



HAL
open science

Farewell to the Ottoman Legacy? Islamic Reformism and Revivalism in Inter-War Bosnia-Herzegovina

Xavier Bougarel

► **To cite this version:**

Xavier Bougarel. Farewell to the Ottoman Legacy? Islamic Reformism and Revivalism in Inter-War Bosnia-Herzegovina. Nathalie Clayer / Eric Germain. Islam in Inter-War Europe, Hurst, pp.313-343, 2008. halshs-00706274

HAL Id: halshs-00706274

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-00706274>

Submitted on 9 Jun 2012

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

« Farewell to the Ottoman Legacy? Islamic Reformism and Revivalism in Inter-War Bosnia-Herzegovina », in: Nathalie CLAYER / Eric GERMAIN, *Islam in Inter-War Europe*, London: Hurst, 2008, pp. 313-343

Xavier Bougarel

Many works dealing with the history of the Bosnian Muslim community tend to present the late Ottoman period (1804-1878), the Austro-Hungarian period (1878-1918) and the early Communist period (1945-1953) as a clash between conservative local elites and modernising external actors. Such an approach to Bosnian history can be misleading, due to the categories on which it is based (“tradition” versus “modernity”) and the role it attributes to internal and external actors. As far as the inter-war period (1918-1941) is concerned, it plays a secondary part in this approach, and is mainly dealt with by historians interested in the inter-ethnic tensions which contributed to the collapse of the first Yugoslav state in 1941.¹

Bosnian society, however, experienced deep transformations within the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929. While the Austro-Hungarian authorities had left the agrarian structures inherited from the Ottoman period untouched, the agrarian reform of 1920 dismantled them completely, hastening the economic decline of Muslim *agas* and *begs* (landowners), and transforming the relationship between peasants, local political elites and the state bureaucracy.² Party politics, which had started to develop in the last years of the Austro-Hungarian period, resumed in the 1920s, before King Alexander’s dictatorship (1929-1934) put serious limitations on political and associative life. Finally, educational and cultural institutions continued to develop, and ethno-religious identities also continued to evolve, as illustrated by the activities of Muslim cultural societies such as *Gajret* (“Effort”, founded in 1903 and showing an increasingly “pro-Serbian” orientation) and *Narodna uzdanica* (“Popular Hope”, founded in 1924 with a “pro-Croatian” orientation).³

The importance of the inter-war period in the overall history of Bosnia-Herzegovina is confirmed by the fact that, in the 1960s and 1970s, the increasing assertiveness of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the recognition of Bosnian Muslims as the sixth constitutive nation within the Yugoslav

¹ Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984; Aleksa Djilas, *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution 1919-1953*, Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 1991.

² Milivoje Erić, *Agrarna reforma u Jugoslaviji 1918-1941*, Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1958; Jozo Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics and Economic Change in Yugoslavia*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955.

³ Ibrahim Kemura, *Uloga “Gajreta” u društvenom životu Muslimana 1903-1941*, Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1986; Ibrahim Kemura, *Značaj i uloga “Narodne uzdanice” u društvenom životu Bošnjaka 1923-1945*, Sarajevo: Bošnjački institut / Institut za istoriju, 2002.

federation went together with the publication of several major works on this period. They included Atif Purivatra's book on the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation (*Jugoslovenska muslimanska organizacija –JMO*)⁴ and Dana Begić's papers on the Movement for the Autonomy of Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁵ The same holds true at the religious level, and the revival of the Islamic Community (*Islamska zajednica*) from the 1960s onwards was accompanied by a return to the religious debates of the inter-war period, as illustrated by Fiket Karčić's works on the reform of Shari'a courts and the development of Islamic reformism in inter-war Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁶ Additional works were published after the collapse of Communist Yugoslavia in 1991, and booklets and collections of articles dating back to the inter-war period were reprinted in the 1990s.⁷ This recent literature, of course, is not devoid of ideological bias, but it provides a lot of useful data and analyses. It represents the main source used in writing the present chapter, since the press and archives of the inter-war period were not consulted.

Understanding the Internal Pluralism of Islam in Inter-war Bosnia-Herzegovina

The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Bosnia-Herzegovina

The first attempts at reforming the local military and administrative structures in Bosnia-Herzegovina date back to the early nineteenth century, with the creation of a professional Ottoman army in 1826, and the promulgation of the *Hatt-i-sherif* of Gülhane in 1839, the latter symbolising the beginning of the *Tanzimat* (reforms) period in Ottoman history. Despite the fierce resistance of Bosnian *kapetans* (a specific type of military leaders settled on the frontier with the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and *ayans* (local political strongmen), the late Ottoman period was thus characterised by a reinforcement of state authority and by far-reaching administrative reforms. Some of these reforms, such as the secularisation of the judiciary in 1856 (limiting the competence of Shari'a courts

⁴ Atif Purivatra, *Jugoslovenska muslimanska organizacija u političkom životu Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca*, Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1974.

⁵ Dana Begić, "Akcije muslimanskih građanskih političara poslije skupštinskih izbora 1935. godine," *Godišnjak društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine*, XVI (1965), pp. 173-189; Dana Begić, "Pokret za autonomiju Bosne i Hercegovine u uslovima sporazuma Cvetković-Maček," *Prilozi instituta za historiju radničkog pokreta*, IV, 4 (1968), pp. 177-191.

⁶ Fiket Karčić, *Šeriatski sudovi u Jugoslaviji 1918-1941*, Sarajevo: Islamska zajednica, 1986; Fiket Karčić, *Društveno-pravni aspekti islamskog reformizma*, Sarajevo: Islamski teološki fakultet, 1990.

⁷ Udruženje Uleme "el-Hidaje" / Rijaset Islamske zajednice, *Islamska misao H. Mehmeda Handžića*, Sarajevo: Oko, 1994; Udruženje Uleme "el-Hidaje," *Zbornik radova sa znanstvenih skupova o Hadži Mehmedu Handžiću*, Sarajevo: Oko, 1996; Esad Duraković (ed.), *Mehmed Handžić: izabrana djela* (six volumes), Sarajevo: Ogledalo, 1999; Enes Karić and Mujo Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević, prosvjetitelj i reformator* (two volumes), Sarajevo: NIPP Ljiljan, 2002; Enes Karić (ed.), *Bosanske muslimanske rasprave* (seven booklets), Sarajevo: Sedam, 2003; Adnan Jahić, *Hikmet. Riječ tradicionalne uleme u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Tuzla: BZK "Preporod", 2004; Enes Karić, *Prilozi za povijest islamskog mišljenja u Bosni i Hercegovini 20. stoljeća – knjiga I*, Sarajevo: el-Kalem, 2004.

to family issues) and the opening of *ruždijas* (from Turkish *rüşdiye*; non-confessional primary schools) in 1869, infringed on the jurisdiction of religious elites. But Bosnian *'ulama* (religious scholars) never reacted in a coherent way to the reforms of the *Tanzimat* period.⁸

In 1878, in the wake of the Russo-Ottoman war (1877-1878), the Congress of Berlin placed Bosnia-Herzegovina under Austro-Hungarian military occupation. On the ground, the advance of Austro-Hungarian troops first met with armed resistance by the local Muslim population. Four years later, the introduction of compulsory military service by Austria-Hungary resulted in a joint Serb-Muslim uprising in Eastern Herzegovina and in the following decades tens of thousands of *muhajirs* (refugees) fled to Ottoman territories.⁹ Most Bosnian *'ulama*, however, quickly gave their allegiance to the Austro-Hungarian authorities. Moreover, they opposed statements by their Ottoman counterparts which insisted that Bosnian Muslims had a duty to perform *hijra* (emigration to Muslim-controlled territories), and in 1882 the *mufti* of Sarajevo, Mustafa Hilmi Hadžiomerović, issued a *fatwa* (opinion on legal issues) encouraging Muslims to serve in the Austro-Hungarian army.¹⁰ This behaviour was probably tactical, linked to the hope that the Austro-Hungarian occupation would not last for long or, on the contrary, to the fear that Muslims could be expelled from Bosnia-Herzegovina, as had been the case in Slavonia and Dalmatia (in today's Croatia) at the end of the seventeenth century. But the allegiance of Bosnian *'ulama* to the Austro-Hungarian authorities can also be seen as a continuation of their subordination to the state, and as part of a wider tendency to reproduce and adapt some features of the Ottoman "*millet system*"¹¹ to new circumstances.

In an effort to separate Bosnian Muslims from the Ottoman Empire, in 1882 the Governor of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Benjamin Kallay, appointed Mustafa Hilmi Hadžiomerović as the first Bosnian *Reis ul-Ulema* (Chief of the *'ulama*), assisted by an *Ulema medžlis* (Council of the *'Ulama*) and, later on, a *Vakf-mearif sabor* (*Waqf* Assembly). The creation of these new provincial bodies facilitated the bureaucratisation of the *waqfs* (religious foundations), *madrasas* (secondary religious schools) and Shari'a courts.¹² At the beginning of the twentieth century, representatives of the traditional elites demanded the right to elect the *Reis ul-*

⁸ Fikret Karčić, *The Bosniaks and the Challenge of Modernity – Late Ottoman and Hapsburg Times*, Sarajevo: el-Kalem, 1999, pp. 35-71.

