroy its Bosnian Muslim subjects. Most painful seemed to be the monetary compensation to which the Memorandum referred as the sale of land that was earned through blood by those who have no rights to it. Finally, the Memorandum expressed hope that the Ottoman people would not accept such a shameful act and offer 10 million liras, if the state was in such need of money that it had to sell its land.⁶

Seeing no reaction from the Ottoman Empire or the international community, while the Habsburg administration was preparing a Bosnian constitution and a provincial parliament, MNO leaders realized that they had to recognize the annexation in order to continue functioning in Bosnia Herzegovina. Other Bosnian parties already sent their representatives to Vienna to express allegiance and acknowledge their acceptance of new political circumstances. It took the MNO more than a year to accept the act of annexation and pledge loyalty to the Habsburg Monarchy.

The provincial constitution was announced just a few days after MNO’s acceptance in 1910, but it did not bring much of a change in the administration of Bosnia Herzegovina. It introduced a provincial parliament (Sabor) with limited powers rendering its decisions mere recommendations, rather than having any effect on the laws of the province. Compared to other Habsburg provincial constitutions of the same period (in Moravia and Bukovina, for example), Bosnian was the most restricted.⁷ The members were elected based on the national and religious proportion, divided among the

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⁶ Imamović, Historija Bošnjaka, 430.

landowners and city and rural dwellers. Whereas voting rights were reserved for men, women landowners paying at least 140 krone in taxes were also allowed to vote. Because Bosnia Herzegovina did not belong to either part of the Monarchy, its inhabitants did not become Austrian or Hungarian citizens but had a special status. The administration planned to expand the rights and participation in the province gradually, in the form of “rewards” to the people, who were considered too backward for full democratic institutions.9

Special status of Bosnia Herzegovina within the Monarchy translated to denying full citizenship and the rights that came with it to the inhabitants of the province. Their legal rights abroad were also affected: As one case study showed, the legal jurisdiction of Muslim Habsburgs in the Ottoman Empire exposed the Habsburg views of Bosnia Herzegovina as a colony, rather than equal member in a multicultural state.10 The Muslims did not have access to capitulatory status the other Habsburgs in the Ottoman Empire did. Since Bosnia Herzegovina had its own shariʿa courts, the Habsburg Departments of Justice and Foreign Affairs decided that the Habsburg Bosnian Muslims in the Ottoman Empire should seek the resolution of their issues in the provincial courts, which the Ottomans rejected as unnecessary hardship since shariʿa courts existed in Ottoman lands.11

8 Imamović, Pравни положај, 216.

9 Ibid., 213.


11 Ibid.
Although feeling insecure under new circumstances, the Muslims started participating in the newly animated political life of the province. The Bosnian Muslims took advantage of their limited economic and demographic dominance, but were increasingly intimidated by activities of nationalist movements, low rate of education within the community, and as a consequence, lack of participation in the provincial bureaucracy.

Reactions to Annexation

The annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina by the Habsburg Monarchy might have come as a surprise to those in Bosnia Herzegovina, but less so to the Ottoman State. The possibility of Habsburg annexation had been discussed in the European press for several years before the actual act. The discussions in the Ottoman Empire and internationally focused not on Austrian plans, as they were apparent, but on reactions of the Great Powers and the effect it would have on the balance established by the Berlin Treaty.

Already in 1906, the Ottoman ambassador in Rome reported on an article in *Pester Lloyd* discussing speculations in another paper, *Patrie*, about Habsburg annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina. Whereas *Patrie* maintained that Austria-Hungary was preparing the ground for annexation, *Pester Lloyd* argued that it was not so easy: even though Russia was not in the position to respond, other countries would not allow divergence from the Berlin Treaty and change of status quo that would throw the Balkans into turmoil.\(^\text{12}\) Despite obvious Habsburg intentions, the complications a breach of the Berlin Treaty would bring, seemed to have been an assurance for the Great Powers, and to some extent the Ottomans, that Austria-Hungary would not act.

\(^{12}\) BOA, Y.A.HUS. 507/5 (October 19, 1906).
The reports from the two parts of the Habsburg Monarchy were conflicting: The ambassador in Vienna did not give much significance to discussions about the annexation and relied on denials of any such plans by Austrian officials. He reported that no importance was given to annexation speculations by foreign ambassadors, politicians, or press in Vienna.\textsuperscript{13} However, Ottoman reports from Pest related that annexation was openly discussed in the Hungarian Parliament, and the belief there was that Bosnia Herzegovina should become part of Hungary upon annexation.\textsuperscript{14} This discussion further aroused nationalist feelings of Austrians and Croats, and some even suggested leaving Bosnia Herzegovina to Serbia. Analysis in \textit{Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung}, assuming dispute over an introduction of legal regulations in Bosnia Herzegovina in the future, proposed that both Austria and Hungary needed to work together to reinforce the permanence of occupation without violating Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty. The consul reporting on this article added that the Austrians would not lack examples for this purpose, reminding his superiors of Tunisia, Egypt, Cyprus, and even Morocco.\textsuperscript{15}

Turhan Pasha, ambassador in St. Petersburg, prompted by an article in the Russian press about Habsburg intentions of annexing Bosnia Herzegovina, spoke to the representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry. He confirmed that there was talk of annexation, but also that there was an agreement among the powers in place. He related that even though there was an agreement about non-action without signatories’ consent, Russia was concerned. The Russian official conveyed to the ambassador that while earlier Russia was alone in opposition, France, England, and Italy came to have similar

\textsuperscript{13} BOA, Y.A. HUS. 511/48 (May 4, 1907).

\textsuperscript{14} BOA, Y.A. HUS. 513/99 (August 5, 1907).

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
concerns, and Germany was about to join them. “In order to look good to the Slavs,” continued Turhan Pasha, “the Russians would do anything to hinder Austria’s undertaking; if not successful though, it was not yet known if they would react with more than just a mere protest.”¹⁶


¹⁶ BOA, Y.A. HUS. 525/56 (October 4, 1908); sent September 30.
In Istanbul, after the restoration of the constitution in the summer of 1908, Sadrazam Kamil Pasha assumed office, and the preparations for the Ottoman parliamentary elections were under way. The CUP was bracing to maintain control of the Sultan and the Sublime Porte behind the scenes, amid workers’ strikes and protests in major cities of the Empire. Taking advantage of the situation in the Ottoman Empire, its outside rivals all attempted to seize as much as possible in territories and concessions, knowing that the administration was too occupied with establishing internal order to respond to outside threats.

In a matter of several days, the Ottoman Empire was given blow after blow: on October 5, Bulgaria announced independence from the Ottoman Empire; Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia Herzegovina the next day; and on October 7, Crete announced union with independent Greece, while the Russian foreign affairs minister was interested in renegotiating Russian access to the Bosphorus. In addition, it was Ramadan, when life and official business altogether slowed down during the month of fasting.

The Austrian ambassador in Istanbul sent an official note to the Ottoman Foreign Affairs Ministry stating that the Vienna Cabinet was withdrawing its soldiers from Yeni Pazar amending Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty: The Habsburg Cabinet felt that a new era had started for the Ottoman State with the second constitutional period, and that the Ottomans were finally ready to maintain order on their own in said county. The withdrawal from Yeni Pazar was thought to be enough compensation for annexing

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18 Ibid., 4.

19 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 525/67 (October 7, 1908).
Bosnian territory that was anyway only nominally under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Sultan.

The same day, the Ottoman ambassador in London reported that he was invited by the British foreign affairs minister to discuss annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina and independence of Bulgaria. The British minister, saying his country did not approve of Austria’s deceitful act, advised the Ottomans to protest and ask for retribution, but avoid war. He also mentioned that there was some talk of a conference in light of the events, and that he had heard that Russia, Italy, and Germany already approved of the annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina and independence of Bulgaria. Head interpreter in the French embassy confirmed the same attitude of the French government.20 Italy, having comparable interests with Austria in the Balkans, had to be reassured, and the Italian ruler was notified by a handwritten note from the Austrian Emperor announcing establishment of a legislative system in Bosnia Herzegovina as part of the Habsburg Empire. The fact that Italy did not react to annexation was evaluated as a trade-off for consent to Italy’s colonization of Trablusgarb (Ottoman Libya).21

The Ottoman administration, caught unprepared to respond militarily, did not have much choice except for nominal protests internationally. The Young Turk administration sent protest notes addressed to the European press and agencies, while prominent regime papers, Tanin, Ikdam, and Ittihad ve Terakki, published them on their front pages.22 The Ottomans hoped for a conference where the interests of other

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20 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 525/66 (October 7, 1908).
21 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 525/70 (October 7, 1908).
signatories of the Berlin Treaty would deter Habsburg advancement, or at least create an opportunity for negotiation. Public opinion at home and in Europe was the only hope for resolving the Bosnian annexation crisis in a manner beneficial to the Ottomans. Regardless, no Great Power openly opposed Austria-Hungary and talk of conference waned.

The most fervent reaction outside of the Ottoman Empire came from Serbia. The Ottoman consul in Belgrade sent an urgent telegraph to Istanbul saying that the Serbian foreign affairs minister notified him that if necessary, Serbia would support, even militarily, any action the Ottoman Empire would take in response to the Bulgarian independence proclamation and Austrian annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina.23 Protests erupted when the news spread among the public. In Belgrade, protestors shouted: “Long live the Sublime State, long live England and Serbia,” and slogans against Austria and Bulgaria. The protestors cheered slogans of support in front of the Ottoman consulate, and the consul wrote back to Istanbul that he had to appear on the balcony to greet them several times.24

Politika, a Belgrade paper known to express official opinion, reported that Serbian consuls were to deliver an official request to the Great Powers demanding autonomy for Bosnia Herzegovina. The same paper also reported on the calls for increases in the Serbian military budget, raising concern in neighboring regions.25 Although Serbia did not approve of annexation and was supportive of the Ottoman protest, the Ottoman Council instructed its ministry of war that measures needed to be

23 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 525/68 (October 7, 1908).
24 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 525/78 (October 15, 1908).
25 BOA, Y.A.HUS. 526/77 (February 9, 1909).
taken in order to prevent Serbian and Montenegrin territorial plans for Yeni Pazar in light of the Habsburg withdrawal and developments in Bosnia Herzegovina.\textsuperscript{26} The annexation caused more anxiety among the Muslim population in Yeni Pazar district than in Bosnia Herzegovina because of the fears of Serbian and Montenegrin territorial encroachment and the violence that usually came with it.

Protests in reaction to Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina were organized across the Ottoman Empire in major urban centers, from Skutari and Salonica, to Trabzon, Aleppo, and even Tripoli, most often by CUP members.\textsuperscript{27} After articles calling for a boycott of Austrian goods appeared in the journals \textit{Servet-i Fünun} and \textit{Tanin}, Istanbul was placated with posters calling for the same.\textsuperscript{28} Other papers picked up on it and the boycott spread rapidly targeting Austrian goods, banks, and ships arriving to Ottoman ports: Austrian shops were blocked, while the port workers refused to carry goods to the quays and service the Austrian carriers.\textsuperscript{29}

The paper \textit{Tercüman-ı Hakikat} published telegraphs from Bosnia Herzegovina and wrote that the Muslims there supported the boycott and remained loyal to the Ottoman State.\textsuperscript{30} The boycott was publicized as far as India encouraging Muslims there to join in; while Serbia and Montenegro also halted trade and boycotted Austrian goods in solidarity.\textsuperscript{31} The boycott lasted for roughly five months and did not have as much of an

\textsuperscript{26} BOA, MV. 125/38 (March 7, 1909).

\textsuperscript{27} Davison, 5, 10.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 5–6.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 6–7.


\textsuperscript{31} Davison, 10.
impact on the economy as it was a symbol of Ottoman unity. Reminiscent of the Iranian tobacco protest, the Bengali boycott of British goods, or the Chinese boycott of United States’ goods, it was one of the few responses the Ottoman Empire was left with in the early twentieth-century world.\textsuperscript{32} The boycott had a diplomatically useful dimension as well: the Sublime Porte was able to negotiate the terms of annexation with Austria-Hungary, and even receive monetary compensation.

\begin{figure}
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Public protest against annexation and critique of Austria-Hungary continued in the Ottoman press and various publications. One such publication was the *Patriotic Plea against the Austrian Annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina*, written by an Ottoman judge of Bosnian origin in 1908. Upon emphasizing the importance of Bosnia Herzegovina as a core Ottoman province whose inhabitants performed the holy duty of guarding its borders; he wondered if there would be an “executive power” (kuvve-i icraiye) that would correct the breach of international law and punish the Habsburg Monarchy. He added that the “sale” of land would not only remain a disgraceful act in Ottoman history, but the abandonment of Bosnia Herzegovina would pain the whole Islamic world.

*The Bosnia Herzegovina Ottoman Beneficent Association* published a brochure in six parts—three of which were sent to the Ottoman government and the parliament and the other three were intended for publications that would influence public opinion. The pamphlet highlighted the attachment and allegiance of the Bosnian people to the Ottoman state, and that both Muslims and Orthodox Christians would not accept a solution for the status of the province that would not include the Ottoman Empire. Bosnian Ali Rüşdi also addressed the Ottoman Parliament in a letter confirming the Muslim-Orthodox unity and commitment to achieve Ottoman rule or autonomy for Bosnia Herzegovina, “until

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33 Ali Ulvi, *Avusturya’nın Bosna Hersek’i ilhakına karşı bir mudaafa-i vatanperverane* (İstanbul: Rusen Matbaası, 1324).

