

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF HILMI BABA'S WORKS

Aydın Özkan

Association of Researchers on Africa (AFAM)

Abstract

Bosnia and Herzegovina has always been characterized by multiethnic and multi-religious diversity. Throughout the history Montenegrins, Serbs and Croats from the neighboring countries have also naturally been connected with Bosnia and Herzegovina. This diversity was also enriched with the influence of great powers, especially by the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Very often internal diversity and interests of the great powers caused significant upheavals, wars, and migrations. For instance, the Austro-Hungarian Empire later attacked Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to invade it in 1697, 1737, 1788 and 1791. Eventually, the Berlin Treaty had enabled the Austro-Hungarian Empire to get the exclusive right to administer Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nevertheless, according to the Treaty, the region was still legally under the Ottoman State. After the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1908 the country's administrative and political system affected the position of Bosniaks. In particular, their political and religious status has been changed significantly. These developments also significantly affected and accelerated migration to Anatolia. During this turbulent period Hilmi Baba, a provincial scholar from Bosnia discussed whether the Muslims living in the region should immigrate to Anatolia. He also critically analyzed the impact of the reforms (tanzimat) in Bosnia. The main aim of this article is to make a contextual analysis of Hilmi Baba's views, approaches, and works.

Keywords: Ottoman, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnian Rebellion, Tanzimat Era, Migration, Tevfik Azabagiç, Hilmi Baba, Meclis-i Mebusan.

Historical Context of Hilmi Baba's Biography

On one hand, the Ottoman Empire symbolically retreated from the Balkans with the loss of Bosnia and Herzegovina after the Berlin Congress. However, the Ottoman Empire could concentrate more on the reforms (tanzimat), which brought about some results and problems too. With the proclamation of Tanzimat Edict, the Ottomans initiated the military, financial, economic, administrative, constitutional, and education reforms. In effect, the modernization era began with the Edict itself. Tanzimat means literally "arrangements". This term is the plural of 'tanzim' which means 'organizing' (Kartal, 1988, p. 61). Just as Nizam-ı Cedid went beyond its literal meanings of 'new order' or 'new military order' and expressed, in a wider sense, a series of planned reforms with a certain beginning and end (Eren, 1979, p. 704), so the term tanzimat means an era of most important reforms in the Ottoman Empire. These reforms had wider socio-political, administrative, economic, cultural and religious implications and consequences (Ülken, 1992, p. 41ff).

Sultan Mahmud II who was enthroned in 1808 during the power struggle of Janissaries and the Ayan (Notables) dominated against the representatives of the traditionalists who stood against the Ottoman modernization of the 19th century. He built the Ottoman central system around himself, made the number of military reforms and managed to abolish the Janissary Corps in 1826, which were the biggest obstacle to the modernization process. Mahmud II, who accelerated the modernization process at a time when the Ottoman State fought with crises at home and abroad, carried Ottoman Westernization further by making use of the historical experience and intellectual legacy of his predecessors. The western way of thinking and understanding which formed the basis of the reforms started first in the military during the reign of Mahmud II and with the passage of time made its impact on many reforms and resulted in the emergence of Western-style institutions. In this era, great changes and reforms in administration, the judicial system, society, as well as education were carried out, and, in line with European systems, primary education was made compulsory and Rüşdiye Schools were opened in various parts of Istanbul.

While the Ottoman Empire was busy with reforms, Bosnia had to encounter new political, social and administrative realities. Beginning from the Belgrade

Treaty (1739), Bosnian cities began to experience changes and transformations, especially with regard to some changes in social strata. Janissaries who came from castles lost to the enemy and settled in Bosnian cities where they gained influence. Sarajevo became a privileged center and the urban notables, military classes and local civilian heads called 'kapudans' consolidated this situation and became the major representatives of political authority. Even during the term of the Bosnian Governor Ali Paşa they formed a Notables' Assembly (Ayan Meclisi) which would have the authority to supervise the governor and control some of his revenues. Besides, the Janissaries, who were in alliance with local forces, were received well by the people. However, starting from the mid-18th century, for a decade several rebellions, mainly organized by peasants, broke out (Aruçi, 2009, p. 130).