⁹ Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile. The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims 1821-1922*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

¹⁰ Fikret Karčić, *The Bosniaks*, pp. 109-123; Muhamed Mufaku al-Arnaut, "Islam and Muslims in Bosnia 1878-1918: Two Hijras and Two Fatwas," *Journal of Islamic Studies*, V, 2 (1994), pp. 242-253.

¹¹ Within the framework of the "*millet system*," the non-Muslim minorities of the Ottoman Empire enjoyed a large autonomy in religious, educational and judicial matters. The specific contours of the "*millet system*," depended both on time and place, and it was only fully institutionalised in the 19th century. See Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (eds), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982.

¹² Fikret Karčić, *The Bosniaks*, pp. 123-139; Alexandre Popovic, *L'islam balkanique. Les musulmans du sud-est européen dans la période post-ottomane*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1986, pp. 273-278.

Ulema, the *Ulema medžlis* and the *Vakf-mearif sabor*. This first political mobilisation of the Bosnian Muslim community resulted in the creation of the Muslim Popular Organisation (*Muslimanska narodna organizacija*, MNO) in 1906, and the promulgation by the Austro-Hungarian authorities of a “Status for the Autonomous Administration of Islamic Religious and Educational Affairs” in 1909.¹³ Contrary to what happened around the same period with the Orthodox (Serb) community,¹⁴ however, this movement did not encourage the emergence of a modern national identity but withdrawal into an autonomous but non-sovereign confessional community, i.e. a kind of “neo-*millet*,” as illustrated by the generalisation of the term “Muslim.” Consequently, the movement for religious and educational autonomy was of a highly paradoxical nature. Although it was led by the traditional Muslim elites, it resulted in the creation of the first modern political party in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and while it aimed at obtaining the autonomy of religious institutions created or bureaucratised by the state, it was unable – or unwilling – to develop a modernisation project of its own. As a result, the origins of Islamic reformism in Bosnia-Herzegovina are not to be found in this movement but on the contrary among its foremost critics: the representatives of a nascent Bosnian Muslim intelligentsia.

The creation of provincial religious institutions by Benjamin Kallay was part of a larger programme to bring about the complete “Europeanisation” of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the promotion of a all-embracing Bosniak identity (*bošnjaštvo*) able to counter Serbian and Croatian nationalist claims.¹⁵ This idea of *bošnjaštvo* had already been advanced in the last decades of Ottoman rule, after the military defeat of Bosnian *ayans* by Omer Pasha Latas in 1851 and the promulgation of the *Hatt-i hümayun* in 1856. It is therefore not surprising that Kallay’s project was embraced by former Ottoman civil servants such as Mehmed-beg Kapetanović Ljubušak (1839-1902), editor of the newspaper *Bošnjak* (1891-1910). The idea of *bošnjaštvo*, however, was not supported by the traditional Muslim elites, and was abandoned by the Austro-Hungarian authorities after Kallay’s departure in 1903. Around the same period, a first generation of Muslim intellectuals educated in Austro-Hungarian *gimnazijas* (secondary schools) and universities played a key part in the emergence of a modern Muslim press and literature, and the creation of the cultural society *Gajret*.¹⁶

The names most frequently associated with this cultural awakening are Edhem Mulabdić (1862-1954), Osman Nuri Hadžić (1869-1937), Safvet-beg Bašagić

¹³ Robert Donia, *Islam under the Double Eagle. The Muslims of Bosnia and Hercegovina 1878-1914*, New-York: Columbia University Press, 1981; Nusret Šehić, *Autonomni pokret Muslimana za vrijeme austrougarske uprave u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1980.

¹⁴ Božo Madžar, *Pokret Srba Bosne i Hercegovine za vjersko-prosvjetnu autonomiju*, Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1982.

¹⁵ Tomislav Kraljačić, *Kallajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini (1882-1903)*, Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša 1987.

¹⁶ Muhsin Rizvić, *Književno stvaranje muslimanskih pisaca u Bosni i Hercegovini u doba austrougarske vladavine*, Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1985; Ibrahim Kemura, *Uloga “Gajreta” u društvenom životu Muslimana*, op.cit.; Alexandre Popović, *Cultures musulmanes balkaniques*, Istanbul: Isis 1994.

(1870-1934) and Musa Ćazim Ćatić (1878-1915). In the newspapers they established, such as *Behar* (“Blossom”, 1900-1911), *Gajret* (1906-1908) and *Biser* (“Pearl”, 1912-1914), the use of Turkish was abandoned in favour of the Bosnian/Serbo-Croat language,¹⁷ Western European forms of literary expression were promoted, and the commitment to progressive values and modern national identities – most often the Croatian one – was constantly emphasised. At the same time, traditional elites were criticised for their hidden nostalgia for the Ottoman Empire, their inability to adapt to new economic and cultural circumstances, and their tactical alliance with representatives of the Serb community.¹⁸ In the same newspapers, reformist writers from the Ottoman Empire (Mehmed Akif Ersoy, Sait Halim Paşa), Egypt (Muhammad Abduh, Abd al-Aziz Shawish), India (Sayyid Ahmad Khan) and Russia (Ismail Gasprinski) were used in order to denounce the conservatism of local ‘*ulama*. At that time, reformist discourse focused on the need to reform the main Islamic religious institutions, beginning with the curriculum of *madrasas* and the administration of *waqfs*, and to lift some religious bans concerning in particular banking activities (notably the question of interest) and women’s education. Although these first debates were limited to narrow intellectual circles, there is no doubt that they opened a new chapter in the history of Islamic thought and life in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Main Religious Debates of the Inter-war Period

After the First World War and the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918, the debates about Islamic reformism experienced profound changes in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the one hand, issues such as the duty to perform *hijra* and the use of the Turkish language became obsolete, while the need to fight the “backwardness” (*zaostalost*) of the Bosnian Muslim community and to adapt to the “spirit of the time” (*duh vremena*) was unanimously acknowledged, at least in principle. On the other hand, socio-cultural issues such as the adoption of Western dress-codes and the role of Muslim women in public life became new bones of contention between the advocates and adversaries of reformist ideas, and new divisions began appear among the reformists themselves.

¹⁷ Until the end of the nineteenth century, the newspapers close to the traditional Muslim elites used the Turkish language, whereas *Bošnjak* already used the vernacular language (called Bosnian language until 1907, and the Serbo-Croatian language later on) written in the Latin alphabet. In the late Austro-Hungarian period, reformist ‘*ulama* such as Džemaludin Čaušević failed in their attempt to promote the use of the Serbo-Croatian language written in a modified Arabic alphabet (so-called *arebica*) in the Bosnian Muslim newspapers.

¹⁸ In the early 1900s, the Muslim Popular Organisation (*Muslimanska narodna organizacija*, MNO, founded in 1906) and the Serb Popular Organisation (*Srpska narodna organizacija*, SNO, founded in 1907) were both fighting for the religious and educational autonomy of their respective community, and entered into a tactical alliance. Bosnian Muslim intellectuals, on the contrary, felt closer to the Croatian national project. In 1908, they created the Muslim Progressive Party (*Muslimanska napredna stranka*, MNS), whose influence remained marginal. In 1911, the agrarian question led to the breakdown of the Muslim-Serb coalition, and the MNO and the MNS merged into the Unified Muslim Organisation (*Ujedinjena muslimanska organizacija*, UMO). See Martha Čupić-Amrein, *Die Opposition gegen die österreichisch-ungarische Herrschaft in Bosnien-Herzegowina 1878-1914*, Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang 1986; R. Donia, *Islam*.

In his work on Islamic reformism, Fikret Karčić establishes for example a distinction between the “secular modernists” (Dževad-beg Sulejmanpašić, Edhem Bulbulović, Šukrija Kurtović, etc.), who gathered in 1928 in the association *Reforma*,¹⁹ and the “religious modernists” (Džemaludin Čaušević, Fehim Spaho, Abdulah Ajni Bušatlić, etc.), who launched the newspaper *Novi Behar* (“New Blossom”) in 1927. The former favoured the suppression of Shari’a courts, permission for Muslim women to be completely unveiled,²⁰ and encouraged Muslim men to wear a hat instead of the *fez*. The latter, on the other hand, only wanted to modernise the interpretation of Shari’a and the administration of *waqfs*, and maintained that Muslim women did not have a duty to hide their face, especially if this was an obstacle to their education and to their participation in economic life.²¹ Both “secular” and “religious” reformists denounced the conservatism of the *ahmedijaši* (“turbaned people”, a derogatory term for the ‘*ulama*) and the ignorance of the rural *hojas* (local imams). However, the “secular reformists” were members of the intelligentsia, favoured the “nationalisation” (national assimilation) of the Bosnian Muslims and had sometimes sympathies for the Yugoslav Communist Party.²² “Religious reformists,” for their part, quite often belonged to the *ilmiyya* (class of the ‘*ulama*), and shared the tactical “Yugoslavism” of the JMO’s leaders.²³

The growing influence of reformist ideas within Islamic religious institutions is in fact one of the most striking features of the inter-war period. Džemaludin Čaušević (1870-1938), the main figure of Bosnian Islamic reformism, was elected *Reis ul-Ulema* in 1913, a few months before the breakout of World War I, and occupied this position until his resignation in 1930. A former student of the famous *Mekteb-i hukuk* (Faculty of Law) in Istanbul, Čaušević had been a member of the *Ulema medžlis* since 1905, in charge of educational issues. Appalled by the poor state of Islamic educational institutions, he had encouraged the introduction of non-religious subjects into the curricula of *madrasas* and the

¹⁹ On the association *Reforma*, see Sabina Ferhadbegović, “Fes oder Hut? Der Islam in Bosnien zwischen den Weltkriegen,” *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit*, V, 2 (2005), pp. 69-85.