34 Ibid., 8.


36 Emgili, 174.

37 Ibid., 175–76.
the last drop of their blood.” 38 He appealed to the members of parliament to do justice and compared the acceptance of monetary compensation to treason. 39

Another booklet, *Bosnia Herzegovina or Ottomans’ Alsace-Lorraine*, 40 compared French patriotic claims in the disputed region to Ottoman sentiment regarding Bosnia Herzegovina. The former mufti of Mostar and exiled leader of the Bosnian movement for religious and educational autonomy published a short work in Arabic, critical of the Habsburg administration and protesting its annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina. 41 Many of these publications raised concern over practical issues for the Ottoman Empire, the most important of which were incoming migrants. Human plight in the process of migration, and burden on the Treasury and local population were concerns the government was asked to consider as well.

In response to critique of his handling of the Bosnian and Bulgarian issues, seventy-six-year-old Sadrazam Kamil Pasha made a statement summarizing Ottoman powerlessness in the matter and reliance on European public opinion:

“I know there are those who object by ascribing soft attitude to my old age. This is a mistaken idea. If it were that way, it would be easy to find a young Sadrazam. Yet, it is not me who is old—it is the Sublime State. Our age is not that of Sultan Süleiman the Magnificent. Secondly, Bosnia Herzegovina is indeed our possession, but a possession that we do not own. It is possible to preserve and protect a possession that is under one’s control by way of war. However, it is not so easy to take back a possession where we do not enforce our rule. Even if it were possible to form an international court [conference] (*mahkeme-i düveliyye*) to deal with the political questions, the actions of this court would have been bound by mutual benefits [of the members]. Certainly the principle of “the victor has the last word” is the rule, no matter what. Our prolonging of the issue is not rooted in soft attitude, but is a result of expecting a positive outcome by showing

38 Ibid., 176.

39 Ibid.


a friendly and pacifist attitude and relying on the fairness of European public opinion . . . 42

After Bosnia Herzegovina officially became a Habsburg province, the legal relationships of Bosnian Muslims with the Ottoman Empire transformed along the lines of the Habsburg-Ottoman agreement signed in 1909. It became the legal criterion for all interactions, including citizenship, land ownership, and other official business between the Ottoman Empire and its former subjects in Bosnia Herzegovina.

Some who immigrated to the Ottoman Empire before the annexation, like Abdullah, son of Mahmud, still petitioned the Ottoman authorities to settle their inheritance in Bosnia Herzegovina, calling upon Ottoman laws. The Sublime Porte’s Legal Counsel advised this applicant that, according to similar cases, the best way to act was to go directly to the Bosnian court, or to apply to the Austrian consulate with official documents concerning inheritance. 43 Others, finding no legal response in the Austrian system, petitioned the Ottoman authorities. Such was a petition by a certain Süleyman Efendi regarding his property that was seized by Austrian officials under the premise that it was state land (miri), although he was in possession of an Ottoman title deed.

The Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte responded stating that the said property needed to be returned to its owner according to the Ottoman-Habsburg agreement of 1909 that stipulated the continuation of property rights, and directed the Ottoman embassy in Vienna to take the necessary steps to make sure these rights were observed. 44

The issues regarding property were so many even from the onset of the Habsburg occupation that a committee was to be formed in the last decade of the nineteenth century

42 BOA, Y. Kamil Paşa Evrakı 3319 (1908).

43 BOA, HR.HMŞ.İSO. 29/2-4, 27/2 (April 17, 1910) in Bosna ile ilgili arşiv belgeleri, 312.

44 BOA, HR.HMŞ.İSO. 29/2-1, 30/1 (April 24, 1910), in ibid., 314.
within the Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte that would solely focus on resolving petitions and issues relating to property in Bosnia Herzegovina.\(^{45}\)

The Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina continued to seek Ottoman legal protections even after the annexation. Bosnians filed complaints with the Ottoman authorities regarding travel to Bosnia Herzegovina when they were denied visas or entrance.\(^{46}\) In some cases, the petitioners were, or had recently become, Ottoman citizens, giving Ottomans a basis for official demands from the Habsburg authorities in protection of their citizens. Often though, the Ottomans advocated on behalf of and in protection of Muslims’ rights.

When the provincial constitution was announced in Bosnia Herzegovina, the Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte instructed the ambassador in Vienna to investigate whether the articles of the constitution contradicted the agreement from 1909, and if the new provincial constitution was in any way changing the previously agreed protocol between the two empires. Most importantly, the ambassador was to look into whether the needs and demands of the Muslims were met.\(^{47}\)

After the Young Turk takeover, the Ottoman policy of protecting Muslims beyond their borders continued, carrying over the Hamidian understanding of its diplomatic and political influence, in a less spectacular but a more pragmatic way. When it came to migration, the Young Turks did not encourage it but made an even more concentrated effort to make use of incoming migrants by settling them in strategically important

\(^{45}\) BOA, BEO 456/34193 (August 16, 1894).

\(^{46}\) For example, BOA, HR. HMŞ. IŞO 29/2-4, 31/2 (December 5, 1909), in *Bosna ile ilgili arşiv belgeleri*, 306.

\(^{47}\) BOA, HR.HMŞ. IŞO. 29/2-3, 2 (March 6, 1910), in *Bosna Hersek ile ilgili arşiv belgeleri*, 311–12.
regions, such as Macedonia, the Aegean coast, or volatile border regions. The Muslims, in their effort to maintain association with the Ottoman Empire, came up with requests for awarding Ottoman medals to various Habsburg officials in Bosnia Herzegovina for their “tolerance and service to the Muslims” there. Such medals were requested from Talat Bey in 1916 and awarded to the Bosnian governor and director of internal affairs.\textsuperscript{48} Although limited to symbolic acts, the Ottomans were still making an effort to remain the Muslim guardians in Bosnia Herzegovina.

\textit{Muslims Loyalties}

Telling of the post-annexation attitudes in Bosnia Herzegovina were activities and opinions of Mehmed Šerif Arnautović, revealed in his writings and correspondence. Arnautović was a veteran high-ranking member of the movement for autonomy from its earliest days, and was even imprisoned for his oppositional activity. After the annexation, when the Habsburg authorities accepted the demands of the Muslim autonomous movement, he was appointed director of the Pious Foundations Administration in Bosnia Herzegovina and became a member of the provincial assembly. His political career of Habsburg oppositionist, pro-Ottomanist, and Habsburg bureaucrat reveals the ways in which Muslims evaluated their options and how they fused their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy, in light of realities in the province, and what he, and other Muslim representatives like him, thought was in the best interest for the Muslim people in Bosnia Herzegovina.

Concerned about migration and the negative effect it had on the status of those who stayed, Arnautović wrote to the Sublime Porte with plans to discourage migration,\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{48} BOA, DH.KMS. 39/10 (May 18, 1916).
explaining that the Muslims’ position improved under new circumstances, so much so that they even prospered.\textsuperscript{49} The landowning class was still strong, he claimed: the Muslims comprised one-third of the population and were in possession of three-quarters of Bosnian agricultural land. According to Arnautović, around 100,000 Christian families worked Muslim-owned land and roughly half of the trade was in the Muslims’ hands. Serbs and Croats, he continued, having among them political and nationalist animosities, were in need of a coalition with the Muslims. For this reason, when the planned provincial assembly opened, Muslims would be able to consolidate their position and fortify their political presence.

Pleased to describe the achievements of the movement for autonomy that allowed the relationship with the Şeyhūlislam to continue, he also went on to say that pious foundations and education were finally flourishing: yearly \textit{vakuf} income was over 1,900,000 francs; whereas the education given in schools was tailored along the Ottoman school program. \textit{Gajret}, a beneficent society founded several years earlier with a yearly income of 70,000 francs, was aiding students in various universities in Europe. Just in the year Arnautović wrote, there were more than 60 students being supported by \textit{Gajret} funds. Finally, Arnautović confirmed with pride that Bosnia Herzegovina was still Muslim: “The lovely view of Sarajevo’s 120 minarets reveals the Muslim essence of the city in one gaze to a foreign eye.”\textsuperscript{50}

The sentiment and loyalties, as an outcome of the complex relationship with the Ottoman Empire, were revealed in Arnautović’s assessment of the Muslims’ position: “There is no Ottoman who would not want the Muslims to become stronger and

\textsuperscript{49} BOA, Y. Kamil Paşa Evrakı 3433 (January 29, 1910).

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
influential in this region bordering the Ottoman Empire, and in a country, that for the past two hundred years, had had an eye on Ottoman territory.” The hint at mutual benefits of the Bosnian Muslim-Ottoman relationship was also a part of his evaluation of the circumstances.

Arnautović’s confidence in regained Muslim preeminence in Bosnia Herzegovina was not entirely baseless, but very much rooted in his optimistic outlook. Statistics from the period show that the landowners, agas and begs, dwindled in number from 8,000 in 1879 to 4,000 in 1918. When it came to education, out of 56,000 students in 568 elementary schools only about 10,000 were Muslim in 1913, even though elementary education became compulsory in 1911. The “Muslim essence of the city” continued to be fused with new directions in the Monarchy’s image making, blending Sarajevo, and Bosnia Herzegovina in general, into the central European architectural landscape where Ottoman heritage protruded as the exotic.

The Muslim parties, officially accepting Habsburgs as their rulers, engaged in provincial politics and focused on the work of the newly founded parliament for which elections were held in 1910. The Bosnian assembly, working along confessional lines that

51 Ibid.
53 Šehić, 36.
progressively became national, quickly divided over the issue of agricultural relationships and kmet buyout, as well as issues such as whether the official provincial language was Serbian or Croatian. The Muslims representing landowner interests in parliament were staunchly opposed to an obligatory buyout that would harm their economic and social standing. As for the language, attempts were made to push the Muslims into declaring their Serbian or Croatian nationhood by choosing a name for their language and a Latin or Cyrillic script. Some Muslim representatives even suggested (Ottoman) Turkish as the official language using Arabic script, while the progressive Reis ul-ulema Čaušević contributed to this debate by promoting and publishing several works in Bosnian Arabic script (arebica), also considered an alternative solution to the language question, quite important for the national determinations of the time.

Just as Arnautović predicted, the nationally divided factions in the assembly were in need of coalitions. The Muslims had a history of oppositional cooperation with the Serbs, but when it came to the issue of agricultural reform, where the interests of Muslim landlords run into those of Orthodox Christian (now Serbian) kmet, alliances with the minority Croatians were planned. This issue, reaching back to the Ottoman rule of the province and the Eastern Question, again became a cause of political and social unrest, but was soon eclipsed by the Balkan Wars and the outbreak of World War I.

The Balkan Wars, although taking place outside the Bosnian territory, caused concern among the Muslims and the Habsburg administration in Bosnia Herzegovina. Realities of armed conflict quickly showed true alliances: victories of the Serbian and Montenegrin forces in particular, caused enthusiasm among the Serbs in Bosnia Herzegovina, who together with the Croats organized celebrations on the streets of
Sarajevo. The Muslims gathered the next day in those same streets to protest the Ottoman attackers. The administration introduced security measures and even a curfew in the province while trying to maintain a neutral attitude, especially after volunteers to Serbian and Ottoman armies were seen off with public celebrations and processions in cities across Bosnia Herzegovina.

The territorial changes that occurred as a consequence of the Balkan Wars left a sizable Muslim population outside the Ottoman Empire. Drawing on the Bosnian experience of post-Ottoman Muslim life, Arnautović addressed these Muslims in an article titled “Muslims in the Balkans.” He warned the Muslims who had become citizens of new countries to learn from the Bosnians’ “bitter experience,” and avoid their mistakes, that is, not to reject everything new and foreign, and detest change and modernization:

Thirty-five years ago we were also occupied by a foreign power. We too were faced with a new way of life and work. … Everything new that came our way we hated and despised, and there was no thought of accepting any of it. … It took us 20–25 years to come to our senses: our children started attending schools in greater number and going for modern vocations, and we seriously took hold of our work and started competing with the rest of the world—to at least preserve what was left. … Now we bitterly regret not being able to quickly find our way under new circumstances.

Arnautović further advised the Balkan Muslims to realize that they would only prosper through hard work, education, and acceptance of the “new,” especially in the Balkans, which was “a part of Europe where others’ accounts are being settled, mostly to your disadvantage.”

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55 Imamović, Pravni položaj, 255.
57 Ibid.
The highlight of Arnautović’s political career throughout the Habsburg period was insistence on Bosnian ties to the Ottoman Empire: requesting the acknowledgment of Bosnia Herzegovina as Ottoman, then autonomy within the Ottoman system, and insistence on religious appointments by Istanbul. Even after the annexation, he encouraged the above-mentioned Gajret society to give scholarships for studies of theology (by default at Ottoman universities) seeing it as one way of continuing and strengthening relationships with Istanbul.\(^{59}\)

Having been labeled by the authorities as the second most extreme oppositional member, after Mufti Džabić, in the early period of Habsburg occupation, Arnautović changed his exclusive pro-Ottoman political course by the time World War I started.\(^{60}\) Many like him were affected by the territorial discontinuity with the Ottoman Empire that followed the Balkan Wars, and by further developments in World War I. Various alternatives emerged for the future of Bosnia Herzegovina, the Balkan states, and the former Ottoman territories toward the end of the war, affected by ideas of Pan-Slavism, nationalism, the Soviet revolution, and Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points implying national self-determination.

Muslim political representatives desired to have a role in whatever future arrangement Bosnia Herzegovina was to be a part of. Some were influenced by ideas of South Slav unity and a possibility of political union of such nature. Even Reis ul-ulema at the time seemed to have supported such Yugoslav solution for Bosnia Herzegovina. Others, feeling endangered by Serbian and Croatian nationalisms saw the future of

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\(^{58}\) Ibid.