Nonetheless, in spite of all these rebellions that were supported by the European powers, Bosnian people showed their loyalty to the Ottoman State. Mahmud II attempted to manage the rebellions with the help of governors of Bosnia like Silahtar Ali Paşa, Süleyman Paşa, Celâlettin Paşa, and Selim Sırrı Paşa. In the end, their initiatives and attempts could resolve rebellions and apathy of the peasants in Bosnia.

Following a fatwa from Şeyhülislam, Janissary Corps which had often rebelled in Istanbul were abolished on 15 June 1826 and the order to abolish the corps was sent to the provinces. Thus, on 12 July 1826, in Travnik the decision about the abolishment of the Janissary Corps was announced to the public. Yet the elite in Bosnia as well as the common people reacted fiercely and rejected the royal decree. Leading and influential local notables and kaptans joined and led the rebellion.

Bosnia was often in the midst of long wars that led to the ruining of the land system, the increase of the taxes as well as the usurpation of the administration by notables and kaptans (Bosna-Hersek'le İlgili Arşiv Belgeleri (1516-1919), pp. 8-9). Together with Tanzimat, drastic changes in Bosnia occurred with respect to Muslims' privileged status. These developments also affected the relations among the notables, landowners, and peasants as well as their relationship with the state. Unrest among peasants and landowners and problems with the recruitment of soldiers and avoiding paying off the taxes began to emerge. Muslims' loss of privileges affected the application of Tanzimat in Bosnia, which was rather

delayed (Inalcik, 1992, p. 13). Further, Tanzimat reforms changed the traditional Ottoman-Islamic model of the state, which was challenged by the Bosniaks.

The Sublime Port (Bâbiâli) had to struggle with Bosnian notables for a long time. Finally, in 1833 Mahmud Hamdi Paşa suppressed rebellions, managed to abolish the Janissary Corps and controlled the affairs in Bosnia. Then privileges of the local notables and kaptans too were ended. Although it was not possible to carry out successful reforms in financial, administrative and cultural fields, the Empire's regaining of control in Bosnia prepared the ground for the application of Gülhane Hattı Hümayunu (Royal Edict of Gülhane) which was declared in 1839. This year in effect is also reference to the beginning of Tanzimat era in Bosnia (Eren, 1965, pp. 7-8).

The sanjak of Herzegovina was brought under Bosnia when the latter was made a province (eyalet). Herzegovina had to go through an administrative change, following the suppression of Hüseyin Kaptan rebellion in 1832. Herzegovina was ruled until 1851 by Ali Paşa of Herzegovina. In 1851, when a rebellion led by Ali Paşa was suppressed, Herzegovina was made into a vilayet and in 1854 was brought under Bosnia again.

Hilmi Baba's Life

Hilmi Baba was educated in Istanbul during the Tanzimat era. He became a scholar, who lived in Saray Bosna Province's (vilayet) Taşlıca (district). He criticized strongly the Tanzimat and Islahat edicts, arguing that these reforms negatively affected both the Ottoman State and Bosnia. Hilmi Baba was actively involved in the debate about the view that after the invasion Bosnia became a Dar al-Harb (The abode of War) and that Muslims living there needed to migrate to Muslim lands. The Austria-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia after the Berlin Treaty brought about a great debate about "migration" from an occupied region to a Muslim land.

Hilmi Baba's biography is limited and it is primarily based on his own pamphlets and also what is shared by Tefik Azabagić, who was educated in Istanbul together with Hilmi Baba, and later was appointed as mufti of Tuzla after the Austria-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia (Lavic, 1990 and 1996). In one of his pamphlets, he tells his name as Bosnavi Hilmi Baba b. Hüseyin et-Taşlıcavi. This shows that

he was from Taşlıca (Pljevlja) in Sandzak region. His stamp too shows that his father was called Hüseyin. He had also the title Baba which was then used by Sufis in addition to titles of şeyh, halife and dervish (Süleyman Uludağ Baba, pp. 365-366).

Mehmet Tefik Azabagić in his work titled Hicret Hakkında Risale [Pamphlet about Migration] made a reference to a certain person nicknamed Deli Hafız (Crazy Hafız - a person who knows the Qur'an by heart) who studied at Fatih Madrasas in Istanbul together with Hilmi Baba. He stated "... I know Deli Hafız personally. We studied in Istanbul together. That was not his name but his nickname which he got due to his character. He was eager to object to (almost) everything without seeing if it is correct or not" (Azabagic, p. 19). These descriptions provide us with an idea about Hilmi Baba's difficult life in Istanbul as well as why he criticized the Ottoman rulers and bureaucrats for carrying out some projects of Westernization similar to those done by Austria-Hungarian Empire in Bosnia.