²⁰ Before 1950, most Bosnian Muslim women wore a long shawl called *zar* or *feredža* covering their body and their hair, as well as a veil called *peča* or *jašmak* covering their face. This traditional Muslim dress code was banned by the Communist authorities in 1950 (see Senija Milišić, “O pitanju emancipacije muslimanske žene u Bosni i Hercegovini,” *Prilozi instituta za istoriju*, 28, 1999, pp. 225-241).

²¹ In the 1920s, out of conviction or for tactical reasons, religious reformists only required that a women’s face should be uncovered, that is the suppression of the *peča/jašmak* (see note 20).

²² Edhem Bulbulović, for example, was elected in 1921 to the Constituent Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes as a representative of the Communist Party. In the 1930s, Communist influence was also perceptible in the cultural association *Gajret* and in the Gazi Husrev-beg *madrasa* (see I. Kemura, *Uloga “Gajreta”*, pp. 215-241; Dubravka Škarica, “Napredna srednjoškolska omladina Bosne i Hercegovine u revolucionarno-demokratskom pokretu 1937-1941. god.,” *Prilozi instituta za historiju radničkog pokreta*, IV, 4 (1968), pp. 593-617).

²³ Atif Purivatra, *Jugoslovenska muslimanska organizacija, op.cit.*; Xavier Bougarel, “Bosnian Muslims and the Yugoslav Idea,” in Dejan Djokic (ed.), *Yugoslavism. Histories of a Failed Idea 1918-1992*, London: Hurst, 2003, pp. 100-114.

printing of schoolbooks in the vernacular language.²⁴ He had also been the main initiator of the Association of Imams and Religious Teachers (*Udruženje imama i muallima*) created in 1909 and of the Association of ‘*Ulama* (*Udruženje Ilmijje Bosne i Hercegovine*) founded in 1912. Finally, he had played a very active part in the development of the Bosnian Muslim press, as shown by his contributions to the newspaper *Behar* and his role in the publication of bilingual religious newspapers (in Turkish and Serbo-Croat, written most often in *arebica*²⁵): *Tarik* (“The Path”, 1908-1910), *Muallim* (“The Teacher”, 1910-1913), and *Misbah* (“The Torch”, 1912-1914).

Čaušević’s election as *Reis ul-ulema* was the logical consequence of his own activism as well as a reflection of the growing influence of Islamic reformism in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But hostility to reformist ideas remained strong within Islamic religious institutions, as shown by the attacks against Čaušević in the 1920s and 1930s. On 6 December 1927, during a conference held at the cultural society *Gajret*, Čaušević declared that Islam did not prohibit women from unveiling or men from wearing a hat, and invited intellectuals who wore the hat to go to the mosque more often, “so that I can preach to them, and they also get the opportunity to speak from the *minbar* (pulpit from which the imam holds his sermon on Friday)”.²⁶ He added that it was possible to modify the initial purpose of a *waqf* and to destroy old graveyards if this could promote the economic and cultural advancement of the Muslim community. These typically reformist statements triggered fierce reactions from the executive board of the *Vakf-mearif sabor* (Waqf Assembly), the Sarajevo *džematski medžlis* (local religious council) and some leading ‘*ulama* such as Ali Riza Karabeg (1872-1944), who accused Čaušević of promoting a “fifth Kemalist *madhhab*”.²⁷ In the following months, Bosnian Muslim ‘*ulama* and intellectuals became involved in a heated debate about the veiling of women and, beyond this symbolic issue, about the place of *ijtihad* (rational interpretation) in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). Čaušević’s adversaries went so far as to declare him a *kafir* (infidel) and a *murtad* (renegade), while Čaušević responded that they were *munafiks* (religious hypocrites). On 10 July 1928, the *Islamska izborna kurija* (Islamic Electoral Curia), the body in charge of electing the *Reis ul-Ulema*, issued a *taqdir* (statement) insisting on the need to conform to the Hanafi *madhhab*,²⁸ restricting the right to issue *fatwas* to the *muftis* and conceding that women could unveil their faces under certain conditions, but condemning the wearing of the hat and rejecting any possibility of circumventing a *vakufname* (the founding act of a *waqf*, mentioning the purpose

²⁴ E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević*, especially vol. I, pp. 17-53 and vol. II, pp. 235-265.

²⁵ See note 17.

²⁶ Quoted in Smail Balić, *Das unbekannte Bosnien. Europas Brücke zur islamischen Welt*, Köln: Bohlau Verlag, 1992, p. 341.

²⁷ Ali Riza Karabeg, *Rasprava o hidžabu (krivenju muslimanki)*, Mostar: Hrvatska tiskara 1928; reprinted in E. Karić (ed.), *Bosanske mulimanske rasprave*, III, pp. 61-92, here p. 79. Between the seventh and the ninth century, four distinct *madhhabs* (legal schools) appeared within Sunni Islam. Bosnian Muslims are affiliated to the Hanafi *madhhab* (from the name of its founder, Abu Hanifa, 699-767), which was the official *madhhab* of the Ottoman Empire.

²⁸ See note 27.

chosen by its founder).²⁹ A few months later, on 7 September 1928, a Congress of Muslim Intellectuals (held in Sarajevo) summoned by the cultural society *Gajret* adopted a conciliatory resolution insisting on the education of Muslim women rather than their unveiling, and on the depoliticisation of the way the *mutawalli* (*waqf*'s administrator) was elected rather than the rationalisation of the way the *waqfs* themselves were administered.³⁰ As for Čaušević, he complied with the *taqrir*, but stressed that the “Curia” had not rejected the principle of the unveiling of women.³¹

In the 1930s, the debate about Islamic reformism experienced new transformations. While the influence of reformist ideas was declining, revivalist circles hostile to *reformaštvo* (a derogatory term for “reformism”) started to agitate for a strict implementation of Shari’a rules, especially with regard to dress-code and other markers of Muslim identity.³² Bosnian revivalists gathered around the newspapers *Hikmet* (“Wisdom”, 1929-1936), published in Tuzla, and *el-Hidaje* (“The Right Path”, 1936-1945), published in Sarajevo. Their leading figure was Mehmed Handžić (1906-1944), a young ‘*alim* (scholar) who, after studying at the Islamic University of al-Azhar in Cairo (1926-1931), became a professor at the Gazi Husrev-beg *madrasa* in Sarajevo and, from 1939 onwards, at the *Viša islamska šerijatsko-teološka škola* (Higher Islamic Shari’a-Theological School).

The rise of Islamic revivalism in Bosnia-Herzegovina has a clear international dimension and reflects in particular the influence of authors such as Shakib Arslan (1869-1946), who visited Yugoslavia in 1932.³³ For their part, in the 1930s Islamic reformists started to cultivate regular contacts with the *Lahori* Ahmadiyya movement,³⁴ as illustrated by the fact that the imam of the Ahmadiyya mosque in

²⁹ Islamska izborna kurija, *Takrir*, Sarajevo: H. M. Merhemić, 1928; translated in S. Balić, *Das unbekannte Bosnien*, pp. 343-344. On the *waqfs* in inter-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, see e.g. Abduselam Balagija, *Uloga vakufa u verskom i svetovnom prosvjećivanju naših muslimana*, Beograd: Štamparija D. Gregorić, 1933; Hajrudin Mulalić, *Institucija vakufa u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 2001.

³⁰ I. Kemura, *Uloga “Gajreta”*, pp. 172-181.

³¹ S. Balić, *Das unbekannte Bosnien*, p. 344.

³² Islamic revivalists are defined in recent literature as “traditionalists” (Fikret Karčić) or “traditional ‘*ulama*” (Adnan Jahić). Such a definition, however, can be misleading, since revivalists did not always belong to the traditional Bosnian Muslim elites, and were critical of some religious traditions inherited from the Ottoman period. On the notions of traditionalism, reformism and revivalism, see Antony Smith, “La ‘légitimation dualiste’, matrice du nationalisme ethnique,” in G. Delannoi and P.-A. Taguieff (eds), *Théories du nationalisme: nation, nationalité, ethnicité*, Paris: Kimé, 1991, pp. 256-283.

³³ Shakib Arslan, a publicist and political activist born in Lebanon, was a leading figure of the pan-Islamic movement in the inter-war period, and one of the organisers of the Muslim Congress held in Geneva (1935). Several papers by Shakib Arslan were published in *Hikmet* and *el-Hidaje*, and his famous brochure *Our Decline, Its Causes and Remedies* was translated into Serbo-Croat in 1934. See Martin Kramer, *Islam Assembled. The Advent of the Muslim Congresses*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1986; Enes Karić and Rešid Hafizović, “Aktuelnost djela Emira Šekiba Arslana,” in Emir Šekib Arslan, *Zašto su muslimani zaostali, a drugi napredovali*, Sarajevo: NIPP Ljiljan 1994, pp. 75-81, and Raja Adal’s chapter in this volume.

³⁴ On the Lahori Ahmadiyya, see Eric Germain’s chapter in this volume.