\(^{59}\) Zgodić, 81.

\(^{60}\) More on his political thought in Zgodić, *Bosanska politička misao: austrougarsko doba*. 
Bosnia Herzegovina as an autonomous region in Hungary, but still as part of the Habsburg Monarchy, considered less harmful than nation-states.

Arnautović traveled to Istanbul in 1916, and the following year he wrote: “Istanbul is our holy ground … Istanbul is where our caliph, our religious leader is enthroned … Istanbul is our symbol and ideal, although we are faithful, proper, and most loyal subjects of our high Habsburg dynasty!” He was against Yugoslav unity and favored an autonomous status for Bosnia Herzegovina within the Monarchy, as was the political course of many in a newly merged political party, the United Muslim Organization. According to Austrian sources, autonomy within Hungary was a course followed by the majority of Muslim representatives resisting nationalist projects as late as 1918.

Arnautović and other like-minded politicians submitted a memorandum to the Habsburg joint minister of finance in October of 1918 asking for increased Muslim participation in the Bosnian administration, unaware of Habsburg dissolution in the last weeks of the war. Staying within the Monarchy was seen as a better solution for the future of Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina than the possibility of joining the Yugoslav state, which did not even recognize Muslims as constitutive people. That option ceased to be valid after the demise of Austria-Hungary. Bosnian Muslims became citizens of a nation-state in which the Habsburg political experience was of great value for reestabishing their rights and advancing their positions.

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62 Zgodić, 81, note 51.
63 Ibid., 89, note 86.
64 Ibid., 90.
Epilogue

The overlap of allegiances was to some extent possible in a state that cherished a multicultural vision of society such as the Habsburg Monarchy. However, fermented nationalist movements, uncontrollable by the administration of Bosnia Herzegovina at the eve of World War I, pressured the Muslims to identify with a nation (Serbian or Croatian). At the same time, these nationalists discriminated against them based on their religion, and equated the Muslims with the “terrible Turk.” Finding themselves in a situation comparable to those of the Jews in post-Habsburg Austria, Muslims, too, became more attached to the community, and strengthened their unity. As Robin Okey observed, “the inner lack of sympathy with Muslims as Muslims which marked the Austrian administrators, Serbs, and Croats” was an important factor in the maintenance of Muslim solidarity. The fact that they identified as Muslim people (Muslimanski narod, islamski millet) not based on religion alone, but also culturally, historically, and territorially, further intensified their attachment to the Ottoman Empire. After all, their very identification as Muslims stemmed from the Ottoman millet system. Although within that system in the late Ottoman period, the Muslims were the only millet without the ecclesiastical structure through which they would have been governed and their interests protected—it was as if they became a millet after they ceased to be a part of the Ottoman system. It was the preservation of this system, closely tied around religious

65 See, Marsha L. Rozenblit, “Jewish Ethnicity in a New Nation-State: The Crisis of Identity in the Austrian Republic,” in In Search of Jewish Community: Jewish Identities in Germany and Austria, 1918–1933, eds. Michael Brenner and Derek J. Penslar (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998). The author suggests that the Austrian Jews wished to continue to identify as Austrians by political loyalty, as Germans by cultural affinity, and as Jews by ethnicity. Unable to do so, and not seeing themselves as ethnically German, they increasingly identified themselves primarily as Jews, which was further intensified by anti-Semitic exclusionism, 135.

66 Okey, 245.
institutions and the landowning elite—a cultural and economic backbone of the community that the Muslims saw as vital to their survival in the post-Ottoman period.

Ottoman legacy, experience under Habsburg rule, and the course of fighting for autonomy and continuation of ties with the Ottoman Empire, all contributed to a sentiment and even supra-loyalty that lasted toward the Ottoman Empire and what it represented for the Muslims of Bosnia Herzegovina after the separation from the Ottoman Empire. It was the symbol of the Empire in the minds of Muslims that facilitated the continuation of this sentiment and loyalty to Turkey after the Ottoman Empire ceased to exist in an almost seamless transition.
Chapter 7

Cultural Reform: Intellectuals Reconsider Ottoman Ties

Rooted in late Ottoman modernization efforts, the ideas of cultural reform in Bosnia Herzegovina fully developed during the Habsburg administration. Introduction of the printing press to Bosnia Herzegovina in the last years of Ottoman rule, and the development of mass communication through print and new ways of associational life were one of the most important steps in forming the specifically Bosnian experience of modernity that brought a new understanding of one’s place within the world, as well as new forms of social and individual organization.

Parallel to Muslim oppositional activity under the Habsburg administration, there was another current among Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina advocating cultural reform. The movement for cultural reform was a diverse group that included intellectuals and notables prominent in cultural life of the province during the last Ottoman years, first generation Habsburg-nurtured intelligentsia—largely writers and teachers educated in the Monarchy’s capitals, along with notables and religious officials associated with the administration.

While the movement for autonomy assumed political character, the cultural reformists avoided political engagement and were often critical of their politically active coreligionists opposing the administration, especially in the early period of the Habsburg administration. That is not to say that they were neutral or inactive when it came to political issues of the Bosnian Muslims. They passionately advocated education and cultural reform as a pretext for Muslim equality and political participation. Both groups,
functioning simultaneously and sometimes cooperating throughout the period of the
Habsburg administration, had corresponding aims: maintaining the sociopolitical and
economic status of Muslims, their traditions, and social, and even physical existence of
the Muslim community, transitioning from Ottoman into the Habsburg Empire.

Those advocating cultural reform, in essence, saw the prospect of achieving their
aims within the Dual Monarchy, and by way of opportunities provided by its Bosnian
administration. Some Bosnian political scientists go as far as to actually consider the
movement for autonomy apolitical, because it sought Muslim institutional autonomy
effectively aiming at “autogetoization,” that is, institutional withdrawal and functioning
within those limits, without questioning the administration and the regime. The
presumed apolitical attitude of the cultural reformists was largely encouraged by various
Habsburg policies, envisioned by Joint Minister of Finance Benjamin Kállay who
focused on promoting Bosnian identity that was to supersede all national and religious
identifications of Bosnian subjects. Kállay made this policy his undertaking interlocking
the strategic needs with the multicultural vision, and the cultural mission of the Habsburg
Monarchy. The Muslims, seen as the key group for Habsburg control of the province,
were courted and controlled.

The Habsburg idea of a regional identity that was to counter aggressive Slav
nationalisms encroaching on Bosnia Herzegovina overlapped with the intellectual
currents coming from Europe, the neighboring Balkan nation-tates, and the Ottoman
Empire, considering discourses of nationhood. Ethnographic efforts of primarily
Habsburg scientists directly working on Bosnia and its natives also had an important

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influence on “imagining” the community and articulating a national identity among the Bosnian Muslims.

The period of Habsburg rule is considered a stage of modernization and westernization in contemporary Bosnian historiography. Many of the intellectuals active in this period are extolled as the pioneers of modern intellectual thought and proponents and guardians of Bosnian identity. Likewise, the period of literary output during most of the Habsburg rule in Bosnia Herzegovina was named the period of cultural “renaissance” (preporod). The historiography considered the Habsburg occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina that terminated Ottoman administration to also have discontinued all ties with the Ottoman and Muslim world. The cultural reformists of Habsburg Bosnia were extensively analyzed in modern Bosnian scholarship situating them within the larger themes of nationalism, intellectual history, and literature, in an attempt to overcome the ideological limitations of the Yugoslav periods. Western literature-based Habsburg and Bosnian sources also evaluated the movement for cultural reform as a response to and an outcome of the Habsburg introduced modernization efforts.

Classical scholarship, in Bosnian and European languages, accepted the earliest Habsburg views of its provincial administration’s supporters and political opposition. Those promoting cultural reform were often characterized as enlightened with an understanding of progress as a means of survival for their community. Their (and

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3 Works of Muhsin Rizvić and others on literature of the period acknowledge the Ottoman literary influence in translational activities, while Fikret Karčić emphasizes the influence of Pan-Islamic ideas on Muslim intellectuals in Fikret Karčić, The Bosniaks and the Challenges of Modernity: Late Ottoman and Hapsburg Times (Sarajevo: El-Kalem, 1999).

4 Such as Šaćir Filandra, Bošnjaci i moderna: Humanistička misao Bošnjaka od polovine XIX do polovine XX stoljeća (Sarajevo: Bosanski kulturni centar, 1996).
Habsburg) opponents, on the other hand, were described as staunch and irrational traditionalists, usually associated with the ulema, while the trope of “Muslim fanaticism” was often invoked in their descriptions. The post-World War II Yugoslav historiography did not question this dichotomous division, but further analyzed it through the discourse of class competition, where the traditionalists represented the religious and feudal class and the modernists, the new emerging urban classes.

However, these two groups were not at opposing ends, neither in their origin nor in principles. They often overlapped in their efforts, and many of the cultural reformists had religious training or came from notable families. Likewise, as noted elsewhere in this study, the notables and the ulema were not all unanimous in opposing Austria-Hungary or the reformists. At the core of both movements’ efforts was an understanding of what “true” Islam was, and the solutions it offered for the community’s betterment. Their actions were solely guided by what the activists saw as contemporary conditions and immediate needs of Muslims, although their visions of what Muslims wanted differed at times and were influenced by the ideological and political circumstances.

In this chapter, I argue that the Muslim intellectual elite of Habsburg Bosnia Herzegovina was part of a broader community of the world’s Muslims. Although extensive analysis of the Muslim world’s reform movements of this period exists, Bosnian Muslim intelligentsia, however, had not yet been analyzed as part of these modernist movements. Bosnian intellectuals’ concern with the future of their culture,

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education, and society in general—all the while aiming to reconcile Islam with modernity—was not a unique undertaking, and it had much in common with the modernist movements of the Muslim world in the same time period and under similar circumstances. These intellectuals were influenced by developments in Istanbul and Cairo, and closely followed the activities of the Muslims ruled by non-Muslims, like those in tsarist Central Asia and independent Bulgaria.

This is not to discount the effects of the top-down Ottoman reforms, or the Habsburg imperial, that is, the colonial context that played an important role in shaping and nurturing the ideas and activities of the cultural reform. The structures set in place by the state in terms of administrative organization, treatment of the individual and the group (the millet system and its continuation in the Habsburg period), education, print, social associations, etc., all affected the ways in which the new intellectual elites understood the notions of tradition and modernity and the place of the individual in the community and the wider world.

**Origins of the Movement for Cultural Reform**

The origins of currents generally termed the movement for cultural reform in historiography on Bosnia Herzegovina can be found in the late Ottoman period. Throughout its Ottoman history, Bosnia Herzegovina was the Ottoman primary space for endowments, investment, and versatile development and expansion. The features of the

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6 Timothy Mitchell remarked that the colonial subjects are formed “within the organizational terrain of the colonial state, rather than some wholly exterior social space,” in Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), xi.
Tanzimats were implemented in Bosnia Herzegovina with eagerness, in spite of opposition and rejection of the local notables most affected by its consequences.

Although short, the Tanzimat period in Bosnia introduced measures and set the foundations of the modernizing experience in all aspects of society, from legal and administrative organization, economy, infrastructure, secularization of the shari’a, to modern education, print, and notions of civil rights, constitutional government, and the power of public opinion. Most importantly, this period saw the fundamentals, as well as the opposition to the reforms articulated in the context of the Islamic state and particularly Islamic terms. New forms of societal organization brought new understanding of religion and the meaning and place of Muslims in the world.

Bosnia together with the provinces of Danube, Erzurum, and Damascus was selected to try the new vilayet system of Ottoman Tanzimat provincial organization that entailed reorganization of the administrative and judicial divisions and their officials, and greater central oversee. The most important feature of the new system was the introduction of representative councils at different levels of administration that included elected and appointed members.7 Whereas the traditional schools, mekteb and medrese, continued functioning, the new Ottoman educational policies introduced modern elementary and higher schools that taught a variety of subjects. In this short period, administrative (Mekteb-i hukuk) and teachers’ (Dar ul-muallimin) schools opened in

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Sarajevo, educating the first generation of modern bureaucrats and teachers in the spirit of the Tanzimat.

During the tenure of Topal Şerif Osman Pasha (1861–1869), Bosnia Herzegovina’s enlightened Ottoman governor, the province experienced the most successful features of the Tanzimat. In addition to reorganizing the province and building roads, railways, schools, hospitals, and libraries, Topal Şerif Osman Pasha founded an inter-confessional provincial assembly and executive council. The intensity of anti-Ottoman nationalist propaganda coming from Croatia and Serbia, especially through the textbooks for confessional schools and the press that were imported to Bosnia, as well as a number of missionary schools set up in this time period, impelled the governor to introduce comparable local sources of Ottoman influence. Considering the power of print and education, the governor focused the reform measures to reflect the Ottoman mark in these fields.

His long-lasting effect on the cultural reform in Bosnia was setting up of the official vilayet printing press in 1866 and the initiation of two papers Bosnaski vijesnik (Bosnian Herald) in Bosnian Cyrillic script, and Bosna (Bosnia) in Bosnian and Turkish. Until 1878, the vilayet press published more than 22 titles including books, as well as laws and regulations in Turkish and Bosnian. The printing of the Salname-i vilayet-i Bosna, the Ottoman official yearbook for the vilayet of Bosnia, was also initiated the same year and continued until 1892, with a three-year interruption after the Habsburg occupation. An official paper of Herzegovina vilayet was Neretva, published in 1876 and with Mehmed Hulusi as its editor.