In his Risale fi'l-Hicret Hilmi Baba mentioned that for some time he stayed at Eyup District in Istanbul and sometimes gave sermons at Eyup Mosque. In the introduction of this work he asserted:

When I stayed at Eyup District, I gave sermons at the mosque. There I met one clerk. He showed himself religious, but he sent his son to Rüşdiye School. One day I was a guest in his house. His son came back from the school and told this to his father: "We believe that God is one, but the French believe that God is three". Father said that "My son! God is one".
(Hilmi Baba, 1884, 4-5)

There are seven works of Bosnalı Hilmi Baba at the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul. He does not cite the titles of his works fully, but they are registered as follows: Kitab mine'l Fıkh ve'l-Fetava (Book of Jurisprudence and Fatwas), Risale fi's-Siyaset (Pamphlet on Politics), Mecalisü'l-Bosna, Mucizatü'n-Nebi (Miracles of the Prophet), Tefsirü Sureti'd-Duha (Exegesis of the Chapter Duha), Fethu'l-esrar ve'l-müşkilat ala ruhi'l-beyan bi'l-İşarat. In addition, Hilmi Baba has another work on migration: Hicret Risalesi. The work which is in Turkish is kept at Gazi Husrev-bey Library in Sarajevo with the registration number R 6172.

Hilmi Baba's "Siyase" and "Tanzimat" Views

The Berlin Congress caused major political, social and administrative changes and transformations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The local peoples were traumatized not only by the occupation by Austria-Hungary, but also due to the loss of Ottoman territories to newly emerging nationalist states like Serbia and Bulgaria. Due to these developments, Hilmi Baba as a scholar and representative of the Muslim people in Bosnia started various activities following the Austria-Hungarian occupation. He also thought of seeking asylum in the Ottoman State when the Austria-Hungarian Empire followed intensive assimilation policies towards Bosnian Muslims in the 1880s.

Hilmi Baba's *Risale fi's-Siyase* is a scholarly work that deals with the phenomenon of immigration and Tanzimat. This handwritten Arabic work is dated at the end of his work to 3 Şaban 1293 (24 August 1876). The work does not have chapters, but it has excellent thematic and chronological order. The original manuscript of the work which has 24 sheets is at the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul and a note at the beginning of it states that it was endowed to Fatih Sultan Mehmet Han Library in 1303. We have not been able to find out in our research if the work had other copies.

Hilmi Baba explains the reason for writing this work in its introductory by stating:

One of them who is a Kadiasker tells this: "Jews and Christians too should be in this parliament because they are part of the Prophet Muhammad's ummah. Also, because Allah tells us that "you are the best ummah". When I heard of this, I said that it was necessary to reply to it and told this: "Your words show your ignorance of Hadith and Qur'anic exegesis or sheer ignorance. Offices often lead the ignorant to injustice..."

(Hilmi Baba, p. 3)

Hilmi Baba used the Qur'anic verses and Hadiths to argue that Tanzimat is not in accordance with the Ottoman way of state administration. He finds it weird to try to justify the entrance of Jews and Christians to the parliament (Meclis-i Mebusan) because for him Christians are a nation invited to the truth, while Muslims are a nation who has already accepted it. According to him, Kazasker's words stem from his ignorance as well as his flattering approach to philosophers and Christians (Ibid., s4). Although

Hilmi Baba provided many Qur'anic verses and Hadiths in this work, he tells the following:

"If I wrote this work by citing all relevant Qur'anic verses and Hadiths in order to show the falsity, harms and consequences of Tanzimat and equality, the work would be a voluminous book and also its humble author would be sent to exile or killed" (Ibid., p. 8).

After the Tanzimat and Islahat edicts Meclis-i Mebusan (The Turkish Parliament) was established on 23 December 1876 which marked the beginning of the First Constitutional Era (Meşrutiyet). Hilmi Baba does not find it appropriate for the non-Muslims to join this parliament as its members. He thinks that non-Muslims may work against the high interests of the Ottoman State and therefore some information and policies should be hidden from them (Ibid., p. 7). However, the common idea was that non-Muslim subjects' joining the parliament would support the new parliamentary system also for the sake of protection, promotion and improvement of non-Muslim peoples' political rights under the shadow of the Ottoman dynasty.