Berlin, Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah, visited Yugoslavia in 1936 where he met with representatives of Islamic religious institutions and with the former *Reis ul-Ulema* Džemaludin Čaušević.³⁵ These contacts with the Ahmadiyya gave rise to new attacks against Čaušević. In 1937, two translations of the Qur'an, one by Ali Riza Karabeg and the other by Džemaludin Čaušević and Muhamed Pandža, were published in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Despite the hostility of the newspaper *Hikmet*, the principle of such a translation was no longer a central issue at that time. In his review of Karabeg's translation, Handžić himself wrote that "we need such a translation and commentary [of the Qur'an], although we hold that a translation can never be used for the same purposes as the original, that is the foundation of religious rules".³⁶ But, as shown by Enes Karić, revivalists rejected the rationalist bias of Čaušević's and Pandža's comments, and blamed them for having used translations by Omer Riza (in Turkish) and Muhamad Ali (in English), two other religious figures linked to the Ahmadiyya. Ten years after having been accused of introducing a "Kemalist *madhhab*" into Bosnia-Herzegovina, Čaušević was thus denounced as a representative of the "Qadiyyanist *madhhab*."³⁷

The growing influence of Islamic revivalism, however, was also related to the Yugoslav political and cultural context. The influence of both international and local factors on the debates of the inter-war period is best demonstrated by a comparison of the educational background and public commitments of Džemaludin Čaušević and Mehmed Handžić, the leading figures of Islamic reformism and revivalism in Bosnia-Herzegovina during this period.

Čaušević and Handžić: Two Generations of 'Ulama?

Džemaludin Čaušević was born in 1870, while Bosnia-Herzegovina was still part of the Ottoman Empire. After frequenting the *madrasa* of Bihać, he left in 1887 for Istanbul, where he studied at the *Mekteb-i nüvvab* (Training School for Qadis) and the *Mekteb-i hukuk* (Law Faculty). While in the Ottoman capital, he became acquainted with some of the Young Turks and with reformist-minded 'ulama such as Ismail Hakki Manastirli (1846-1912). In 1901 and 1902, he travelled to the Hejaz and to Yemen as correspondent of the Istanbul newspapers *Tasvir-i efkar* ("The Description of Thoughts") and *Tercüman-i hakikat* ("The Interpreter of the Truth"), and spent some time in Cairo, where he attended classes given by Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), the Mufti of Egypt and a

³⁵ Dr S.M. Abdullah, "Der Islam in Jugoslawien," *Moslemische Revue*, XIII, 1 (April 1937), pp. 15-19. In a paper published in 1970, Husein Đozo writes that Muhammad Abdullah was a "personal friend" of Džemaludin Čaušević, and that "it is possible that Čaušević did not have a clear idea [*nije bio na čistu*] concerning the Qadiyyani movement". Husein Đozo, "Kur'an časni," *Glasnik IVZ*, XXX, 1-2 (1970), pp. 3-7; reprinted in E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević*, I, pp. 260-264, here p. 261.

³⁶ Mehmed Handžić, "Prijevod Kur'ana od Hadži Ali Riza Karabeg," *el-Hidaje*, II, 9 (1938-1939), pp. 141-142; reprinted in E. Duraković (ed.), *Mehmed Handžić*, I, pp. 758-761, here p. 760.

³⁷ Muhamed Pašić, "U čemu se sastojе greške, podvale i potvore Glavnog odbora 'el-Hidaje' u prikazu djela 'Kur'an časni'," *el-Hidaje*, I, 1 (1937-1938), pp. 9-13; quoted in E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević*, I, p. 115. Here the Lahori branch of the Ahmadiyya was confused by Čaušević's opponents with the other branch, the Qadiani Ahmadiyya, condemned in the 1930s as "outside the pale of Islam".

leading figure of nineteenth century Islamic reformism. Thus, Čaušević's educational background was mainly an Ottoman one, and he had direct contacts with the first generation of reformist *'ulama*. During the inter-war period, Cairo replaced Istanbul as the main centre of higher education for Bosnian *'ulama*. But the University of al-Azhar that Mehmed Handžić entered in 1926 was quite different from the one Čaušević had known at the time of Abduh. Moreover, Handžić's five-year stay in Egypt provided an opportunity for him to discover the Islamist ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood, a movement founded in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949).

Čaušević's and Handžić's educational backgrounds reflect the political and religious changes taking place in the Muslim world. On the contrary, a comparison of their official positions during the inter-war period reveals the importance of local political circumstances. As already mentioned, Čaušević was elected *Reis ul-Ulema* on 27 October 1913, shortly before First World War broke out. Living in such a troubled time, he could not avoid getting involved in politics.³⁸ At the end of the war, Čaušević rallied to the Yugoslav project, allegedly stating that he was tired of both "the Turkish and the German power",³⁹ and tried – along with other political and religious leaders – to give their support to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in exchange for the preservation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a distinct administrative unit and of the 1909 Status of Autonomy for Islamic Religious Institutions. In the following years, however, he clashed regularly with the state authorities over the fate of the Bosnian Muslims in the new kingdom and, more specifically, over the Government's attempts to limit the autonomy of Islamic religious institutions. In 1919 and 1920, Čaušević denounced the murders and pillaging by Serb veterans and irregulars in Eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina and in the Sanjak region (between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo), as well as the appropriation of *waqfs* and the transformation of mosques into military warehouses. In 1921, he demanded from the new state authorities that all religious communities enjoy the same rights, that family matters remain within the jurisdiction of religious institutions, that any form of proselytism should be forbidden and that no religious symbols or holidays should be introduced in state institutions.⁴⁰ While the Radical Party in power and the JMO were fighting for control of the *waqfs*, an important channel for clientelism, Čaušević was above all opposed to the introduction of the cult of Saint Sava (the patron saint of the Serbian Orthodox Church) in elementary and secondary schools, which he defined as "temples of education" (*hramovi prosvjete*). His definition of public education was therefore a strictly secular one: "The best is that all that is religious belongs to the mosques, to the churches and to the books on religious instruction of each confession, and that in our public schools, which

³⁸ On the political activities of Džemaludin Čaušević, see e.g. Enes Durmišević, "Džemaludin Čaušević i pravni položaj Reis-ul-Uleme od 1918. do 1930.," in E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević*, pp. 124-145; Mustafa Imamović, "O političkoj aktivnosti reis-ul-uleme Čauševića," *Glasnik IZ*, LIV, 1 (1991), pp. 26-34.

³⁹ Quoted in Atif Purivatra, *Jugoslovenska muslimanska organizacija*, p. 18.

⁴⁰ Džemaludin Čaušević, "Oдношaj islama prema državi i drugim konfesijama (Beograd, 22. novembra 1921. god.);" reprinted in E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević*, I, pp. 274-279.

are intended for all citizens, nation and science are cleansed of all that belongs to places of worship and to religious books.”⁴¹

Already in the mid-1920s, Čaušević was attacked as one of the main obstacles to the “nationalisation” of Bosnian Muslims. The newspaper *Politika* wrote that “there are in Bosnia nationally-oriented people and one should not prevent Čaušević from playing the Turk as much as he wants [*da i dalje turkuje do mile volje*]. Pension him off, and let him go wherever he wants: either to Istanbul, or to Ankara”.⁴² But the final clash between Čaušević and the Yugoslav state took place in 1930, after King Alexander had established a centralised dictatorship on 6 January 1929 and passed a new law on Islamic religious institutions on 31 January 1930. This law abolished the 1909 Status of Autonomy and created a Yugoslav-wide *Islamska vjerska zajednica* (Islamic religious community) whose main bodies were appointed by the King. Čaušević protested against this law, rejected his appointment as Yugoslav *Reis ul-Ulema* on 26 February, and was pensioned off on 6 June 1930. He was replaced by Ibrahim Maglajlić (1861-1936), the Mufti of Tuzla and an *alim* close to the revivalist newspaper *Hikjmet*.

Mehmed Handžić, for his part, became politically active when Čaušević had already withdrawn from public life and inter-ethnic tensions were increasing in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In 1935, at a time when political freedoms were restricted, most JMO’s leaders agreed to join the Yugoslav Radical Community (*Jugoslovenska radikalna zajednica*, JRZ) in power, and Fehim Spaho (1877-1942) was appointed as the new *Reis ul-Ulema*.⁴³ In the following year, Handžić took part in the creation of the Association of ‘*ulama el-Hidaje* (“The Right Path”) which published a journal under the same name. Its aim was to “raise the authority of the class of the ‘*ulama* as the spiritual leadership of the Muslims”⁴⁴ and, beyond that, to provide new moral and political guidelines to a disoriented Bosnian Muslim population. Shortly after its creation, the Association *el-Hidaje* protested against the amendment of the law on Islamic religious institutions and, especially, against the suppression of the office of mufti. According to Mahmut Traljić, “Mehmed Handžić was a candidate on the opposition list in parliamentary elections [in 1938]”.⁴⁵ On 26 August 1939, Prime Minister Dragiša Cvetković and Croatian political leader Vlatko Maček agreed to divide Bosnia-Herzegovina between Serbia and the new autonomous *banovina* (province) of Croatia, in a last attempt to calm down growing Serb-Croat tensions. As the recently elected

⁴¹ Džemaludin Čaušević, “Nacija i vjera,” *Novi Behar*, IX/1-3, 1935-1936, pp. 1-2; reprinted in *ibid.*, II, pp. 377-380, here p. 380.