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8 Đorde Pejanović, Štamparije u Bosni i Hercegovini, 1529–1951 (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1952), 11–16.
At a request of Mehmet Šakir Kurtčehajić (1844–1872), the governor approved the launch of another paper, *Sarajevski cvjetnik (Gülşen-i saray)* in 1869. In this paper, Kurtčehajić, journalist and educator, member of the provincial assembly, and mayor of Sarajevo, expressed his views on identity and patriotism influenced by contemporary intellectual currents in the Ottoman Empire. His loyalty was to the Ottoman Empire, and he saw this allegiance as necessary for the advancement and strengthening of the multi-religious and multi-national Ottoman State.\(^9\) A longtime supporter of modernization, Kurtčehajić and his peers, following the trends in Istanbul, developed consistent Young Ottoman thought, very much applicable in a multi-religious Bosnia Herzegovina. Governor Topal Şerif Osman Pasha, just like Benjamin Kállay some decades later, encouraged the idea of Bosnianism, seeing it as a form of regional identity that would counter the nationalist propaganda threatening the province and endangering Ottoman rule in the Balkans in general.

**Transition into the Habsburg Empire**

The Habsburg occupation did not discontinue the reform and modernizing efforts that were initiated during the last Ottoman years in Bosnia Herzegovina. Similar to the rest of its administrative organization, the Habsburgs in Bosnia Herzegovina carried over Ottoman practice in the area of intellectual and educational activities, in order not to create popular dissatisfaction and to attract the support of especially the Muslims. Although planning to weaken the Ottoman influence, the administration encouraged and financed the publication of papers even in Turkish, and advanced similar local initiatives

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with a long-term goal of drawing the Muslim leaders and the educated elites into the
Habsburg and Central European intellectual circles.

As soon as control of the province was established, the Habsburg administration
started the *Bosansko-hercegovacke novine* (Bosnia Herzegovina News), later *Sarajevski
list* (Sarajevo Paper), in which, in addition to relevant news, it started promoting its
particular civilizing mission with westernization, Latin script, and modern education as
the basis of progress and separation of this province from its ‘Oriental’ heritage. Sporadic
dedication of some articles to stylized ‘Eastern’ themes in poems and short stories
(“Stories from the Arab desert,” “Story from Persia,” etc.), written by non-Muslim
authors, or articles examining the Turkish influences on the Bosnian language (“Turcizmi
u Bosni”), testify to the administration’s intentions to include the Muslims.\(^\text{10}\) It is only in
the 1890s that Muslim authors began publishing in *Sarajevski list*.

Printing of the yearbook *Bosna ve Hersek vilayet salnamesi* in Turkish continued
in the period 1882–1893, assuming its original purpose and content begotten in 1866, and
even its official character, since it published statistical and administrative information in
addition to the calendar of yearly events and articles on history and culture.\(^\text{11}\) Muslim
intellectuals at first felt more comfortable publishing in this yearbook in Turkish than in
the Bosnian Latin script in the *Bosansko-hercegovacke novine*. The articles in the
yearbook were written by the late Ottoman intellectuals who continued their activities
into the Habsburg period. Most were from notable landowning families and some were
officials in the Ottoman *vilayet* administration.

\(^{10}\) Rizvić, *Bosansko-muslimanska književnost*, 20–23.

\(^{11}\) Bisera Nurudinović, “Bosanske salname (1866–1878 i 1882–1893)” Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju
The editor of the yearbook was Salih Sidki Hadžihuseinović Muvekkit (1825–1888), who contributed most of the published material.\textsuperscript{12} His name, Muvekkit, indicated that he was a timekeeper of the Gazi Husrev Beg pious endowment’s muvekkithane, established in the 1850s. He continued his line of work in the Habsburg period and arranged the calendar portion of the yearbook.\textsuperscript{13} He also contributed a number of articles on Ottoman officials of Bosnian origin, and wrote a book of history on Bosnia Herzegovina encompassing the time from the Ottoman conquest to the Habsburg occupation.\textsuperscript{14} History writing in the late Ottoman and Habsburg periods focused on the Bosnian historical accounts that often began with the Ottoman conquest, and the authors explicated the role of the province in imperial history, as well as situated the Bosnian historical actors and their contribution to Ottoman heritage. At the same time, they related to historical individuals, groups and movements through family, class, cultural, spiritual, and intellectual lineages.

Another prolific author appearing in the yearbook was Ibrahim Beg Bašagić (1840–1902), a notable from Herzegovina who held high positions in the Ottoman provincial administration of Herzegovina and was elected to the Ottoman Parliament. After 1878, he continued in his post of district governor, and later assumed high offices in the Habsburg administration of Islamic pious endowments. Fluent in oriental languages, he wrote poetry and articles in Turkish.\textsuperscript{15} Other authors noted in this publication were Mehmed Hulusi, editor of the Ottoman period paper \textit{Neretva} and an

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 257–58.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{14} Bosnian language translation of his work is: Salih S. M. Hadžihuseinović, \textit{Povijest Bosne} (Sarajevo: El-Kalem, 1999).

\textsuperscript{15} Rizvić, \textit{Bosansko-muslimanska književnost}, 30–31, note 5.
official of the Habsburg pious endowments administration, and Mehmed Teufik Azapagić, Istanbul-educated religious scholar, the mufti of Tuzla, and later second Reis ul-ulema of Bosnia Herzegovina.\textsuperscript{16}

After having gained confidence with the work associated with the \textit{Salname}, Muslim activists requested permission to begin publishing a paper that was established through donations and which would be supported by subscriptions. The newspaper called \textit{Vatan} (Homeland) was published in Turkish from 1884 to 1897, when its editor, Mehmed Hulusi, initiated another paper, \textit{Rehber} (Guide), also in Turkish. Although papers printed in Ottoman Turkish receded with time, the names of many remained Turkish: \textit{Behar} (Blossom), \textit{Musavat} (Unity), \textit{Gajret} (Endeavor), \textit{Tarik} (Path), \textit{Muallim} (Teacher), \textit{Misbah} (Lantern), etc. Discussions about the place of the Turkish language in Bosnian education and print as a link with the Ottoman Empire, Islam, or as a political position continued throughout the Habsburg era in Bosnia Herzegovina. The administration, although seeing Turkish as a threatening bond to Ottoman influences, tolerated Turkish as a sign of goodwill, most likely because of low widespread literacy in this language in Bosnia Herzegovina that was diminishing on its own anyway.\textsuperscript{17}

The fact that the first publications were in Turkish and that the content and writing style of the authors were very much in trend with the Ottoman literary and journalistic currents of the time, is indicative of the fact that these authors inhibited the Ottoman, as much as the new Habsburg Bosnian world. Muslim representatives active in the administration or those activists supportive of the Habsburg modernizing efforts were

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 31–32.

\textsuperscript{17} For example, when the Statute of Sarajevo was adopted in 1884, the administration saw no problem with a proposal to translate it to Turkish and distribute to representatives, in Todor Kruševac, \textit{Sarajevo pod austrougarskom upravom 1878–1918} (Sarajevo: Muzej grada, 1960), 271.
all part of the late Ottoman reform endeavors, and many were educated in Istanbul and thus affected by similar modernizing trends at the heart of the Empire.

One such development was the founding of kiraethana (Tur. kiraathane), an Ottoman concept reading room, first in Sarajevo in 1888 and then in other major cities of Bosnia Herzegovina beginning in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The reading room was a public space that offered newspapers, journals, and books to its patrons, as well as organized lectures and discussions. It served as a public forum, elevating the public consciousness about relevant issues for the Muslims, such as education and cultural development, and was the birthplace of the movement for educational and religious autonomy. Most importantly, the kiraethana was to remedy the problem of illiteracy as the important printed material was often read aloud and discussed. It was to be a bridge and an additional encouragement for promotion of communication through print in a society with an established oral tradition.

The Austrian administration worked to support the modernizing efforts of the nascent Muslim intelligentsia, as well as to separate the religious establishment and the ulema from Istanbul. To that end, the administration restructured the existing Ottoman educational institutions (mekteb, ruždia, and medresa), which it carried over, and established new ones that would relinquish the need for education in Istanbul. Especially pertinent in this effort was the establishment of educational institutions of higher religious education that would produce religious officials to serve in the Habsburg Islamic hierarchy separate from the influences of the Şeyhülislam in Istanbul. In 1887, Mekteb-i nuvvab was established with a main purpose of educating shariʿa judges who would work within the Habsburg legal system, which had absorbed the shariʿa laws in the
administration of Bosnia Herzegovina. The students at this school studied subjects related to shari’a and Habsburg jurisprudence and laws, Arabic, Bosnian, Turkish, Persian, German, and French, as well as other subjects in the sciences and humanities. The school became an example of modern education in the Muslim world: Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849–1905), one of the most important Muslim reformists and later mufti of Egypt, proposed opening of a school for shari’a judges to the Egyptian government citing the example of the Bosnian Mekteb-i nuyvab.\footnote{Fikret Karčić, “Maktab-i Nuwwab of Sarajevo: A Bosnian Contribution to Muslim Education,” \textit{IRKHS Research and Information Bulletin} 2 (1996): 62–3.}

The graduates of this and other modern schools in Bosnia Herzegovina often continued their education in Zagreb, Vienna, Istanbul, Salonica, or Cairo. Although the historiography of this period describes the educational patterns at the root of a split between the modernist and traditionalist factions—the Ottoman educated being the traditionalists—the fact is that many of the Ottoman era intellectuals, as well as those educated in the Ottoman capitals later, were actually a part of the progressive intellectual elite that was active beyond the Habsburg period in Bosnia Herzegovina. Likewise, many of those studying in Vienna and Zagreb attained specializations in Oriental studies and languages giving them access to the developments in the Muslim world through literature and the press.

Experience of modernity that began in the late Ottoman period in Bosnia Herzegovina continued into the Habsburg era, but it did not develop as a linear process of rejecting the Ottoman, Islamic, or Eastern, in place of the Habsburg, European, and Western. The modernity of Muslim intellectuals of this period was a complex response to their immediate sociopolitical environment in the province, reformist currents in the
Ottoman Empire and the wider Muslim world, and the efforts of the administration to nurture such modern intellectual elite hoping to attract and integrate them into the Habsburg imperial setting.

Approach to Empires

It has never happened before that over half million Mohammedans live in full freedom under the protection of a Christian ruler, as we live today in our homeland.\(^{19}\)

With these words, Mehmed-Beg Kapetanović Ljubušak (1839–1902), an Ottoman official in Bosnia Herzegovina and a member of the Ottoman Parliament, described the implications of the Habsburg occupation for Bosnian Muslims, comparing their fate to what happened in Serbia and Montenegro, just across the Bosnian border.

Born into a notable family in Herzegovina, Ljubušak was a graduate of medresa in Mostar. He was awarded the Third Class Order of Mecidiye for his participation in the Ottoman reform efforts of Cevdet Pasha in Herzegovina. After working as a district governor for some time in Bosnia Herzegovina, he traveled throughout Europe and the Ottoman Empire. Upon his return to Bosnia Herzegovina, he moved to Sarajevo, and in 1877 was named mayor and elected to the first Ottoman Parliament.

Right after the Habsburg occupation of Bosnia Herzegovina, he was in the group of representatives from Bosnia Herzegovina who traveled to Vienna for an audition with the Emperor to acknowledge Habsburg authority over the province. Soon after, he became a member of the city council and again mayor of Sarajevo (1893–1898). Ljubušak was awarded Habsburg Order of the Iron Crown, Third Class and named

\(^{19}\) Mehmed-Beg Kapetanović Ljubušak, *Buducnosti ili napredak Muhamedovaca u BiH* (Sarajevo, 1893), 4–5.
honorary counselor. Mehmed Beg Kapetanović Ljubušak (and some other beg families) requested the Habsburg authorities to confer a title of Austrian nobility based on his Bosnian and Ottoman titles and merit. Kapetanović requested a title of count or baron, but was after much deliberation on the Austrian side granted a place among the Austrian knighthood (österreichischen Ritterstandes) in the 1880s.²⁰

This almost seamless transition from one empire to another was characteristic of some of the notables and officials who distinguished themselves in the Ottoman reform efforts in the field of cultural and educational activities, and continued their endeavors into the Habsburg period. The development of print that brought about circulation of information and literature, along with travel that became possible for wider population by the end of nineteenth century, facilitated new ways of understanding one’s place within overlapping communities: religious, economic, linguistic, regional, etc., in ways not possible ever before. The understanding of modernity by intellectuals in Bosnia Herzegovina, as encouraged by the Ottoman Tanzimat measures that further grew in the Habsburg framework, was focused not on abstract ideas and ideologies, but developed around concrete and immediate social, political, and economic struggles in the province’s society. The forerunner in constructing such an outlook in Bosnia Herzegovina and setting the intellectual stance for generations to come was Mehmed Beg Kapetanović Ljubušak.

Even if the Bosnian Ottoman experience of Austria in earlier periods included expulsion and forceful conversion of Muslims in Hungary and Lika, Ljubušak saw the Habsburg administration in a new light: “Everyone knows that religious wars and the

²⁰ Husnija Kamberović, Begovski zemljišni posjedi u Bosni i Hercegovini od 1878 do 1918 (Sarajevo: Ibn Sina, 2005), 60–63.
Crusades ended a long time ago.”\textsuperscript{21} He perceived the possibility of prosperity and the future of the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina under Habsburg rule, because of the authorities’ promise of equality and impartial treatment of all, regardless of religion. Equal treatment and opportunity, he reasoned, should be the basis of the Muslims’ loyalty to the Monarchy as well.\textsuperscript{22} Regarding the anticipation of Ottoman action to take its lost province back, he stated: “As for the thoughts and hopes of Bosnian return to Turkish hands everyone here knows, that in the past two centuries, whatever the Turkish government lost, or was taken away from it, was never returned. Bosnia can be a lot of things, but never Turkish.”\textsuperscript{23}

By assuming a definitive attitude toward the Ottoman Empire, Ljubušak firmly ended the limbo many of the other Muslim leaders were lingering over, hoping for an Ottoman return or at least Ottoman support in their political endeavors. He advocated a focus on the immediate Muslim circumstances and wrote several articles and pamphlets, often in response to various attacks on Muslim loyalty to the Monarchy published in Austrian and Croatian papers in the early years of occupation. In his publications he shaped the argument of separation from the Ottoman Empire and encouraged concentrating on the improvement of social, cultural, economic, and political positions of Muslims under Habsburg rule by taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the administration.