Hilmi Baba is not against the opening of the parliament, nor against its existence as part of the state mechanism, but expresses his objection to non-Muslims' joining it as follows:

If someone who wants to glorify the parliament says that Muslims have many benefits and great public interests in it and that it is a general principle which leads to Islam, then we will say the following: if this parliament is composed of ulema who is not hypocritical towards the oppressors, good Muslims and believers who do not have sympathy for Christian law, then it is alright. The members of the parliament must be knowledgeable about domestic and foreign affairs as well as the just rulers of the past. As explained before in the works of Qur'anic exegesis, the parliament should be free from Jews and Christians and in this form it is such a nice demand.

(Ibid., p. 7)

By considering the above citation one could argue that Hilmi Baba was not exclusively against the new parliament, but he argued that its members should be educated and learned, should not be pro-Western and should know internal and external affairs of the Ottoman state as well as its history in order to take lessons from it. However, he states that the non-

Muslims in the parliament, with the help of the West, would in the future seize the power completely and the life would turn upside down:

In fact just the opposite has occurred. Because of these two (Tanzimat and equality), mischief and injustice have prevailed. The infidels have gained superiority over the Muslims. Those who advocated equality have begun to call the infidels as agas, beys, pashas and effendis. The majority of the parliament was formed by Christians and now we see Christian pashas and directors. In brief, Tanzimat and equality are against sharia.

(Ibid, p. 8)

According to Hilmi Baba, Tanzimat and equality brought a lot of problems and troubles to the Ottoman society. He expresses some of them at the beginning of his work and later tries to explain them. He also blames the Ottoman high class for the literal following of the Europeans. Further, he also condemns the literal use of European laws and their application instead of Islamic law. He argued:

... One should know that with the practices like Tanzimat, equality and wearing Western clothes came out things that can be considered as misfortunes for Muslims. Some of them are as follows: issues are no longer resolved through fatwas, Christians now sit together with Muslims in the parliament and discuss matters and in many towns notables are killed for the sake of the application of Tanzimat reforms.

(Ibid, p. 8)

According to Hilmi Baba of Bosnia, dismissal of Mustafa Paşa, the governor of the Shkoder was unjust and harmful for the Ottoman State. Paşa expressed that people of Montenegro provided him with support, but that he was dismissed by incompetent administrators in Istanbul with unfounded pretexts because he was against the application of changes related to Tanzimat (Ibid., p. 9). Mustafa Paşa, the governor of the Shkoder belonged to the family Buşatlı which was named with reference to the village called Bushati. Therefore he was called Buşatlı or İşkodralı (from Shkoder). He made great contributions in order to re-establish the order in regions of Rumelia which was under his authority and was also charged with the duty of suppressing Tepedenli Ali Paşa's rebellion against the central administration. He also warded off successfully Montenegrin attacks towards northern Albania. Due to his success in these tasks, he was also given additional authority over Ohrid

and Elbasan cities. He was also successful in the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1828-1829. However, as he was worried about the changes and re-arrangements which were to be carried out in public administration during the reign of Mahmud II, he strengthened his relations with the Prince of Serbia, Prince of Montenegro and Mehmet Ali Paşa, the governor of Egypt. This was not welcomed by Istanbul and Ohrid, Elbasan and Dukagin sanjaks under him were taken away from his authority. He reacted to this decision by capturing the cities of Nis, Skopje, and Sofia and consequently was declared a rebel, dismissed from office and brought to Istanbul (Bilge, pp. 344-345).

People of Bosnia were in general against Tanzimat. Thus, Hilmi Baba argued that Bosnia is surrounded by Austria Hungarian Empire, Serbia, and Montenegro, that at the heart of Bosnia live non-Muslim subjects with a population of 15.100 and that they are all armed. According to him, people of Bosnia do not need any help from the Empire and they are able to defend themselves as they did in the past, as long as changes which some wanted to bring through Tanzimat are not applied (Hilmi Baba, p. 9).