⁴² *Politika*, 13 February 1925; quoted in *ibid.*, I, p. 138

⁴³ Fehim Spaho was the brother of Mehmed Spaho, the main leader of the JMO until his death in 1939.

⁴⁴ The programme of the Association *el-Hidaje* is extensively quoted in Enes Karić, “Časopis ‘*el-Hidaje*’,” in E. Karić, *Prilozi*, pp. 421-458, here p. 423.

⁴⁵ Hafiz Mahmud Traljić, “Handžić kao društveni i javni radnik,” in Udruženje Uleme “*el-Hidaje*,” *Zbornik radova*, pp. 45-50, here p. 49. Traljić does not provide more details about Handžić’s candidature. However, the list in question is probably the one led by the Croatian Peasant Party (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka* –HSS) and its Bosnian Muslim branch, the Muslim Organisation (*Muslimanska organizacija* –MO), created in 1936 by pro-Croatian intellectuals and JMO dissidents (see Dana Begić, “Akcije muslimanskih građanskih političara”, esp. pp. 178-180).

president of the Association *el-Hidaje*, Handžić participated in several meetings of the main Muslim cultural and religious associations which led up to the creation of the Movement for the Autonomy of Bosnia-Herzegovina (*Pokret za autonomiju Bosne i Hercegovine*) on 30 December 1939.⁴⁶

Islamic Reformism and Revivalism in Bosnia-Herzegovina: What Was Really at Stake?

Two Antagonistic Trends with a Common Intellectual Origin

Čaušević's and Handžić's biographies show that the religious debates of the inter-war period have to be considered within their historical context. A closer examination of the writings of the main reformist and revivalist authors also demonstrate that, in Bosnia-Herzegovina as elsewhere, the relationship between Islamic reformism and revivalism is not one of outright opposition, but one of contradictory evolution from a shared intellectual legacy: the ideas of early reformist *'ulama*, and above all of the Egyptian scholar Muhammad Abduh.⁴⁷ Both reformists and revivalists, for example, condemned the heterodox practices of popular Islam. While Dževad-beg Sulejmanpašić made fun of the rural *hojas'* belief in the power of written amulets,⁴⁸ Handžić considered that "it is shameful and unfortunate that, at a time when medicine is experiencing progress and when we have medical specialists for every disease, we turn for remedy to dead people who are unable to help themselves, let alone to cure us."⁴⁹ Reformists and revivalists alike stressed that Islam was compatible with "sound reason" (*zdrav razum*), and that it strongly encouraged learning and work. Within this background, Čaušević and Handžić also agreed on the need to preach on worldly topics in the vernacular language and to promote the diffusion of religious newspapers and brochures among the Bosnian Muslim masses.

Common ground between reformists and revivalists, however, stopped when it came to more sensitive issues such as reform of the *waqfs* and the reinterpretation of the Shari'a. Reformists insisted on the need for *ijtihad* (rational interpretation), in order to take into account "what exists, what will exist and what should exist".⁵⁰ At the end of his life, Čaušević went so far in this direction that he seemed to deny any value to the accumulated legal corpus of *fiqh* and to promote

⁴⁶ Dana Begić, "Pokret", esp. pp. 180-185.

⁴⁷ Elie Kedourie, *Afghani and Abduh*, London: Frank Cass, 1966; Aziz al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities*, London: Verso, 1993; Armando Salvatore, *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity*, Reading: Ithaca Press, 1999.

⁴⁸ Dževad-beg Sulejmanpašić, *Zelen čovjek. Komediya u jednom činu iz muslimanskog seoskog života*, Sarajevo: Gajretova mala pozornica 1932; quoted in S. Ferhadbegović, "Fes oder Hut?" op.cit., pp. 76-77.

⁴⁹ Mehmed Handžić, "Islam zabranjuje traženje pomoći od mrtvih i u tom cilju posjećivanje turbeta i crkvi (a ovo naročito osuđuje)," *Glasnik IVZ*, I, 8 (1933), pp. 13-17; reprinted in E. Duraković (ed.), *Mehmed Handžić*, III, pp. 355-362, here p. 362.

⁵⁰ Džemaludin Čaušević, "Naša kulturna pitanja," *Novi Behar*, II, 17 (1928-1929), pp. 257-259; quoted in F. Karčić, *Društveno-pravni aspekti*, pp. 217.

instead an individual relationship with the Qur'an and the *hadiths* (Muhammad's deeds and sayings). In 1928, in response to those who accused him of not conforming to the Hanafi *madhhab*, he wrote: "My answers on the veiling of women conform to what God is ordering in the Qur'an, and even if I know what Shari'a lawyers and commentators have said, I prefer to conform to the precepts of the Qur'an, since it is here forever and for all times. I am required to do this by the Qur'an, since it orders me to ponder, to learn and to investigate."⁵¹ Of course, many *'ulama* disagreed with such statements and instead set strict limitations on *ijtihad*. In its *taqrir*, the "Curia" warned, for example, that "each individual Muslim has a duty to follow those prescriptions which are in accordance with the opinions of our religious authorities. Any individual interpretation of the Shari'a which is not confirmed by the Tradition (*Sunna*) has no value from the point of view of the Shari'a, and has therefore no binding effect."⁵² Similarly, in 1939 after *Reis ul-Ulema* Fehim Spaho had suggested that, "together with the time in which we are living, Shari'a jurisprudence, which is based on custom (*'urf* and *'ada*), has to be changed",⁵³ Handžić replied that, "every question which deals with belief, religious rituals or legal issues is, in terms of the Shari'a, a 'religious' one," and no mufti could issue a *fatwa* without basing it on a quotation from the Qur'an or a legitimate *hadith*. He therefore rejected Spaho's justification of usury in post-Ottoman Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as his suggestion that modern astronomy should be used in calculating lunar months.⁵⁴

This conflict about the scope of *ijtihad* was linked to another issue, the relationship between the *ilmiyya* (class of the *'ulama*) and the intelligentsia. Both secular and religious reformists accused the *'ulama* of being one of the main causes of the decline of their community and, in particular, of having encouraged the rejection of the Austro-Hungarian educational system (*švabska škola*: "German school") and the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets (*vlaški alfabet*: "Valachian alphabet"). In Abdulah Bušatlić's eyes, for example, "the *hojas* are the first culprits for our backwardness since, during all our long history, they were not up to the hard task of educating their people in a contemporary way. Nobody taught them how to work with the people, how to facilitate their moral and material advancement and progress."⁵⁵ As a religious reformist, however, he also complained that "instead of being exemplary in its conduct and behaviour, [the Westernised intelligentsia] has behaved provocatively and has prompted in the

⁵¹ Džemaludin Čaušević, "Sarajevskom vafufsko-mearifskom džematskom medžlisu putem kotorskog vakufsko-mearifskog povjerenstva u Sarajevu (Sarajevo, 27. januara 1928)," reprinted in E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević, prosvjetitelj i reformator, op.cit.*, I, pp. 298-307, here p. 298.

⁵² Islamska izborna kurija, *Takrir*, p. 343 (translated from the German version).

⁵³ Fehim Spaho, "Tumačenje šeriatsko-pravnih pitanja kod nas," *Kalendar Narodne uzdanice*, VII (1939), pp. 21-25; translated in S. Balić, *Das unbekannte Bosnien*, pp. 346-348, here p. 346.

⁵⁴ Mehmed Handžić, *Tumačenje šeriatsko-pravnih pitanja kod nas – odgovor na istoimeni članak g. F. Spahe*, Sarajevo: Štamparija J. Karić 1939; reprinted in E. Duraković (ed.), *Mehmed Handžić*, III, pp. 191-235. The Yugoslav authorities banned this brochure.

⁵⁵ Abdulah Ajni Bušatlić, *Pitanje muslimanskog napredka u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Sarajevo: Islamska dionička štamparija, 1928; reprinted in E. Karić (ed.), *Bosanske mulimanske rasprave*, V, pp. 85-120, here p. 94.

masses the feeling that Western science corrupts instead of ennobles.”⁵⁶ For their part, revivalists admitted that the Muslims of Yugoslavia represented “a mighty religious community which lags behind in many domains, and which needs to dedicate all its might to its religious, cultural and economic renaissance.”⁵⁷ But they wanted to put this process under the leadership of the *ilmiyya*, especially in a period “when, as a consequence of the First World War, the level of morality has begun to decline, when perversion has started to spread rapidly among men and women, when Islam is publicly insulted and attacked in newspapers, reviews, in various books and even in schoolbooks, and when some would-be Muslims undermine the basic tenets of the true Islam with their articles and books.”⁵⁸ More generally, revivalist *‘ulama* maintained that the *ilmiyya* “is closest to its people ... and has grown with it.”⁵⁹ They also insisted that the secular intellectuals did not have the right “to rummage around in Islamic upbringing and religious education”,⁶⁰ and criticised them for trying “to introduce into [Islam] some Western points of view which they like, allegedly in order to reconcile Islam with the so-called sound legacy of the West.”⁶¹

This last quotation reveals that, in Bosnia-Herzegovina as elsewhere in the Muslim world, what was finally at stake was the definition of the relationship between “Islam” and the “West”, perceived as two distinct and homogenous civilisations.⁶² Reformists were eager to “connect the treasury of Islam with the material treasury of the Western school, which represents knowledge and technique,” in order “to reach a happy life in both worlds.”⁶³ They warned that:

the world is going ahead, and if we do not conform to the spirit of the time, we will be run over. We often lay dormant in the past, and we have now to stop doing that. While we were seeking help from *turbets* [tombs of holy men], from dead people, while we were expecting that the Caliphs and the Caliphate would protect our faith, others ... dug the mountains, entered into the earth’s core, extracted ore, exploited the forests and got rich.⁶⁴

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 96.