Following suit were the intellectuals of the next generation, most of whom were graduates of modern Ottoman and Habsburgs schools, and universities in Zagreb, Vienna,

\textsuperscript{21} Mehmed-Beg Kapetanović Ljubušak, \textit{Budućnosti ili napredak}, 5.

\textsuperscript{22} Ljubušak, \textit{Što misle mukamedanci u Bosni i Hercegovini} (Sarajevo: Spindler & Löschner, 1886), 17.

\textsuperscript{23} Ljubušak, \textit{Budućnosti ili napredak}, 6.
and to a lesser extent Istanbul. Most came from notable families and after finishing their education were employed in various offices of the provincial administration or educational institutions. Their ideas and political attitudes were principally expressed in the ever-growing press of the province where they published literary content, essays, and translations, most often from Turkish, but also French, German, Hungarian, English, and even Japanese.

*Imagining the Nation*

The focus of the cultural reform advocates in Bosnia Herzegovina was on the immediate circumstances of the Muslims living within the administrative borders of the province. However, their worldview and intellectual background had broader horizons and encompassed multiple identities and influences. The various identities circulating in late Ottoman and Habsburg times in Bosnia Herzegovina presented an interconnected picture of overlapping religious, social, and economic structures of the region that were not mutually exclusive. The Ottoman *millet* system, carried over by the Habsburg administration, played an important role in early modern identities, but so did the urban and rural environments, trade and artisan guilds, language affinities, regional associations, Sufi networks, class affiliations, and imperial service.

Because of the political denial of a Bosnian nation throughout the twentieth century, and even after the establishment of an independent Bosnia Herzegovina in 1992, national identity of the Muslims was continuously debated and analyzed in local historiography and even more after the 1992–1995 war in publications worldwide. However, the framework of nation almost always ignored any other discourses of identity
and the ways in which they transformed, especially in the period of the late Ottoman and
Habsburg periods in Bosnia Herzegovina, crucial for understanding the post-imperial
debates on the place and identity of the Muslims.

Notions of romantic nationalism, including shared ethnic descent, language as a
uniting factor, and common historical continuities, began to influence the understanding
of identities in Bosnia Herzegovina in the late Ottoman period. These ideas came in
various forms from several directions: the Ottoman Empire, newly independent Balkan
states, and the Habsburg Empire. They were spread through the printed word, so they
remained in the limited realm of the reading audience. In addition, efforts of the political
agents in the Ottoman Empire in general, and Bosnia Herzegovina in particular, had quite
an effect on exacerbating occasions of class tension into religious conflicts and national
struggles.

Benedict Anderson pointed out the ways in which new means of communication
and sociopolitical change allowed for new ways of imagining the nation.\textsuperscript{24} However, the
case study of Bosnian Muslims and others like them, characterized by overlapping
identities and compound loyalties, show that there are many approaches to imagining the
community, as touched upon in previous chapters. The reformists in Bosnia Herzegovina
appealed to and worked specifically for the community of Muslims in Bosnia
Herzegovina, but they saw themselves as Slavs, as belonging to the worldwide
community of Muslims, and Ottoman and/or Habsburg subjects, and citizens of a modern
world. While some allegiances and identities came to the foreground or were in tension

\textsuperscript{24} Benedict Anderson, \textit{Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism}
with the others, they did coexist well beyond the demise of both imperial systems and left
an important mark on contemporary ways of imagining a Bosnian nation.

The first attempts at “imagining the nation” by Muslim intellectuals came as a
reaction to assertive attempts by Serbian and Croatian nationalists to define Bosnian
Muslims and claim the province as their national right. Concrete ideas about the Bosnian
nation were first expressed by Ljubušak. In his works, Ljubušak articulated the Muslims’
national standpoint and the history of the Bosnian nation, explicating the role of
particularly the Bosnian notables, to whom he himself belonged, as the preservers and
guardians of Bosnian identity that reached back to pre-Ottoman times. The continuity
with medieval Bosnia and its feudal class was “proof” of Bosnian national existence.25

He included the Catholics and Orthodox Christians in his definition of the
Bosnian nation, but rejected their Croatian and Serbian national identity as a development
of “recent political origin.”26 Serbian and Croatian nationalists mostly mocked his effort,
and although having full support of the administration during Kállay’s tenure,
Bosnianism was ultimately deemed a futile attempt to fight nationalism by the
administration in the first years of the twentieth century.

That Bosnianism was not only a national identity tied to Muslims, Ljubušak
supported with historical examples of the Bosnian Muslims’ rebellions against “their
caliph” in defense of “their rights and customs.”27 The Slav identity and Bosnian
language of Muslims were further emphasized to dissuade their equation with the Turks
common in the Balkans and Europe. However, Islam was at the same time given

25 Zgodić, 59.

26 Ljubušak, Budućnosti ili napredak, 24.

27 Ljubušak, Što misle muhamedanci, 7.
importance as an essential part of identity and a link to the Bosnian Muslims’ moral, cultural, and historical heritage. Tolerance and equality, as elemental characteristics of Ljubušak’s Bosnianism, were also rooted in Islam.\textsuperscript{28}

A group of like-minded Muslim intellectuals together with Mehmed-Beg Kapetanović Ljubušak founded the paper Bošnjak (Bosniak) published from 1891 until 1910 in Bosnian. It was intended for Muslims in particular, and was envisioned as a political response to Serbian and Croatian national claims over the Muslims. It was the first political, educational, and literary voice of the Muslim in Bosnia Herzegovina, and was published with support of the Habsburg administration and Benjamin Kállay, as it worked well into his plan of neutralizing Serbian and Croatian nationalisms harmful to the Habsburg state.\textsuperscript{29}

Edhem Mulabdić, a writer of this period, later described the atmosphere in which this paper came out and why it was so well-received by the public:

Turkey left us, Austria defeated our armed resistance and was suppressing our first movements for justified opposition in the field of religion and education; and we felt alone, like a tree cutoff. Our compatriots of other two faiths quickly found their way around, and even back then, they had their organizations for raising national consciousness in their communities; while we were unaware, and without hope in having a future. It was then that we needed anyone to address us, to encourage us, and give us confidence.\textsuperscript{30}

Another author, who defined Bosnianism in Bošnjak, other papers, as well as his publications, was Safvet Beg Bašagić (1870–1934). A notable from a distinguished family from Herzegovina, he studied Islamic languages in Vienna and wrote his doctoral dissertation on the role of Bosnian/Herzegovinians in Islamic literature. Bašagić was a

\textsuperscript{28} Zgodić, 56.

\textsuperscript{29} Rizvić, \textit{Bosansko-muslimanska književnost}, 71–101.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 87.
lecturer in Arabic at the Sarajevo Gymnasium (1900–1906) and president of the Bosnian Parliament from 1910 until its dissolution in 1919.

Although early in his career he published in Croatian and Serbian papers and had some Croatian leanings, Bašagić’s concept of Bosnianism, Bosnia Herzegovina, as well as the Muslim community and its advancement, were the focus of his work. His notion of the Bosnian national identity included common historical, cultural, linguistic, and intellectual characteristics that defined the community. Bašagić’s poem, “Šta je Bošnjak?” (What is a Bosniak), conveyed that Bosniak was “One small branch / of the great Slav tree.”

Bašagić, an aristocrat like Ljubušak, highlighted the prominence of the old notables’ role in protecting and maintaining the national consciousness and identity, not realizing their already declining status in society and weakening of economic power. In his political activity, especially in the interwar period, he represented the interests of the landowners in the ongoing debates about the agrarian relationships and their resolution.

Already in the paper Bošnjak, he defined Bosnian people as Muslims, with a shared past and common fatherland, establishing patriotism as a religious responsibility when he cited the hadith “Love of the fatherland is part of faith,” which was the title of one of his first articles in this paper. Old identities and concepts received new meaning in romantic renditions of identity: vatan/otadžbina (fatherland) that in the traditional context existed as one’s place of birth acquired a sense of utmost importance in defining

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31 “Jedna mala grana / Velikoga stabla Slavljana,” in Rizvić, Bosansko-muslimanska književnost, 86.

32 Atif Purivatra, Jugoslovenska Muslimanska Organizacija u političkom životu Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca (Sarajevo: Bosanski Kulturni Centar, 1999), 76.

one’s identity. Bašagić called it a “stone” in which the prophecy of “our” future is written.\(^{34}\)

He lamented the lack of patriotic consciousness among the Bosnian Muslims, which he saw as a necessity for a nascent Muslim intelligentsia. This new intelligentsia, he elsewhere called “spiritual aristocracy,” was to be the national consciousness—a guide to Muslims into a successful future.\(^{35}\) Bašagić and the circle of intellectuals around him, as well as some of the like-minded ulema, defined national consciousness as vital for the physical and intellectual survival of the community. This necessity was seen as almost a defensive measure, responding to the urgency of the Muslim situation in the Monarchy and a reaction to threatening nationalisms around them. Lack of patriotism was also found to be at the root of migratory movement to the Ottoman Empire, which the cultural reformists regarded as detrimental for the Muslim position in Bosnia Herzegovina.

The notions of romantic nationalism blended with the ideas of Pan-Slavic, Pan-German, and Pan-Turkic movements, but were also inspired by the Pan-Islamism of the Muslim world in which the Muslim intellectuals of Bosnia Herzegovina found comparable issues to the circumstances of their own community. The nation was imagined within the boundaries of the province, in territorial terms but also in confessional. Bosnian/Bosniak nation was increasingly understood as equivalent with Muslim.

As the native language was the principal characteristic of a nation according to many of these considerations, the cultural reformists defined their nation as Slav, and gave prominence to especially folk literature and its compilation activities as proof of its

\(^{34}\) Ibid., 2.

\(^{35}\) Ibid.
historicity and by extension, a distinct national being and continuity. However, a great portion of national identity was explained through references to the Islamic cultural and intellectual heritage, and the history and contribution of the Bosnian Muslims to Ottoman and Islamic civilizations. For reformists, Islam was the basic marker of cultural and, in most cases, national identity. Despite attempts to imagine and define a confession-blind Bosnian nation, the confessional nationalisms prevalent among other groups, as well as Muslims’ cultural and political identity originally defined by adherence to religion, generated a fluid, yet distinct awareness of a particular Muslim nation within the geographic delineation of Bosnia Herzegovina.

Critique of Tradition

The themes and messages in the writings of the reformists were filled with continuous warnings of disappearance and ruin of the Muslim community. While the Habsburg oppositionists were warning of the same because of the separation from the Ottoman Empire and loss of Muslim traditional way of life, the reformists warned of the destruction of the Muslim society on another level. Mulabdić, who earned his fame with prolific didactic prose, defined through the speech of one of his characters the key idea of his entire generation of intellectuals engaged in Muslim cultural-literary reform movement:

Gone are the times when we defended our land, fame, reputation, and might with a sword [...] today is the time to defend these with education. Only education can safeguard them for us. If we are not hard working and accept it, there would be no one to blame if we lose all these to others who had accepted education in time.36

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The focus on creating an intellectual elite and a prosperous economic community that would support it—modern but also Muslim—were the main aims of the reformists’ efforts at regenerating society. Bašagić dreaded the fact that: “Stagnation in our intellectual, economic, and generally cultural development is so obvious, it does not need to be verified with numbers or logic. The evil consequences of our stagnation in modern, contemporary advancement would not become so bitter to anyone else but ourselves, who were until recently an element powerful and sightly.” Ljubušak similarly advised: “One should not ceaselessly hold on to the old ways, that meant something in the past, but should move on as the occasion requires,” critiquing the fanatical adherence to tradition, when it caused passivity in the face of progress and new opportunities for the Muslims.

The harshest critique came from the pen of Osman Nuri Hadžić, a law graduate of Zagreb and Vienna universities, and a productive writer who held various posts in the Bosnian administration. His novels and short stories mostly dealt with the hopelessness of Muslim decadence and resignation during the Habsburg period. In his work The Muslim Question in Bosnia Herzegovina, published in 1902, he analyzed the social and political problems facing Muslims. He summed up the problem at the beginning of this work:

It is obvious that in the last twenty years the Muslims had overwhelmingly stagnated, and are perishing day in and day out. The fortunes and properties they had until the occupation began to shrink, and by now have largely slipped out of Muslim hands. The new cultural innovations in our lands are not being used by us Muslims, or are used very little; whilst trade and wholesale is slipping from our hands daily. Consequently, two main factors of human society, and two main aspects of a modern state: the material

37 As quoted in Zgodić, 102.

38 Ljubušak, Budućnosti ili napredak, 12.
wellbeing and spiritual intelligence are missing—lacking among the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina.\(^{39}\)

Hadžić and other intellectuals saw the roots of Muslim stagnation in the lack of education and ignorance of the ulema, who had the monopoly on Muslim primary education and a substantial influence on people in defining what was and was not Islamic under the new circumstances. In the view of the cultural reformists, knowledge and education were the only way to salvation. Knowledge was considered the basis for material well-being, power, and prestige that the Muslims were losing so rapidly.