Hilmi Baba suggests that the system of Kaptans/Ayans which had been practiced in Bosnia for centuries should not be abolished, because for the people of Bosnia they are like "spirit in the body":

... Oh our Sultan! Leave us on our own. Take whatever you want from us, but do not dismiss the notables (ayans) in our land, because for us they are like spirit in the body. All towns are obedient to them in all their affairs and especially in war against the Christians and in each town there is a commander known for his jihad against the infidels. This has happened through the wonder (keramet) of your ancestor Sultan Mehmed II, the Conqueror as he appointed a commander to every city following his conquest of Bosnia ... If local commanders are removed from office, some wicked people from among the Christian subjects in Bosnia will provoke the people to rebel against the central government. Nevertheless, instead of accepting this rightful demand of the Bosnian people, the Ottoman government recruited soldiers from among them, killed most of the notables (ayans), sent many of them to exile and even some of the exiled notables died there for various reasons. The government appointed to Bosnian towns many directors and civil servants in a bureaucratic structure.

(Ibid., p. 9)

In January 1840, with the instructions by Mustafa Reşid Paşa, a ferman was issued for the establishment of an advisory council in each province. They were to be called as “consultative assemblies” (Meclis-i Muhassilin). Their first function was taking over administrative affairs from the kadis because, until the Tanzimat, only kadis had jurisdiction. These new councils would supervise the application of Tanzimat in the region. In addition, they had the authority to inspect compliance of some of the affairs of the governors. The councils were composed of the kadi, mufti, some local authorities and representatives of the non-Muslim communities. Thus, on 25 January 1840, these councils were established in Bosnia (Çadırcı, 1991, p. 212).

Tanzimat brought great reforms in the field of education and the government made great efforts to raise the educational level. One of these reforms was the opening of Rüşdiye schools in Bosnia. Hilmi Baba was against them because they would be part of a secular system that would be dominant in the country. In his work *Risale-i Siyaset* he argued: “They have opened Rüşdiye schools and carried out Tanzimat and equality in Bosnia by force and with all their reality and dreadfulness.” Thus, education was another field in which Tanzimat reforms were applied all over Bosnia. With a structural change in the school system, the opening of secondary schools for non-Muslims and of Rüşdiyes providing secular education were accepted as the most important change and novelty. In 1870 Orthodox Christians in Bosnia had 57 schools with 3.525 students and 75 teachers. Catholics had 50 schools run by the churches with more than 2000 students and nearly 60 teachers. In addition, Sarajevo had a Jewish school. All these schools were newly opened following the Tanzimat (Karčić, 1999, p. 68).

Hilmi Baba’s criticisms are not limited to political and legal fields and he expresses harsh criticisms and warnings with respect to security and military affairs by arguing that:

Ottoman central administration has emptied the existing castles and either consumed or eliminated ammunitions and food prepared for a siege. They also sent all the canons in the castles to Istanbul. Removal of the ammunitions from the castles and widening of the roads on the mountains for easier passage are all in favor of and for the service of Christians who will enter Bosnia.

(Hilmi Baba, p. 9)

Hilmi Baba argued that the killing of Ali Paşa (Ridvanbegović) (1783-1851), the governor of Herzegovina was a direct outcome of the Tanzimat, which negatively affected the Ottoman image in Bosnia. Ali Paşa of Herzegovina was on the side of the Ottoman state when in 1830’a rebellion started against Ottomans in Gradačac, by Hüseyin Kaptan who benefitted from the collaboration of most of the 39 kaptans.

He repaid Montenegrin Ladikas (a local title used for the person combining religious and political authority) in kind whenever the smallest attack came from them towards Herzegovina. It is known that he easily and quickly gathered fighters from Kolašin, Taşlica (Pljevlja), Prepol (Prijeopolje), Foča, Čajniče, Gačka, Trebinje, Nikšić and raided Montenegro. He tells the following about Ali Paşa:

And then they killed Ali Paşa, the governor of Herzegovina for the sake of Tanzimat and equality. The reason for that was Ali Paşa’s animosity against Christians and especially Montenegro. In fact, he was always with Sultan. He was with Sultan during the rebellion of the person who was known among people as Hüseyin Kaputan. His death was a cause and factor for Montenegro’s gaining of superiority and wars against Muslims which continue today. Likewise, Morea was lost after the killing of Ali Paşa. Ali Paşa, the governor of Herzegovina received public properties (miri mallarını) every year from the people of Montenegro. For example, he could get them from villages like Karahu by going there without soldiers with him. During his governorship, one man could travel alone from Mostar to Tasika (and this is valid for other places too). Nobody from Montenegro could kill a Muslim, because if they did it, Ali Paşa would send his soldiers and had 20 or more infidels killed in retaliation. But when Ali Paşa was martyred by an infidel of Montenegrin origin, people of Montenegro rebelled, killed thousands of Muslim soldiers and even cut the noses and ears of many soldiers. In short, when Ali Paşa was martyred people of Montenegro attacked Muslims .

(Ibid., p. 10)

Hilmi Baba cited another shortcoming stemming from Tanzimat by arguing that in Diyarbakır, where they tried to apply Tanzimat and equality, a war was fought against Bedirhan Bey who was an important ruler who was loved by the people. Bedirhan Bey was insulted and faced punishment, exile and confiscation of his properties and died in exile and

all these resulted from Tanzimat policies (Ibid., p. 11). Bedirhan Bey belonged to a ruling family which had been in charge of tax collection in the region before the Tanzimat era and became a colonel (Redif Miralay) following the establishment of Redif military organization. He was the emir of Cizre-Bohtan and served the state loyally. He supported the state in the military operation made in the region (1833-1839) during the reign of Mahmud II. However, his application of the Tanzimat reforms led to outbreak of a large rebellion against the government (Doğan, 2010/2, p. 17).

After the abolishment of the Janissary Corps, new armies like Asâkir-i Mansure and Asâkir-i Nizamiye were established. Thus, with Tanzimat, military service was made a civic duty. In this regard, the rebellions in Tuzla and Zvornik occurred in 1849 due to military service and population census. Common people said that there were non-Muslim commanders in the army and that they would not let their children fight under their command. When Cevdet Paşa visited the region for inspection, he recommended that they too should follow the conscription system practiced in Bosnia. Yet Hilmi Baba argued that the conscription system originated in Istanbul with the proclamation of Tanzimat is not suitable for Bosnia, since all Muslim men in Bosnia are already soldiers of Sultan without any expectations in return (Hilmi Baba, p. 9). Hilmi Baba argued:

If we let Christian subjects into military affairs, provide them with military training, teach them art of war, let them fight in wars and if they have their weapons, they might start enmity against us, abandon the command of Sultan and Muslims and fight against us. Then what will happen to us, given the shortcomings in many cities? Currently, no subject in Russia has a weapon in his house, whereas with us it is just the opposite.

(Ibid., p. 21)

Hilmi Baba compared the Tanzimat with the process of colonization of the Ottoman Empire. Britain used a free trade agreement to enter the Ottoman Empire which was large and rich in terms of markets and raw materials. When Mehmet Ali Paşa of Egypt defeated Ottoman armies and reached Kütahya the Ottoman State asked for British help in order to get rid of this rebel governor. Consequently, on 16 August 1838 a trade agreement with Britain was signed (Pamuk, p. 654). The protectionist policy of the Ottoman State disappeared and the markets were flooded with the

British goods. Further, offices were occupied by pro-Western bureaucrats. Moreover, this situation stroke a blow to the Ottoman industry and a lot of industrial plants began to close down. Trade advantages granted to Britain were later followed by those to France and some other European states. Therefore, Hilmi Baba thinks that all these policies and practices weaken the Ottoman State and lead to loss of its territories:

We take very little customs taxes for Western products. If we tax them properly, as Russia does, and consume and export our own products, then our people will be one of the richest people. Russia has a very large territory and has so many Muslims whose number we do not know. Kazan, Crimea and Daghestan where Muslims live are few of them. Russia does not let any Muslim know about its royal affairs and secrets and keep many practices and knowledge as state secrets... However, Muslims [Ottomans] gave various ranks like the rank of colonel to Christians who served bravely in the army. Britain too had 150 million Indian Muslims under their control, but no Muslim state knew Britain's secrets nor interfered with its affairs.