⁵⁷ “Uvodnik,” *el-Hidaje*, I, 1 (1937-1938), pp. 2-3; quoted in E. Karić, “Časopis ‘el-Hidaje’”, p. 426.

⁵⁸ Mehmed Handžić, “Uloga uleme u narodu (govor održan na skupštini ‘el-Hidaje’),” *el-Hidaje*, I, 2 (1937-1938), pp. 20-23; reprinted in E. Duraković (ed.), *Mehmed Handžić*, VI, pp. 46-53, here pp. 49-50.

⁵⁹ “Uvodnik,” *el-Hidaje*, I, 1 (1937-1938).

⁶⁰ [Ibrahim Hakki Čokić], “Na rabotu reformaša,” *Hikjmet*, III, 25 (1931), p. 29; quoted in A. Jahić, *Hikjmet*, p. 124

⁶¹ [Ibrahim Hakki Čokić] “Na namjerno uvredljive izraze,” *Hikjmet*, III, 23-24 (1931), pp. 374-377; quoted in *ibid.*, p. 128.

⁶² Armando Salvatore, *Islam*, esp. pp. 67-96.

⁶³ Džemaludin Čaušević et al., “Braćo Muslimani!,” *Novi Behar*, I, 1 (1927-1928), pp. 1-2; reprinted in E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević*, II, pp. 166-169, here p. 168.

⁶⁴ Džemaludin Čaušević, “Kur’an i Muslimani,” *Novi Behar*, VIII, 11-14 (1933-1934), pp. 161-162; reprinted in *ibid.*, II, pp. 194-196, here p. 195

To support such arguments, authors like Čaušević not only referred to Japan and Turkey as examples of the successful appropriation of Western science and culture, but were sometimes tempted to depict Westerners as “better Muslims” than the Muslims themselves: “The Qur’an says: ‘Obey, learn and see how the past nations ended’. English, German and other people conform to this commandment. And what about us? We Muslims are learning the Qur’an, we are listening to the Qur’an, we are doing good deeds [*sevap*] and are praying for the dead, but we do not care about its commandments, especially not about those which require sacrifice, effort and work.”⁶⁵

Admittedly, Čaušević himself was aware that “the hate which has been fed in the Middle Ages against Islam and Muslims has not yet completely disappeared.”⁶⁶ However, he considered that the Crusades belonged to the past, that the biggest threat for Muslims was not Western science or dress-code, but their own passivity and ignorance, and that “it is due to the Qur’an, as a great divine miracle [*mu’džiza*], that Muslims have today their mosques in London, in Paris, in Berlin and in other places.”⁶⁷

Revivalists, on the contrary, insisted much more on the differences or even the incompatibility between Islamic and Western civilisations, the latter perceived as “materialistic” and “corrupt.” Handžić, for example, deplored the ongoing “Westernisation” of Bosnian society:

Under the influence of the West and of corrupt times, [men and women] have started to go together to the cinema, to the theatre, to the cafés and to other places, to take part in various excursions far away from the cities and, in some perverted cases, to have intimate intercourse which they do not consider as an evil since they will get engaged and married later on. ... Even in the decent and useful gatherings which have a religious character, the consumption of alcoholic drinks is becoming more and more frequent.⁶⁸

Handžić also stressed the superiority of the Islamic classical age over the “20th century, the century of tolerance, as Europeans call it,”⁶⁹ and criticised Western Europe for its lasting hostility toward Islam: “When the Turks slaughter the Armenians, all European newspapers write about Turkish savagery, barbarity and

⁶⁵ Džemaludin Čaušević, “Vjera,” in *Gajretova predavanja*, Sarajevo: Gajret, n.d.; reprinted in *ibid.*, II, pp. 313-320, here p. 319. The editors do not provide original page numbers.

⁶⁶ Džemaludin Čaušević, “Božje svjetlo ne može nitko ugasiti,” *Kalendar Narodne uzdanice*, II (1934), pp. 17-21; reprinted in *ibid.*, II, pp. 209-213, here p. 211.

⁶⁷ Džemaludin Čaušević, “Džamija (Džamiun),” *Kalendar Narodne uzdanice*, V (1937), pp. 113-119; reprinted in *ibid.*, II, pp. 214-219, here p. 218.

⁶⁸ Mehmed Handžić, “Ružni običaji u vezi s ženidbom,” in Glavni odbor ‘el-Hidaje’, *Islamski obiteljski život*, Sarajevo: el-Hidaje 1942, pp. 23-25; reprinted in E. Duraković (ed.), *Mehmed Handžić*, III, 244-245.

⁶⁹ Mehmed Handžić, “Položaj nemuslimana u muslimanskoj državi (s upoređenjem sa nekim današnjim prilikama),” *el-Hidaje*, IV, 9-11 (1940-1941), pp. 234-249; reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 265-291, here p. 268.

crimes. But when the Balkan Christians massacre Muslims in Rumelia [the European part of the Ottoman Empire], the same newspapers call this heroism, bravery and liberation.”⁷⁰

Bosnian Muslim Elites and the Challenge of Being Muslim in Europe

The debates taking place within the Bosnian Muslim community were reminiscent of those in the Muslim world in general, but took place in the particular context of the post-Ottoman Balkans. Already in 1893 Mehmed-beg Kapetanović Ljubušak contrasted the benevolent attitude of the Austro-Hungary toward Bosnian Muslims with that of the new Balkan states and the European colonial powers:

Until now it had never happened that more than half a million Muslims were living with full freedom under the protection of a Christian ruler, as we are doing happily in our dear homeland. Austro-Hungary did not proceed [as Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro did in 1878] and it will never do that, provided that we remain loyal and devoted to it, but it behaved as a cultured and powerful state. Soon after crossing the Sava [river], it bestowed ... on of all us the equality of rights, it granted a complete civic and religious freedom which the followers of all confessions are still enjoying today.”⁷¹

Considering *hijra* as unnecessary and harmful, Kapetanović reminded his fellow citizens that “we are living in the nineteenth century in the middle of Europe”,⁷² and that “it is better to learn in the *gimnazija* than to go to Asia” (“*bolje učiti u gimnaziju nego ići u Aziju*”).⁷³

The awareness of living in Europe, and in a regional environment that was potentially hostile to the very presence of Islam, was also manifest in the inter-war period. In an interview in 1919 with the French journalist Charles Rivet, Čaušević deplored that “the hidden hostility of our Orthodox neighbours has turned into open hate, unfortunately with the approval of the [Serb] occupation authorities.”⁷⁴ Fourteen years later, he mentioned that “we Muslims of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia have people on the right side and on the left side [i.e., Serbs and Croats] who should perceive us as their brothers, but it is unfortunately not the case.”⁷⁵ This situation explains why the Bosnian Muslim elites reproduced

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 273-274.

⁷¹ Mehmed-beg Kapetanović Ljubušak, *Budućnost ili napredak muhamedovaca u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Sarajevo: Tiskara Spindlera i Löschnera, 1893; reprinted in E. Karić (ed.), *Bosanske mulimanske rasprave*, I, pp. 83-107, here pp. 86-87.

⁷² Ibid., p. 93.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 98.

⁷⁴ Interview published in *Le Temps* (1st April 1919), and reprinted in E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević*, I, pp. 271-273, here p. 272.

⁷⁵ Džemaludin Čaušević, “Neka nam je Kur’an vodič!,” *Islamski svijet*, II/, 31 (1933), p. 9; reprinted in *ibid.*, II, p. 225.

the “neo-*millet*” strategy set up during the Austro-Hungarian period, bargaining their allegiance to the Yugoslav state for physical security and religious freedom. With the exception of some intellectuals, their support for the Yugoslav idea was mainly a tactical one. The insistence on a South-Slav background shared with Serbs and Croats was a way of distancing oneself from the Ottoman past, of avoiding an exclusive identification with the Serb or Croat national identity and of playing a leading role within the Yugoslav *Islamska vjerska zajednica*. The public statements of the Bosnian ‘*ulama* were also part of this strategy. In 1919, for example, Čaušević said: “we can still bear the injustice that [the Serbs] govern without us but, for God’s sake, they have at least to respect our lives, our honour and our goods.”⁷⁶ Similarly, on the eve of the Second World War, in a resolution protesting against the turning of mosques into Orthodox churches in southern Serbia (Kosovo and Macedonia), the Association *el-Hidaje* reminded the state authorities that Yugoslav Muslims “have never endangered the religious peace or the state and national interests. They are fulfilling their civic duties without reservation and have always done so.”⁷⁷

Moreover, the geopolitical situation of Bosnia-Herzegovina influenced the attitude of Bosnian Muslim elites toward the issue of the Caliphate. In the Austro-Hungarian period, some reformists such as Osman Nuri Hadžić, Džemaludin Čaušević and Fehim Spaho perceived pan-Islamism as a way to free Islam from its Ottoman distortions and to reopen the “gates of *ijtihad*.” After the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate by Mustafa Kemal in 1924 – a move greeted by some intellectuals but deplored by the ‘*ulama* –, the JMO and the Islamic religious institutions supported the project of a Caliphate exercising purely religious functions, and thus not infringing on the sovereignty of the Yugoslav state.⁷⁸ Yugoslav Muslims were not allowed to participate in the General Islamic Congress for the Caliphate in Cairo (1926), but a delegation of Muslim politicians and ‘*ulama* did attend the General Islamic Congress in Jerusalem (1931) and the European Muslim Congress in Geneva (1935). In the meantime, however, the hope of restoring the Caliphate had vanished, and the Muslim Congresses had turned into anti-colonial and anti-reformist forums.⁷⁹ In the absence of a legitimate religious authority for the whole *umma* (community of the Faithful), reformists and revivalists were once again opposed to each other over the possibility of resorting to *ijtihad* in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ali Riza Karabeg, for example, considered that “one can not expect ‘*ijtihad*’ from other nations [except the Arabs], and especially not from us in Bosnia,” since “the minimal conditions for this are, among others, a perfect and active knowledge of the Arabic language and a comprehensive knowledge of the Qur’an and the *hadiths*, and it is clear that

⁷⁶ Interview published in *Le Temps* (1st April 1919), p. 273.