Hadžić’s descriptions of decaying *medresas*, its useless students, their lives rotting away in the irrational educational system, and inadequate, corrupt teachers, in his prose were the gloomiest and one of the most relentless critiques of the clerical class of the period.\(^ {40}\) He directly blamed the “lazy” and “self-indulgent” ulema, ignorant of Islam for the intellectual and material downfall of the Muslim people.\(^ {41}\) In the same context, Hadžić openly attacked the leader of the movement for educational and religious autonomy, Mufti Džabić, asking if there was anything beneficial he had done in his entire career for Islam and the Muslims.\(^ {42}\)

Blindly following a distorted tradition, rejection of anything new and modern, and a paralyzing reliance on Ottoman involvement, were the key aspects that the cultural reformists found damaging in the thinking and preaching of the ulema, on whose advice

\(^{39}\) Anonymous, [Osman Nuri Hadžić], *Muslimansko pitanje u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Zagreb: Tisak Dioničke Tiskare, 1902), 4.


\(^{41}\) Anonymous, [Osman Nuri Hadžić], *Muslimansko pitanje u Bosni i Hercegovini*, 53.

\(^{42}\) Ibid., 81.
the common folk relied so much. The reevaluation of the notions of tradition, culture, and religion in the face of modernity was a widespread occurrence in the Muslim world: from Southeast Asia, Egypt, to the Ottoman Empire and Central Asia, Muslim intellectuals reassessed the cultural-religious values and offered a unique understanding of Islam and modernity. That tradition and Islam were not in contradiction with modernity, and that knowledge and acquiring it through modern education were the principal aspects of modernity, outlined the main features of intellectual considerations in the Muslim world at the turn of the twentieth century.

Role of Islam

For the cultural reformists, modernity, progress, and advancement were all rooted in “true” and “unspoiled” Islam. Their critique of the traditionalists was not the critique of their religiousness, but of their misunderstanding of genuine Islam—an understanding that became distorted with superstition and un-Islamic practices. In their view, those who called themselves conservatives and wanted to preserve some ideal tradition in the name of faith were actually hiding behind Islam to resist progress. The reformists did not see a contradiction between ideas of progress, modernity, and Islam. What is more, they advised that modernity, progress, and Islam were in a mutually connected relationship: Islam warrants progress, and knowledge and community (in its unity, proper organization, and prosperity) enable the true understanding of Islam.

Ljubušak often supported his arguments for reform with Islamic teachings: “Us, Mohammedans of Bosnia Herzegovina, if we work and make an effort as present requires, if we study and accept all that our religion does not deem harmful—no doubt
will we have a better and safer future.” He also pointed out that Islam had no boundaries when it came to modernity and progress, and quoted Qur’anic verses to illustrate that there were no hardships in religion, supported by examples of high culture from Islamic history, and Islam’s emphasis on education. Bašagić wrote that Islam was “founded on democratic institutions,” and that it preached “realistic socialism,” which was the reason for its equal “appeal to an African, and a European.”

For Hadžić as well, Islam was a synonym for civilization in the sense that it was directing its adherents to progress and excellence. He saw the root of Muslim deterioration in the fact that Muslims did not truly know their faith: “. . . our people hide behind the institution of faith, not really knowing true faith nor what it allows, tolerates, or forbids,” otherwise, he contended, they would have continued being the most powerful element in Bosnia Herzegovina. According to Hadžić, this was not only a characteristic of the Habsburg period, and he found it to be the continuity of resistance to progress dating back to the rejection and opposition to Ottoman reforms. He characterized the Bosnian notables’ uprising of the early nineteenth century as having selfish reasons, contrary to other intellectuals who reinterpreted this historical event as demonstrative of Bosnian unique nationhood and movement for autonomy and liberation from Ottoman rule.

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44 Ibid., 14.
45 As quoted in Zgodić, 104, note 29.
Reformists defined education and hard work, based on Islamic principles as central to the future survival of the Muslims. For them, Islamic discourse also informed new ways of organizing and keeping the community united. Participation in new schools, economic establishments, social and cultural institutions, and ultimately political parties were essential to maintaining the community. Bašagić often quoted hadith in his works to demonstrate that the congregation was envisioned as a duty of the faithful not only for the purpose of performing religious duties, but also developing mutually beneficent social and ethical values.\footnote{Zgodić, 104–107.}

Based on this notion of uniting, he advocated and participated in founding such new forms of sociability and expanding associational life. He supported the work of the reading rooms, and was one of the founding members in 1903 of Gajret, an association with the primary purpose of financially helping young men receive education in modern schools.\footnote{On the role of Gajret in Muslim life, see Ibrahim Kemura, Uloga "Gajreta" u društvenom životu Muslimana Bosne i Hercegovine (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1986).} Soon after, Zvijezda, an association of Muslim academics in Vienna was founded, followed by the cultural association El Kamer in Sarajevo and an Islamska dionička štamparija (Islamic Printing House) in 1905. Bašagić also participated in the founding of the Association of Muslim Youth in 1906, and in 1911, the Muslim Central Bank and Združena Tiskara (Joint Printing House). Many trade and workers associations were also founded often bearing Turkish names: Ittihad (Unity) in Mostar in 1906 and Hurrijet (Freedom) in Sarajevo in 1908. The first Muslim charitable society, Merhamet, was founded in 1913 with an aim to fight poverty—a modern version of the work pious endowments traditionally performed.
That the new forms of sociability began to dominate the social and cultural discourse in Bosnia Herzegovina was demonstrated in the fact that the members of the movement for cultural and religious autonomy—the traditionalists who originally opposed even the founding of Gajret—through organized activity and voting politics in local chapters of the society effectively took control over the association’s board a few years later. Members of the ulema as well founded their own associations, *Muslimansko muallimsko – imamsko društvo za Bosnu i Hercegovinu* (Muslim Teachers and Clerics Association of Bosnia Herzegovina) in 1909, and *Udruženje bosansko-hercegovačke ilmije* (Association of Religious Scholars of Bosnia Herzegovina) in 1912, and published papers *Muallim* (Teacher) and *Misbah* (Lantern).

Another aspect of society that was criticized and needed change, according to the reformists, was the Muslims’ attitude toward capitalism and acquiring wealth. In this case, too, Bašagić, reminded of the hadith that related poverty as being very close to faithlessness, and other Muslim traditions that encouraged giving and aiding those in need, necessitating acquisition of wealth in order to do good. Others, like Hadžić, saw the support of the wealthy as essential in a well-functioning society, as was the intellectual production of its scholars, or the honest work of its workers. This focus on keeping and acquiring wealth came from the circumstances of Muslim economic weakening, as described earlier, and the intellectuals’ own experiences with reform, educational, and cultural achievements: Bašagić financed his own education in Vienna; Ljubušak, Bašagić, and Hadžić published their first works on their own expense; and many of the papers and societies depended solely on the contributions of their subscribers.

50 Zgodić, 105.

and members. Ademaga Mešić, a prominent merchant and patron of reformist endeavors in Bosnia Herzegovina, was an example of such investment in the national cause: he was the owner of the leading paper *Behar*, majority owner of the first Islamic Printing House, and significant donor to *Gajret*. First Muslim Publishing Printing House and Bookstore in Mostar was also founded by a business entrepreneur, Muhamed Bekir Kalajdžić, in 1911, resulting in another wave of cultural and publishing activity through his paper *Biser* (Pearl) and editions of the *Muslimanska biblioteka* (Muslim Library), publishing novels, translations, and other works that catered to a Muslim audience.

A noticeable feature of change in the sociocultural landscape was the disintegration of the ‘monopoly’ on primary and education about religion held by the ulema, which was at the core of the reformists’ efforts. Although moral and Islamic education factored in the reformists views of what ideal education should entail, it was an education different than the traditional *mekteb* and *medresa* instruction, based on memorization and learning Arabic and Turkish from unqualified teachers who did not speak these languages well themselves. One of the first works Ljubušak authored was *Risale-i ahlak* (Tract on Moral Conduct) in 1883 for the school board adapting modern Ottoman textbooks with an author’s selection of folk proverbs, both Bosnian and Middle Eastern, demonstrating the reformists’ focus on education and its Muslim and Ottoman characteristics.

Identical to modern Ottoman schools and the New Method schools in tsarist Central Asia, the modern schools of the Habsburg Bosnia, especially the *Mekteb-i nuvvab*, the new school for shari’a judges described earlier, taught Islam, as well as other subjects unrelated to Islam—“marking off Islam from the rest of knowledge,” as Adeeb

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Khalid observed in the case of Central Asian New Method schools.\textsuperscript{53} Similarly, remaining Ottoman reform schools and Habsburg mixed elementary and secondary schools had separate religious education classes, (in case of the latter for each of the confessional groups), while other subjects were taught without regard to religion of the students. In this manner, Islam was “situated squarely in a desacralized world defined by progress through history.”\textsuperscript{54}

This new position and understanding of Islam and what it meant to be Muslim also affected the ways in which Islam and its principles were employed in the reformists’ efforts and recommendations at bettering the immediate circumstances of the community. The Qur’an, hadith, and examples from Islamic history and literature were employed to rationalize, justify, and organize the new cultural and political undertakings. The reformists, however, did not engage in theological debates or intellectual deliberations on abstract ideas and theories—their concern with the community and its immediate circumstances led them to focus on the practical aspects that produced direct results.

\textit{Publishing and Language}

The first individual works and publications written exclusively by Muslims in Bosnian and Latin script appeared in the 1890s. Ljubušak’s previously mentioned pamphlets \textit{Budućnosti ili napredak Muhamedovaca u Bosni i Hercegovini} (Future or

\textsuperscript{53} Khalid, \textit{The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform}, 173. He explained that: “In the maktab, all knowledge was sacram and tenets of Islam pervaded everything taught. In new method schools, Islam became an object of study, knowledge of which could be acquired in the same way as all other knowledge.” For Ottoman education, see Benjamin C. Fortna, \textit{Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); and Selçuk A. Somel, \textit{The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839–1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline} (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2001).

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 175.
Progress of Muhamedans in Bosnia Herzegovina) in 1893, and Što misle muhamedanci u Bosni i Hercegovini (What do Muhammedans in Bosnia Herzegovina Think) in 1886, expressed the attitudes of Muslim subjects in Bosnia Herzegovina for the Habsburg audience (they were translated to German). Ljubušak published Narodno blago (National Treasure) in 1887, at his own expense and in both Latin and Cyrillic script that was well received by the Habsburg administration and became popular among audiences across religious and national groups.\textsuperscript{55} This was a collection of Bosnian literary and folk heritage with an assortment of translated Turkish, Persian, and Arabic proverbs. The author specified that he had hoped this collection would instigate the Muslims to publish in their “mother tongue,” and that he had written it in “honor of kin and dear homeland,” inserting the Muslim voice in the nationalist debates in Bosnia Herzegovina.\textsuperscript{56}

Supporting the Muslim/Bosniak solution to outside nationalisms engulfing Bosnia Herzegovina, the Habsburg administration published another anthology of Muslim folk epics in Latin script Narodne pjesme Muhamedovaca u Bosni i Hercegovini (Epic Poetry of Mohammedans in Bosnia Herzegovina) collected by Kosta Hörmann.\textsuperscript{57} A show of goodwill to the Muslim population praising the Muslim heroic past as described in the folk epics, the collection was also promoting literacy in Bosnian Latin script and officially defined a distinct “Mohammedan” people in its title, in spite of Croatian and Serbian attempts to adopt Muslims into their national group.

\textsuperscript{55} Rizvić, Bosansko-muslimanska književnost, 50–56.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 50.

\textsuperscript{57} Kosta Hörmann, Narodne pjesme Muhamedovaca u Bosni i Hercegovini (Sarajevo, 1888–1889); and Đenana Buturović, Studija o Hörmannovoj zbirci muslimanskih narodnih pjesama (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1976).
The spread of Latin script literacy and rise in readership followed the publishing activities and drew interest to a number of books printed in the 1890s by Bosnian Muslim writers about Muslims and for Muslims: Safvet Beg Bašagić’s poems *Trofanda* (1896) and a historical work, *Kratke upute u prošlost Bosne i Hercegovine* (Short Instruction into the Past of Bosnia Herzegovina), in 1900; Edhem Mulabdić’s novel *Zeleno Busenje* (Green Turf) in 1898, set during the early days of the Habsburg occupation; Osman Nuri Hadžić’s *Islam i kultura* (Islam and Culture) in 1894; and in collaboration with Ivan Aziz Miličević, a duo known as Osman-Aziz, a number of novels and stories describing Muslim life in Habsburg Bosnia Herzegovina and criticizing its backwardness: *Bez nade* (Without Hope) in 1895, *Na pragu novog doba* (At the Doorstep of a New Age) in 1896, *Bez svrhe* (Without Purpose) in 1897, and *Pripovijesti iz bosanskog života* (Tales from Bosnian Life) in 1898.

Popularizing the Latin script of the Bosnian language opened up growing readership to a variety of new print sources, both provincial and regional, and the influences that they projected: literary, political, and social. Bosnian was not a new language in the province, but its Latin rendition was. Suggestions to use the provincial language as means of education and print appeared during the implementation of the Tanzimat reforms: author of a textbook, *Sehletul Vusul* (Effortless Approach), printed in 1875 in Bosnian and Arabic script, advocated Bosnian as the language of education.58 Even earlier, a body of literature known as Bosnian *alhamijado* literature (in Arabic script) flourished along literature in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian throughout the Ottoman

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Bosančica (western, or Bosnian Cyrillic) was used in pre-Ottoman and Ottoman-era epistolary literature.