(Hilmi Baba, pp. 21-24)

Hilmi Baba also elaborated Russian ways of administration and the treatment of the subjects in his pamphlet titled Hicret:

... It is peculiar to Austrians to make Muslims into infidels. On the other hand, Russians captured Kazan nearly 500 years ago, but they repair Muslims' decayed mosques and madrasas, they are sympathetic to those Muslims who are religious and do not levy tithe on their produces...

(Hilmi Baba, p. 8)

In this pamphlet, Hilmi Baba expressed his support to the classical Ottoman administration and rule. Hilmi Baba obviously respected the Sultan and his orders, but criticized administrators around the Sultan for their lack of skills for administration. According to him, for instance, some viziers follow a policy of getting rid of a rising person by finding local collaborators. In his work, he gives an example for the use of such tactics: in the framework of Ottoman-Serbian relations, local authorities (dayıs) in Belgrade were initially supported, but after they started opposing central administration in Istanbul, it was decided to get rid of them. For that purpose, collaboration with Kara Yorgi (Karadjordje) was preferred, but he went out of control and killed Muslims during a festive

prayer in Belgrade. Because of this and some other development, this time Ottoman state dealt with getting rid of Kara Yorgi (Kutlu, 2007, p. 46; Ortaylı, 1985, pp. 79-81).

Hilmi Baba's Religious Works

It is known that political, social and juridical views of the religious scholars (ulema) are shaped by the education and socio-political context. Hilmi Baba's thought was formed by Fatih Madrasas in Istanbul. He used significantly his education, deductive reasoning, learning of the past and religious scriptures. While he appreciated Sufi views, in Hadith and narrative methods he adopted more conservative scholastic views. The courses taught at Ottoman madrasas were in terms of their nature almost the same as those taught at Seljukid madrasas (Bilge, 1984, p. 42). Ottoman tradition of science was based on Birgivi and Razi schools (d. 606/1209). Birgivi School was continued by Kadizadeler, while Razi School was adopted and continued in general by the official scholars (ulema) who were close to the state (Ocak, 1989, pp. 30-32).

Hilmi Baba devoted his life and works to understanding the causes of the Ottoman decline. He called for the return to the essence of the original religion. His famous religious work was *Risale-i Hicret*, which was a socio-historical book. There are two copies of Bosnalı Hilmi Baba's work titled *Hicret Risalesi*. The copy at the Süleymaniye Library in İstanbul was written in Arabic. It is contained in a volume written by Hilmi Baba and called *Mine'l-Fıkh ve'l-Fetava*. *Hicret Risalesi* has 20 pages in total and is between the pages 56 and 76 in that volume. The other copy which has a few differences from the Arabic copy is in Ottoman Turkish and located at Gazi Husrev-bey Library in Sarajevo (with the registration number of R 6172). This copy has 12 pages and the fact that the last sentence in this pamphlet is incomplete suggests that the work is in fact longer.

In his *Hicret Risalesi* Hilmi Baba discusses in detail the issue of migration in the light of Qur'anic verses and Hadiths. The Hadiths are cited together with their Arabic originals and this is in line with the contemporary book format and style of providing references. His selections of hadiths from the collections of al-Bukhari and al-Muslim shows that he wants to discuss the issue of migration with reference to reliable religious sources.

With the Austria-Hungarian invasion of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the social life of Bosniaks changed significantly. The Austro-Hungarian Empire used a powerful administrative structure to control the territory. The new local administrators were appointed who introduced heavy taxes and sometimes confiscated their possessions, which contributed to the migrations of Muslims. Besides, the greatest support was given to the Croats who shared the same religion with Austro-Hungarian occupiers. Bosniaks now (in Hilmi Baba's words) were under the rule of a state headed by infidels. Moreover, doing compulsory military service in the army of non-Muslims was a serious problem. Such a state of mind facilitated Bosniak mass migration to the Ottoman state and according to some data between 140.000 to 300.000 people migrated until 1918 (Ilic, 1999).

Austria-Hungarian officials promoted Muslim-Serbian animosity in order to rule the country easier. In addition, in 1882 an Ulema Assembly was composed of one head and four members in order to acquire influence over Muslims (Basic, 1998, p. 45). Finance Minister Benjamin Kalay, who was given special duties by the Austria-Hungarian state governed Bosnia and Herzegovina and followed the empire's policies. Although the state pretended to leave the administration of the Bosniak religious affairs and schools to Bosniaks, it was careful not to lose control over it (Georges, 1993, p. 64).