⁷⁷ The resolution was quoted extensively in M. Handžić, “Položaj”, pp. 288-291, here p. 288.

⁷⁸ In its programme, the JMO demanded that “our link with the Caliphate is granted and that it is organised in such a way that we have the same free links as the Catholics have with the Holy See.” (see “Program JMO,” reprinted in A. Purivatra, *Jugoslovenska muslimanska organizacija*, pp. 418-420, here p. 418).

⁷⁹ M. Kramer, *Islam Assembled*; F. Karčić, *Društveno-pravni aspekti*, pp. 228.

this does not exist among us.”⁸⁰ Fehim Spaho, on the contrary, opposed Mehmed Handžić’s rejection of usury in the following terms:

The same Shari’a rule can be implemented differently in different places, depending on the customs existing in these places. ... Was it necessary and timely, precisely here at the periphery of Islam, where we are fighting for our economic survival, was it appropriate to raise this question [of usury] which time has solved for so long? Can the discussion of such outdated questions bring anything else but trouble?⁸¹

The Inter-war Period and the Origins of Bosniak Nationalism

Enes Karić, one of the leading figures of the *Islamska zajednica*, rightly notes that, “as numerous treatises and debates by Muslim intellectuals during the first half of the twentieth century show, all that remained for them was the issues of dress, old graveyards, *waqfs* and the decline of the Caliphate,” and that “those Muslim intellectuals who did discuss questions relating to state and nation were few and far between.”⁸² But his statement that “[instead] there should have been debates about the state as an institution of security”⁸³ is an *a posteriori* reconstruction and hinders a proper understanding of the links existing between the religious debates of the inter-war period, the impact of political and cultural Westernisation on Bosnian society and the crystallisation of a modern national identity among Bosnian Muslims.

As Karić himself acknowledges, “the debate about dress was ... in a sense a debate about the community’s security and survival.”⁸⁴ This means that the clashes between Islamic reformists and revivalists about the adoption of Western dress-codes, the role of women in public life and the reform of religious institutions also reflected deeper disagreements on the best way to ensure the long-term survival of the Bosnian Muslim community. Čaušević, for example, encouraged Bosnian Muslims to emulate their non-Muslim fellow citizens: “The Catholics, the Orthodox and the Jews take care – and this very aptly – of the education of their youth, of assistance to their poor, but we Muslims stay motionless, as we would sleep in the Arabian Peninsula, and not find ourselves in this corner of Europe.”⁸⁵ In his eyes, “if the Islamic community wants the continuing existence [*opstanak*] of Islam in this region, it has to take care of the education of the future [generations of] Muslims”⁸⁶ and, more generally, to acquire “all that the other communities have to ensure their conditions of

⁸⁰ A.R. Karabeg, *Rasprava*, p. 74.

⁸¹ F. Spaho, “Tumačenje,” p. 348.

⁸² Enes Karić, “Islamic Thought in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 20th Century: Debates on Revival and Reform,” *Islamic Studies*, XLI, 3 (2002), pp. 391-444, here p. 393.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Dž. Čaušević, “Božje svjetlo,” p. 213.

⁸⁶ Džemaludin Čaušević, “Iman, Islam,” *Novi Behar*, VI, 19-20 (1932-1933), pp. 253-254; reprinted in E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević*, II, pp. 188-190, here p. 190.

existence.”⁸⁷ Revivalists, for their part, put a much stronger emphasis on the preservation of Islamic values and symbols, claiming that “we do not want to disappear as Muslims, we do not want to get assimilated into others and the like”,⁸⁸ and suggesting for example that Muslim female workers be employed in separate workshops in which they could “be employed in the best possible moral and material conditions.”⁸⁹ While reformists stressed the necessity of keeping pace with the other ethno-religious communities of Bosnia-Herzegovina, revivalists were preoccupied with the maintenance of ethno-religious boundaries.

This difference between reformists and revivalists, which was neither clear-cut nor stable, reflected in part their attitude toward the issue of the “nationalisation” of Bosnian Muslims. As already stated, many intellectuals identified themselves as Croats or Serbs and therefore perceived the veil and the *fes* (fez) as obstacles to the “nationalisation” of the Muslim masses. Dževad-beg Sulejmanpašić, for example, wrote: “the *fes* is one of the social dividing lines between us and our national brothers of another confession. Wearing the *fes* as a compulsory religious uniform constantly emphasises our social isolation, and represents a permanent obstacle to the reinforcement of our national consciousness.”⁹⁰ Some ‘*ulama* had a similar stance. In his brochure defending the unveiling of women, for example, Abdulah Bušatlić encouraged “the nationalisation of our people [*naš svijet*] as an indigenous element in these provinces, with the aim of introducing it into the circle of civilised people dedicated to their own wellbeing and progress in their national fatherland.”⁹¹ Most ‘*ulama*, however, agreed that “the purity of our language is a proof of which nation and community we belong to,” and that “we are pure Yugoslavs by our blood.”⁹² But they were anxious to preserve the symbolic boundaries of their community. Consequently in its *taqrir*, the “Curia” condemned any attempt at adopting non-Islamic dress-codes for the sake of “fashion, custom or even the wish for unification with our brothers by blood and language.”⁹³

Once again, historical circumstances played an important role in the evolution of this debate on the “nationalisation” of Bosnian Muslims. The 1930s were not only marked by increasing inter-ethnic tensions at the political level but also – paradoxically enough – by the disappearance of some ethno-religious boundaries in everyday life. Against this background, revivalist ‘*ulama* insisted more and

⁸⁷ D. Čaušević, “Kur’an i Muslimani,” pp. 194-195.

⁸⁸ Ibrahim Hakki Čokić, *O teset-turu (pokrivanju muslimanki)*, Tuzla: Štamparija Petrović, 1928, p. 31; quoted in A. Jahić, *Hikmet*, p. 31.

⁸⁹ Programme of the Association “*el-Hidaje*,” p. 423.

⁹⁰ Dževad-beg Sulejmanpašić, “Za šešir i protiv fesa,” *Jugoslavenski list*, October 1925; quoted in Dževad-beg Sulejmanpašić, *Slobodna misao i hikmetovština. Dva gledanja na naše muslimanske verske i socijalne probleme*, Zagreb: Štamparija Gaj 1933, p. 96; reprinted in A. Isaković (ed.), *O “nacionaliziranju” Muslimana*, pp. 80-83, here p. 80.

⁹¹ A.A. Bušatlić, *Pitanje*, p. 99.

⁹² Chameran [Ibrahim Hakki Čokić], “Hamiš ‘Odgovoru Ilmije’,” *Hikmet*, IV/46, 1933, pp. 309-310; quoted in A. Jahić, *Hikmet*, p. 94.

⁹³ Islamska izborna kurija, *Takrir*, p. 344 (translated from the German version).

more on “the importance of external symbols”⁹⁴ and condemned syncretic practices as well as attendance at non-Muslim ceremonies (weddings, burials, etc.). In addition, both reformist and revivalist ‘*ulama* condemned materialistic ideologies such as Communism and new cultural trends such as the spread of Western fashion and mixed marriages in urban centres. In 1939, the *Ulema medžlis* denounced Muslim women who uncovered and dressed their hair,⁹⁵ and Mehmed Handžić and Fehim Spaho agreed that mixed marriages should be forbidden for both Muslim men and women in Bosnia-Herzegovina (whereas the Shari’a allows the marriage of a Muslim man with a non-Muslim woman). Handžić stated that “one has to differentiate between Muslims living in an Islamic state and Muslims living in an environment where non-Muslims are in a majority”,⁹⁶ while Spaho considered that “in this exposed place, where we are living with so many other faiths and where the use of Shari’a rules is too limited, mixed marriages are a threat which endangers our family life and thus our complete future as followers of Islam.”⁹⁷

Finally, the influence of historical circumstances is obvious in the attitude of the intellectuals and ‘*ulama* towards the issue of nationalism. At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, both Serb and Croat nationalisms were able to embody the hopes of the Bosnian Muslim intelligentsia, and this explains why, in 1914, intellectuals such as Šerif Arnautović or Šukrija Kurtović supported Serbia against the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Similarly, in the 1920s, “Yugoslavism” represented a framework within which the Bosnian Muslim elites could reproduce their “*neo-millet*” strategy, while remaining ambiguous about their national affiliation. Čaušević’s attitude toward patriotism and nationalism is characteristic of this period. On the one hand, he combined religious with linguistic solidarity in order to legitimise a specific feeling of togetherness among Bosnian Muslims:

God tells us that Muslims are only brothers and that, as such, they have to work together for the good of their religious community. ... But there is also a brotherhood by homeland and language. Whoever is living with us in our homeland and is speaking our language is our brother, even if

⁹⁴ Mehmed Handžić, “Važnost vanjskih znakova sa šerijatskog gledišta,” *el-Hidaje*, III/6-7, 1939-1940, pp. 80-82; reprinted in E. Duraković (ed.), *Mehmed Handžić*, V, pp. 249-255.