With the Habsburg occupation, these other forms of writing and literature did not die down. On the contrary, a revision of Arabic script for Bosnian was implemented and works were published in this script up until World War II. Ljubušak himself used and encouraged others to use Bosančica. The struggle to maintain the Ottoman system of education as part of the Muslim movement for autonomy in religious and educational

affairs often included an insistence on the continuation of Turkish as the language of education. In opposition, those advocating cultural reform and universal education, many of whom were versed in the so-called Oriental languages, objected to Turkish and promulgated Bosnian because it encompassed the largest possible demographic, and because teachers, especially at elementary level, barely spoke Turkish, and therefore could not have provided sound education.

Writing and publication in Middle Eastern languages continued, although in smaller volume during the Habsburg period: many of the Muslim intellectuals writing in Bosnian also wrote, published, and translated from Turkish; during the Habsburg period Arabic remained the language in which the high-ranking ulema wrote their treatises and official opinions; while the Persian literary output and study, associated with the dervish orders, particularly the Mevlevi, receded with the decline of Sufism and its educational establishments in Bosnia Herzegovina. All three languages continue to be taught to this day as part of the curriculum of theological education in Bosnia Herzegovina.

In 1900, a group of already well-known writers led by Bašagić decided to establish an independent paper of primarily literary content that would influence and educate the young, corresponding to the “spirit of time and needs of the people.” 60 In the words of one of the founders, Behar (Blossom) was to be “exclusively our, Islamic, and arranged in a clear and sensible Islamic spirit.” 61 The founders desired the contributors to be exclusively Muslim, while the content of the paper was intended for Muslim readers. 62

Considered the arena of Muslim literary renaissance, Behar, through its popularity and

60 Muhsin Rizvić, Behar: književnohistorijska monografija (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1971), 14.
61 Ibid., 15.
62 Ibid.
wide audience influenced the educational and cultural developments and shaped Muslim political views. Other periodicals that followed suit created similar outlay and content of their publications, although they did not limit their contributors to the Muslims only, which later changed for Behar as well.

What was characteristic for the poetry and prose in periodicals, as well as other publications, were their common didactical and cultural-educational endeavors. Short stories and novels dealt with contemporary Muslim life, economic, social and intellectual lag, constraints of religious tradition, and needs of modern life. The historically themed poetry, prose, and drama often celebrated a heroic past and encouraged patriotic feelings. Migration to the Ottoman Empire was a frequent theme and was intensely criticized, while its reasons were often found to be rooted in ignorance and lack of patriotism, and thus, necessitated modern education. Readership also participated with their letters, comments, and contributions. They sometimes replied to editors’ questions, and responded to calls for collection of various folk literature forms. Readers’ letters were sent from all around Bosnia Herzegovina, students in Habsburg capitals, as well as migrants in the Ottoman Empire.

*Translation and Ottoman Influences*

In addition to poetry and prose authored by Bosnian Muslim contributors, Behar, Biser, Gajret, and other magazines, journals, and periodicals also brought literary critique and translations, with a special interest in contemporary Ottoman Turkish literature. Ottoman avant-garde literary-political periodical Servet-i Fünun (Wealth of Knowledge) and its contributors were widely read and had a considerable influence on the Muslim
writers in Bosnia Herzegovina. Assessing the Turkish literary directions and European influences, Bašagić expressed his vision of Muslim literary production in Bosnia Herzegovina as well: Turkish modern writers “do not blindly follow French decadents, but take from them what is beautiful, and according to their eastern tastes, complement the unrefined in decadence with Eastern gaiety and poignancy.”63 This understanding of the ‘juncture of East and West’ in Turkish literature was also the principle that affected the work of Bašagić and other writers in the following generations.64

The most influential were translations of poetry, prose, and literary criticism published as serials in papers and journals. Translations were from Turkish, Arabic, and Persian, although Turkish literature dominated. Translations of European authors, while on a much smaller scale, also took place in the popular Muslim press of Habsburg Bosnia. That translations from Ottoman Turkish were not a Muslim trend only is demonstrated in the fact that there were a number of non-Muslim translators especially in Gajret.65

Writers also published plays corresponding to demands for cultural activities of youth organizations among Muslims, which followed new forms of entertainment and associational life. Theater became popular, and many amateur theatre associations were established in cities. However, its Muslim audiences were not attracted by Serbian and Croatian plays that often portrayed Muslims and the Ottoman period in a negative light. Furthermore, Muslim actors often refused to play non-Muslim, or immoral characters,

63 Anonymous [Safvet Beg Bašagić], “Hajal ičunde (U mašti) Husein Džahid” Behar 1 (1900–1901): 24, as quoted in Rizvić, Bosansko-muslimska književnost, 201.

64 Rizvić, Behar, 82.

65 Rizvić, Bosansko-muslimska književnost, 243.
further creating a need for Muslim-oriented playwrights and content that would appeal to an exclusively Muslim audience. A number of new plays, as well as translations and adaptations of Turkish ones, were published and performed beginning in the first years of the twentieth century. Among European plays appearing in Muslim literary publications, Henrik Ibsen’s *Nora* and *An Enemy of the People* were translated in *Gajret* and *Behar*, respectively. Namik Kemal’s plays were quite popular, whereas the first rendition of Molière’s *Les Fourberies de Scapin* in Bosnian was actually a translation of a Turkish adaptation of this play for Muslim audiences. Looking at these phenomena in theatre and literature, some scholars have found that the western literary influences in Bosnia Herzegovina came, not directly, or at least not only, from Europe, but by way of Ottoman Turkish literary agency.

*Women*

Poetry and prose written by Ottoman women writers was published, and achieved popularity among Bosnian readers. Their work was translated and analyzed by some of the most notable writers of the period who expressed their hope that Muslim women in Bosnia would follow in their steps. Editors often lauded the spread of their publications mentioning that “even the women read them,” while some claimed that the popularity of novels published in serials encouraged many women to learn to read the Latin script.

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66 Ibid., 212.

67 Ibid., 212–13.


69 Among them, Fitnet, Fatma Aliye, Nigar, and others.
Women also began appearing in popular publications with their works, although seldom: Vahida, Nafija Zildžić and M. Munira in Behar; Hatidža Djikić, Šefika Nesterin Bjelavac, and P.K. Fatma in Gajret; and Nafija Sarajlić in Zeman and Biser.70 The first women’s organizations and magazines emerged after World War I, although girls’ education, women activism, and public appearances were noted and encouraged in the Habsburg period: women were teachers and educators, writers, and activists in women’s chapters of cultural associations.71 The reformists saw the importance of education and the need to rid women from the traditionalist constrains so they could perform their role in modern society: when Muhazarat, a novel by Ottoman writer Fatma Aliye (1862–1926),72 was published in Behar and achieved wide popularity, Mulabdić in his commentary focused on the question of the inequality of men and women in choosing whom they would marry, although that was not the central argument of the novel.73

Bosnian Muslim reformers, similarly to reformers around the Muslim world, criticized the conditions of women in their society. In their understanding of nation, patriotism, and society building, they situated the role of women as the cornerstone of family, and as mothers of the next generation. The focus of their efforts was education for girls and women, arguing that it was already granted to them by Islam. A stable family in which women had an important role in childrearing and teaching “true” Islamic morals

70 For a very limited discussion of Bosnian Muslim women’s literature in English, see Celia Hawkesworth, Voices in the Shadows: Women and Verbal Art in Serbia and Bosnia (New York: Central European University Press, 2000).
72 Fatma Aliye (Topuz) was the first Ottoman woman novelist and translator (and according to some, first in the Muslim world), and the daughter of the great Tanzimat statesman, Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, who also served in Bosnia.
73 Rizvić, Behar, 197.
and patriotic feelings was considered the basis for the future of a nation.\textsuperscript{74} The references to women in reformers’ writings, however, had little impact on immediate changes in society. The editors of \textit{Biser} distanced themselves from the prolific Istanbul-educated author Hifzi Bjelavac, because his liberal views that included support for full emancipation of women, were not in line with the editorial board’s views.\textsuperscript{75} These and other debates concerning women, such as (un)veiling, had to wait until the social and political circumstances brought them to the fore in the interwar period.\textsuperscript{76}

\textit{Pan-Islam}

The nation of Bosnian Muslims was characterized by confessional affiliation so much so that in the writings of the reformists the difference between Islam as religion and Muslims as a particular community was often blurred. Association with Islam alternated between emphasis on the ethno-confessional individuality of Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina to stressing the importance of belonging to the universal community of the Muslims (the \textit{umma}). Muslim intellectuals were prompted by the concerns of their community in Bosnia Herzegovina and were especially impacted by developments in the rest of the Muslim world with which they could find similarities: modernization in the Ottoman Empire, debates on reform in Islam by scholars in Egypt, or Muslim community organization and publications in Bulgaria and tsarist Central Asia.

\textsuperscript{74} Hadžić, \textit{Muslimansko pitanje}, 38.

\textsuperscript{75} Rizvić, \textit{Bosansko-muslimanska književnost}, 253.

\textsuperscript{76} For some of these debates, see Xavier Bougarel, “Farewell to the Ottoman Legacy? Islamic Reformism and Revivalism in Inter-War Bosnia-Herzegovina”, in \textit{Islam in Inter-War Europe} edited by Nathalie Clayer and E. Germain (New York, Columbia University Press, 2008), 313–43.
The reformers made an effort to introduce historical and contemporary Islamic literature in translation as both a part of common cultural heritage, and because its themes resembled the sociocultural issues and their reform in the contemporary context of a Bosnian Muslim environment. Publications, even if they were written in Bosnian Latin script, habitually featured a section on the news from the Muslim world. One of the first treatments of the notion of Pan-Islam in the press was an article in Behar, “Pan-Islamska Ideja” (Pan-Islamic Idea), in which its author Fehim Spaho (1877–1942), in line with the reformist views, elaborated on the cultural and religious unity as the focus of twentieth century Pan-Islamism.\(^\text{77}\) He also observed Pan-Islamic ideas through the lens of circumstances particular to the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina: migration and living under non-Muslim rule, concluding that Muslim unity was in no contradiction to the fact that many Muslims lived under non-Muslim rule.

Among cultural and literary works, the reformers often published articles and translations touching upon the social, cultural, and political issues of Muslims, especially those living under non-Muslim rule. Gajret published articles about the conditions of Muslims in Russia, reform of the medrese system in the Ottoman Empire, and Islamic education in Bukhara.\(^\text{78}\) Behar published a report about a visit to Bakhchysarai in Crimea, the Russian Muslims, and the famous paper Tercüman and its editor Ismail Gasprinski (1851–1914), an important actor in the Russian Muslim reform movement.\(^\text{79}\) Articles from Tercüman were sometimes translated, and letters to the editor from as far as Cairo

\(^{77}\) Fikret Karčić, *Društveno-pravni aspekt islamskog reformizma: pokret za reformu šerijatskog prava i njegov odjek u Jugoslaviji u prvoj polovini XX vijeka* (Sarajevo: Islamski teološki fakultet, 1990), 205.

\(^{78}\) Karčić, *The Bosniaks and the Challenges of Modernity*, 146.

\(^{79}\) The report signed “Garib” appeared in Behar 4 (15 June 1903).
were also published. At different times, editor of *Behar* and *Biser*, and a frequent literary and political contributor to various papers, Musa Ċazim Ćatić used the pseudonym “Panislamista.” He translated Muhammad Abduh’s poem of disappointment, critique, and discontent with the ulema, characterizing the reformists’ attitudes toward the clerics whom they blamed for preventing the spread of modern science and culture among Muslims.\(^8^0\) Sultan Abdülhamid II’s Pan-Islamic project, the Hijaz railway, which connected parts of the Ottoman Empire with the holy cities of Mecca and Medina facilitating the hajj, was followed in the press with interest, and donations from Bosnia Herzegovina were collected for this project.

The press was instrumental in bringing the news from the Ottoman fronts during the fighting in Trabulsgarb (Ottoman Libya) in 1912, and the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913. In addition to army volunteers from Bosnian Herzegovina, the Bosnian Red Crescent committees collected donations for the Ottoman defense efforts, wounded soldiers, and refugees. *Misbah* published articles calling for donations and describing the situation on the Ottoman fronts not only as Ottoman wars of defense, but as the defense of the entire Muslim world. In an article published in December 1912, Mehmed Džemaludin Ćaušević—an Istanbul-educated religious scholar, admirer of Egyptian reformer Muhammad Abduh, and later Reis ul-ulema of Bosnia Herzegovina—pointed out the magnitude of the Ottoman predicament and its connection with the entire Muslim world:

> It is obvious that the attacks the great Ottoman State is facing are aimed at destroying the Islamic world. Because Turkey is the hope for liberation of the entire Muslim world. Turkey is the heart of the whole Islamic world. The ability of Muslims to live like Muslims is connected to the perpetual existence of the Turkish government. That is why the Muslim world truly desires the Ottoman State and the Caliphate to be strong, and

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\(^8^0\) Published in *Behar* in 1907–1908, in Rizvić, *Behar*, 328.
excel in its prosperity and honor. Those enemies of Islam, who know this, are taking action in every way. To weaken it, they engage in all kinds of deceit and conspiracy. Their aim is to weaken and make Turkey—the basis and support of the Muslim world—wretched. Our coreligionists in Turkey are defending the honor of the Caliphate with their lives. They are dealing with unexpected attacks of four kingdoms and one million enemies…

The paper diligently published the amounts of money collected from each town across Bosnia Herzegovina and encouraged religious officials to engage their congregations. According to reports the Red Crescent published regularly detailing support coming from outside the Ottoman Empire, the donations from Bosnia Herzegovina during the Libyan War only totaled 300,000 krone (15,000 Ottoman Lira). For the Bosnian readers, the ties with the Ottoman Empire, existing by way of their past affiliation, were even more encouraged through the Pan-Islamic sentiment that placed the Ottoman State and the Caliphate at the center of Islamic existence and Muslim struggles.

In addition to Vatan and Rehber written entirely in Ottoman Turkish, or those published in both Ottoman Turkish and Bosnian Latin and/or Cyrillic script (such as Misbah), one of the most popular papers, Behar, in its seventh year began publishing four additional pages in Ottoman Turkish. The Ottoman Turkish section, just like the larger Bosnian language part, also dealt with the reformist views and recommendations for the Muslim society: necessity of education, critique of backward traditions, and propositions for betterment of Muslim society in Bosnia Herzegovina through didactic literature, translations, and opinion articles.

The paper was noticed and praised in the Muslim world, and those articles were sometimes reprinted: previously mentioned Bosnian lobbyist, Ali Ulvi wrote from the

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82 Ibid., 103.
Ottoman Empire praising the fact that *Behar* began its Ottoman Turkish section, Bulgarian Muslim paper *Tuna* sent a letter congratulating *Behar* on its new program, and one article titled “İslamska jeka” (Islamic Echo) informed of reactions to the Ottoman Turkish section of *Behar* in the Muslim world. Mention of Bosnian Muslims in the Muslim press—in Crimean papers like *Tercüman* and *Sabah*—were also reported. Similarly, Bulgarian Muslim papers reported on the news and Muslim affairs in Bosnia Herzegovina. They were aware of the reformist endeavors and the autonomous movement, and discussed them, finding similarities with the Muslim situation in Bulgaria.83 Interest and fascination with other Muslims around the world and the rapid spread of information about their circumstances was available only in the age of the press and postal mail, and facilitated by primarily Turkish, and also the Arabic and Persian languages, an educated Muslim of the time was to have mastered.

The addition of Ottoman Turkish in *Behar* was initiated by the appointment of a new editor, Mehmed Džemaludin Čaušević, if only for a year. Maintaining the link with the rest of the Muslim world seemed important to the Bosnian Pan-Islamist reformers who were disconnected by way of language. For this reason, in addition to the translational activity and following the news and developments in the Muslim world, the need was felt to continue publishing in Ottoman Turkish as a way of taking an active part in the Muslim intellectual activities on an international scale. Čaušević was also instrumental in maintaining the publications in Bosnian written in Arabic script, which he revised and standardized for the needs of the printing press.

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Biser was published in Bosnian Latin script, although in its heading it contained two mottos in transliterated Arabic: “True believers are brothers,” and “Islam Triumphs over everything, and nothing triumphs over it.” Some of the articles published in Biser tell of the profound interest in Pan-Islam as an idea, and the related debates about the reform in Islam occurring throughout the Muslim world: “Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism,” translated from French; “Muslim Woman” by Muhammad Farid Wajdi (1875–1954), translated from Arabic; “Pan-Islamism and Europe” by Rafiq Bey al-‘Azm (1865–1925); and “Woman and Family Life in Islam,” translated from Ottoman Turkish.

The role of the printed word was obviously essential for the spread of Pan-Islamic ideas and awareness of Muslims and their issues in other regions of the world. The Ottoman Empire as the last powerful Muslim state defying European Powers, the Caliphate as the symbol of Muslim unity and community, and the person of the Sultan-Caliph as its leader had a paramount symbolic role. Istanbul, as one of the most cosmopolitan cities of the world at the time, was also the junction of ideas, peoples, and ideologies: it was where the Central Asian and Balkan Muslims stopped over on their way to the hajj, where exiled Iranians wrote and published, and where Arab and many other Muslims came for advanced education.84

The Ottoman Empire, as discussed in other chapters, in particular during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, attempted to develop the Pan-Islamic outlook and employ it in the diplomatic arena as leverage, by maintaining its spheres of influence in regions lost, or building relations with colonized Muslims who were never before Ottoman subjects. In its Pan-Islamic endeavors the Ottomans, however, focused on the features that served its diplomatic interests, and even tried to control and contain other faucets of Pan-Islamic activity they deemed unnecessary or harmful to the concerns of the state: censoring press,

banning certain Muslim publications from entering the Ottoman domains, or controlling the activities of prominent Pan-Islamists such was the case of patronage, and later surveillance of Jemal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–1897), the originator of Islamic modernism.

Pan-Islamists around the world, though, did not follow Ottoman policies. On the contrary, their Pan-Islam(s) were molded according to the specific circumstances of their immediate environment and concerns of Muslim communities in Bosnia Herzegovina, tsarist Central Asia, Bulgaria, Egypt, and India. Pan-Islam was an outcome of the ways to reconcile Muslim identity and modernity. For the Bosnian Muslims, Pan-Islam focused on bridging the internal differences within the Muslim community, as well as neutralizing appropriations of Muslims by other national programs. As Pan-Islam was spread through the printed word, it was confined to the reading elites, for whom it was only one of the ways and multiple identities through which modernity was mediated. Contrary to European fears, especially those European countries with Muslim colonies, Pan-Islam was not a movement of the masses, but of the reformist-inclined elites faced with modernity.
Conclusion

Analyzing the ways in which the Muslims of Bosnian Herzegovina navigated the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires from 1878 to 1914, through the prism of exit, voice, and loyalty argumentation allowed me to present an alternative view of the period and offer a new approach to understanding the lingering afterlife of empire. The focus on these options and especially the role of loyalty as envisioned, advanced, and promoted by both the subjects in the province, and the imperial state from the center, provides an advantage for this study firstly, by moving away from a fixation on identity in observing this transitional period, and secondly, by offering a more realistic assessment of what sovereignty meant in practice in this particular region.

The Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina after the Berlin Congress were in a unique position, especially when compared to the state of other Muslims who remained in the newly formed nation-states in the Balkans, carved out of the former Ottoman territories. Bosnia Herzegovina became part of another multicultural empire, which in many ways faced similar issues and had comparable aims with those of the Ottoman Empire. Unlike the efforts of the nation-states to homogenize their populations, the Habsburg Monarchy, in order to stave off nationalisms spreading in their realms, desired to continue the confessional differentiation of their subjects and promoted their own brand of multiculturalism. In Bosnia, given to the Habsburgs as a mandate to repair the state of affairs the Ottomans supposedly could not handle, the Monarchy was cautious not to cause any major unrest that would show it incapable of the task. Therefore, the Habsburg administration maintained and continued many of the Ottoman practices, laws, and
policies, and gradually integrated or changed them as the opportunity arose. What it meant for the Bosnian Muslims was that they remained an important power center and a political force the new administration attempted to court and ultimately control.

The Bosnian Muslims therefore found themselves in a comparably comfortable position, firstly, because under new rule they were not expelled en masse, as was the case in Serbia, Bulgaria, or Crimea, while their attitudes were taken seriously in establishing the new administration; nor did they have to contend with the ongoing Ottoman centralizing policies other Muslim groups, like the Albanians, who remained in the Ottoman Empire, faced. Still, their reactions to the new administration exhibited a combination of “exit” and “voice” both informed by loyalty. Initial migration and armed revolts at the time of occupation and conscription were a significant demonstration of exit vis-à-vis the Habsburg Monarchy, and a show of loyalty to the Ottoman Empire. While the migration from Bosnia Herzegovina to the Ottoman lands did continue throughout the Habsburg period and beyond, its scale after the early years of occupation significantly shrunk, and was further reduced by the extent of migrant return. The imperial policies of both the Habsburgs and the Ottomans ultimately converged on the same aim of keeping the Muslims put in Bosnia Herzegovina, albeit for starkly different reasons. Migration in effect, became an element of voice, as it was often proposed as a possibility by Muslim petitioners to both empires in the event their requests were not to be honored.

Staying in Bosnia Herzegovina and engaging with the new administration did not preclude the Muslims to continue and streamline their ties with the Ottoman Empire. In fact, along with the institutional, political, and social continuities enabled by the Habsburg administration, the relationships and appeals by the Muslims to the Ottoman
Empire further contributed to the gradual and protracted passage from one empire to the other. The Ottomans, as well, had an interest in prolonging the effects of their vestiges in the province as that earned them diplomatic and political clout and extended their interests in the region. This was particularly the case in the legally ambiguous period after the occupation when the sovereignty of the province was still officially Ottoman, until the Monarchy annexed Bosnia Herzegovina in 1908.

For the Bosnian Muslims, determined petitioning and insistence on maintaining official relationships with the Ottoman Empire became important means of leverage in negotiating and furthering their positions under the Habsburg rule. The fact that they engaged not only with the Ottoman administrators and consuls in Austria-Hungary and the neighboring lands, but also with the Habsburg administration, the opposition, and the European public opinion, shows that the Muslims understood the availability of various disparate legal and diplomatic protections and opportunities they could claim. Muslims’ choices were not exclusive and they tactically navigated the overlapping allegiances to the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, the Muslim umma, as well as a number of local and regional constituencies.

After the occupation, the Muslims took advantage of their unique position and the ambiguous legal position of Bosnia Herzegovina to advance their political and economic claims with both empires, in essence, acknowledging the legitimacy of both in the province. The variations and limits to claims of sovereignty, legitimacy, and allegiance were exposed after the 1908 annexation, because the legal basis of Ottoman sovereignty in Bosnia Herzegovina ceased to exist, but also because of the change in conditions for the Bosnian Muslims related to the complete incorporation into the Habsburg
Monarchy—chiefly, the adoption of long sought religious and educational autonomy, and the establishment of the Habsburg provincial parliament—that is, the acceptance of the political goals the Muslims struggled for, as well as acknowledging their predominance in the provincial political structure.

Just as was the case at the occupation, the second milestone of the Habsburg takeover—the annexation, brought about an adjustment in how rights, claims, and loyalties were expressed. By 1908, due largely to the spread of the printed word, the circulation of information and literature, and the new forms of sociability, Bosnian Muslims, and especially the Muslim intellectuals and political and religious leaders, were able to envision themselves as part of overlapping international communities of Muslims, of Slavs, and citizens of the world, in addition to being Habsburg/Ottoman subjects. For the Bosnian Muslims, the link with the Caliphate, especially its symbolism and advantage under the Habsburgs, the political ties centered on viewing the Ottoman State as their Great Power protector, as well as the Ottoman model of modernization as an alternative to the European, were the main ways of continuing the relationship with the Ottoman Empire.

Being part of the worldwide community of Muslims was especially appealing to the intellectuals who, aware of the developments in the rest of the Muslim world, were able to relate to the challenges various Muslim communities faced: modernization in the Ottoman Empire, educational reform in tsarist Central Asia, or communal organization in Bulgaria. Whereas the European fears of Pan-Islam were based on a threat of a universal Muslim state, the Pan-Islam(s) of Muslims worldwide was an outcome of modernity and
represented a different aspect of this movement for each individual group.\(^1\) Ottoman promotion of Pan-Islam was one of many strategies in conserving the Empire and advancing its international status. For the Bosnian Muslims, it was a variation on the theme of extending Ottoman continuities on a different level by focusing on the representative link with the Caliphate that legitimated the local religious establishment and institutions, the discourses of modernity and progress culturally adaptable to the Bosnian Muslim environment, and a political need for an outside power that would support and preserve their privileges.

Considering loyalty as a concept in this analysis allows for recognition and evaluation of the meaning of legitimacy and sovereignty in the region. Parallel, overlapping, and composite allegiances were transforming along the ways in which the state engaged with its citizens. The late Ottoman, as well as Habsburg and Russian empires, rallied the loyalty of their subjects by responding to pragmatic considerations and incorporating features of modern principles of sovereignty and legitimacy, such as religious, human, and civil rights they claimed to champion in protecting their subjects and territories they inhabited. While it cannot be said that these empires were moving from the territorial to popular conception of sovereignty,\(^2\) they definitely were acutely aware of contemporary requirements needed to appeal to popular loyalties and attain legitimacy. In proposing a new approach to the empire’s end through the focus on the lingering afterlife of the Ottoman Empire, this study contributes to a more realistic

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appraisal of what sovereignty meant in practice in its westernmost borders, overlapping with the Habsburg sovereignty in its southeast—not homogeneous or rigid, but partial, shared, and gradual.

From this perspective, the activities, sentiments, and professed allegiances of the Bosnian Muslims do not seem anomalous, as they are often characterized when observed from the standpoint of identities. This understanding in turn, provides for a precise and nuanced picture of the ways in which the Empire structured the lives of its subjects and how it continued to do so after its formal departure. The lasting afterlife of empire and the accompanying sentiments continuing even after the demise of the Ottoman State and the Caliphate in 1924, were seamlessly transferred to the Turkish Republic, and can be traced through the present time. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans and in Bosnia Herzegovina was pronounced and predicted countless times with the military, political, and strategic setbacks of the Ottoman Empire followed by the increasing remoteness of the Turkish Republic.³ Time and again, though, the Muslims viewed Turkey as a model and an ultimate place of safety, and found the appeal to an outside power helpful in preserving their privileges.

³ Rebecca West witnessed the disappointment of Sarajevo’s Muslims after a visit by the Turkish prime minister in the late 1930s, who, in his address to the public, did not emphasize the common Ottoman and Muslim past as many expected, but on the contrary, praised the secular Yugoslav government. Rebecca West, Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: A Journey Through Yugoslavia (New York: Viking Press, 1941), 1059.
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