⁹⁵ Muhamed Pašić, “Tražena fetva,” *el-Hidaje*, III, 10-11 (1939-1940), pp. 133-134; quoted in F. Karčić, *Društveno-pravni aspekti*, p. 223.

⁹⁶ Mehmed Handžić, “Mišljenja islamskih učenjaka koji su bili protiv mješovitih brakova,” *Novi Behar*, XII, 1-4 (1938-1939), pp. 14-17 and XII, 5-6 (1938-1939), pp. 55-58; reprinted in Rijaset Islamske zajednice, *Mješoviti brakovi*, Sarajevo: Biblioteka glasnika IZ, 1996, pp. 23-44, here p. 23.

⁹⁷ Fehim Spaho, “Mješoviti brakovi,” *Glasnik IVZ*, VI/1, 1938, pp. 1-10; reprinted in Rijaset Islamske zajednice, *Mješoviti brakovi*, pp. 7-22, here p. 8. It is interesting to note that, in this peculiar case, Handžić agreed with Spaho on the need to adapt the *Shari’a* to specific local circumstances.

he is not a Muslim. But in any case the links are stronger with the Muslims who are together with us in our homeland.”⁹⁸

On the other hand, he was anxious to ensure the religious neutrality of the state, to distinguish religious from national identity and to preserve his own neutrality with regard to the national question:

There are in our state Croats and Serbs who are closely following their Islamic faith, and this has to be taken into account. I am firmly convinced that the most accurate solution is that neither the Catholics nor the Orthodox link their Croat or Serb identity with their religious feelings, since it causes a great confusion among those Croats who are not Catholics and those Serbs who are not Orthodox.”⁹⁹

This attitude, however, became less and less tenable in the political context of the 1930s. It is thus not surprising that Mehmed Handžić, the leading figure of Islamic revivalism in Bosnia-Herzegovina, was also the one who laid the foundations of contemporary Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) nationalism.¹⁰⁰ On the one hand, he borrowed from works written during the Austro-Hungarian period by authors such as Franjo Rački (1828-1894), Ćiro Truhelka (1865-1942) and Safvet-beg Bašagić (1870-1934) the idea that the Islamisation of Bosnia-Herzegovina resulted from a massive conversion of Bosnian Bogomils¹⁰¹ and that the literature published in Oriental languages during the Ottoman period represented a first manifestation of Bosnian cultural identity.¹⁰² On the other hand, he stated that Islam was compatible with nationalism, promoted a definition of nation (*narod*) close to the German definition of *Volk* and, more specifically, introduced a new notion of *bošnjaštvo* which applied solely to the Bosnian Muslim community. In a speech given in 1940, shortly after the Cvetković-Maček

⁹⁸ Džemaludin Čaušević, “Međusobno se potpomažite u dobrim i pobožnim djelima,” *Novi Behar*, VIII, 1-2 (1933-1934), pp. 1-2; reprinted in E. Karić and M. Demirović (eds), *Džemaludin Čaušević*, II, pp. 191-193, here p. 192.

⁹⁹ Džemaludin Čaušević, “Nacija i vjera,” *Novi Behar*, IX, 1-3 (1935-1936), pp. 1-2; reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 377-380, here p. 379

¹⁰⁰ On the link between revivalism and nationalism, see Antony Smith, “La ‘légitimation dualiste.’”

¹⁰¹ Mehmed Handžić, *Islamizacija Bosne i Hercegovine i porijeklo bosanskohercegovačkih Muslimana*, Sarajevo: el-Hidaje, 1940; reprinted in E. Duraković (ed.), *Mehmed Handžić*, I, pp. 7-46. Bogomilism was a Christian heresy present in the medieval Balkans. The Croatian historian Franjo Rački was the first to state that the Bosnian Church (*bosanska crkva*) which existed in medieval Bosnia was linked to Bogomilism, and that its repression by the Orthodox and Catholic Churches explained the massive conversion of Bosnians to Islam. This thesis has been refuted by more recent academic works on the Bosnian Church and the Islamisation process in Bosnia-Herzegovina (see e.g. John Fine, *The Bosnian Church: A New Interpretation*, New York: Columbia University Press 1975).

¹⁰² Mehmed Handžić, *Rad bosanskohercegovačkih Muslimana na književnom polju*, *Glasnik IVZ*, I, 1 (1933), pp. 15-22; I, 2, pp. 22-27; I, 3, pp. 22-29; I, 6, pp. 20-25; I, 7, pp. 11-16; I, 8, pp. 19-26; I, 9, pp. 25-32; I, 10, pp. 16-20; I, 11, pp. 10-18; I, 12, pp. 14-18; reprinted in *ibid.*, II, pp. 308-451.

agreement (i.e. the division of Yugoslavia into several provinces in August 1939), he claimed that:

Islam has reinforced the innate patriotism of the Bosniaks [*Bošnjaci*] and they have become in this way the most patriotic element of this country and almost the only element which sincerely perceives Bosnia-Herzegovina as his native soil. Almost nobody perceives Bosnia-Herzegovina as his homeland in the same way as the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina do, and this is the reason why, when it comes to the interests of our homeland, almost nobody strives [to defend them] but the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina.¹⁰³

In December 1939, the creation of the Movement for the Autonomy of Bosnia-Herzegovina was the specific manifestation of this nascent Bosniak nationalism, just as the movement for religious and educational autonomy had been the first collective expression of the “neo-*millet*” strategy during the Austro-Hungarian period.¹⁰⁴ One could argue that, while playing a leading role in the autonomy movement, Handžić was also supporting the pan-Islamist organisation *Mladi Muslimani* (“Young Muslims”), which dreamt of “a great Islamic state which would count more than 400 million inhabitants belonging to the most diverse races and nations.”¹⁰⁵ But, in Bosnia-Herzegovina as elsewhere, political pan-Islamism was nothing but a form of proto-nationalism,¹⁰⁶ as illustrated by the hostility of the “Young Muslims” to the “Yugoslav” idea during and after the Second World War, their interest in the creation of Pakistan and – last but not least – their role in the founding of the Party of Democratic Action (*Stranka demokratske akcije* –SDA) and the renewal of Bosniak nationalism in the 1990s.¹⁰⁷

Bosnian Muslims had been separated from the Ottoman Empire in 1878, a few decades earlier than the Muslims of Sanjak, Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania. It is therefore logical that, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the rise of Islamic reformism

¹⁰³ Mehmed Handžić, “Patriotizam, narodnost i nacionalizam sa islamskog gledišta,” *el-Hidaje*, V, 1 (1941-1942), pp. 7-16; reprinted in *ibid.*, III, pp. 323-339, here p. 331.

¹⁰⁴ On the autonomy movement during the Second World War, see Enver Redžić, *Muslimansko automaštvo i 13. SS divizija. Autonomija Bosne i Hercegovine i Hitlerov Treći Rajh*, Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1987; Rasim Hurem, “Pokušaj nekih građanskih muslimanskih političara da Bosnu i Hercegovinu izdvoje iz okvira Nezavisne Države Hrvatske,” *Godišnjak društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine*, XVI (1965), pp. 191-221; Rasim Hurem, “Konceptije nekih muslimanskih građanskih političara o položaju Bosne i Hercegovine u vremenu od sredine 1943. do kraja 1944. godine,” *Prilozi instituta za historiju radničkog pokreta*, IV, 4 (1968), pp. 533-548. On Mehmed Handžić’s political activities during the same period, see Udruženje Uleme “el-Hidaje,” *Zbornik radova*.

¹⁰⁵ Mladi Musliman, student medicine [Tarik Muftić], “Kompromisni islam i kompromisni Muslimani,” *el-Hidaje*, VI, 4 (1942), pp. 91-96, here p. 92.

¹⁰⁶ Nikki Keddie, “Pan-islam as Proto-Nationalism,” *Journal of Modern History*, XLI, 1 (1969), pp. 17-28.

¹⁰⁷ Xavier Bougarel, “From Young Muslims to Party of Democratic Action: The Emergence of a Pan-Islamist Trend in Bosnia-Herzegovina,” *Islamic Studies*, XXXVI, 2-3 (1997), pp. 533-549.

occurred before the First World War. Nevertheless, for the Bosnian Muslims the inter-war period represents not only a period of rupture and crisis, with the demise of the Ottoman Empire and its replacement by Kemalist Turkey, but also the incorporation of Bosnia-Herzegovina within the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Against this background, it is clear that, although apparently limited to the issues of dress, graveyards, *waqfs* and the Caliphate, the religious debates of the inter-war period played a key role in the way Bosnian Muslim elites have positioned themselves towards European political modernity, which means, first of all, towards the nation-state.