While the Kalay administration encouraged the enrolment of Muslim boys in secular schools, Bosnian Muslims complained that they were not allowed to administer, organize and reform their schools as they wanted and that the education provided at those schools actually indoctrinated the students according to Croat views and policies (BOA. Y.A. Hus, Nr. 412/8, 28 R. 1318). In fact, Benjamin Kalay contributed towards the Christianization of Bosnian Muslims and his initiatives and plans were supported by the emperor. In this context, the government issued an official document in 1891 stating that it accepted people's religious conversion (Bogicevic, 1951, p. 266). Besides, the compulsory military service in the Austrian army facilitated the fast recruitment of Bosniak youth. Hilmi Baba and some people rebelled in the in 1883 as a reaction to all such decisions. However, when the rebellion failed, Hilmi Baba continued to use academic and intellectual ways to counter these influences. He authored his *Risale-i Hicret* with a language addressing the common

people by dealing with following issues that forced Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina to migrate:

- Religious reasons (people's rejection of living under a non-Muslim state)
- Compulsory military service introduced in 1881 by the Austria-Hungarian government
- Austria-Hungarian interference with various educational programs in the country
- Austria-Hungarian government's efforts to Christianize Bosniaks by making the Law on Religious Conversion (Gürbüz and Özkan, 2006, p. 168).

Hilmi Baba believed that Bosnia and Herzegovina is now Dar al-Harb (Abode of War) due to the above-mentioned, which in turn accelerated migrations. According to him, a land where Muslims are under pressure and oppression and cannot carry out their religious duties is certainly Dar al-Harb (Abode of War) from which people must migrate.

He argued:

Oh Muslim brothers who are in charge of protecting their families! There is no doubt that it is obligatory upon those who can afford it to migrate from the Abode of War (Dar-al Harb) to Muslim lands according to the verses and hadiths pertaining to migration (hicret) as well as works of exegesis such as Tefsir-i Beyzavi, Tefsir-i Keşşaf, Tefsir-i Ebu Suud, Tefsir-i Hazin, Tefsir-i Neseфи.

(Hilmi Baba, p. 2)

According to Hilmi Baba, just as the Spanish kings forced Muslims to convert to Catholicism, the Austria-Hungarian Empire too would try to Christianize Muslims. He mentioned two Austria-Hungarian soldiers of Muslims origin he met at the Gazi Husrev Bey Mosque in Sarajevo. The soldiers told him that they were actually Turks from Budin (Hungary) and that they had to leave Islam and become Christians because they and their grandfathers were threatened with death. However, they were now happy to hear adhan (Muslim call to prayer) at the mosque.

According to Hilmi Baba, it is peculiar to Austrians to make Muslims into infidels, whereas Russians who captured Kazan nearly 500 years ago did not oppress the Muslims. On the contrary, the Russians repair Muslims' decayed mosques and madrasas, are sympathetic to those Muslims who are religious, do not levy a tithe on their produces and do not recruit

Muslims as soldiers. Therefore, Hilmi Baba believes that Muslims can migrate to Russia, as he compared such a migration to the Muslim migration to Ethiopia permitted by Prophet Muhammad (Ibid., p. 8).

Hilmi Baba asserts that the immigrants should be received well by the local people who should share their food and clothes with them and even share their houses, if needed. In this context, he expresses the following:

It is necessary for the Muslims living in Muslim lands to love the immigrants coming to their lands. They should offer food and drink to them, give money, clothes, wood and coal as much as they can. They should treat the immigrants with compassion and dignity and provide them houses or rooms. They should see immigrants as brothers and sisters. Those who treat immigrants in these ways will be blessed by Allah. On the other hand, if an ignorant person says that «why have these dirty, worthless and despicable people come to our land, for if they were good people the infidels could not capture their land?», then he becomes an infidel. If I am asked for evidence of his infidelity, then I will reply as follows: ... When Prophet Muhammad migrated to Medina, the inhabitants of the city were divided into two: the first group welcomed the Prophet and the people with him and respected and helped them... Whereas the second group was composed of the hypocrites... They said let us send these worthless and despicable people away from Medina. If they tell me, «oh Bosnian! You talk about the affairs of the immigrants, but if they were like the Prophet and his friends around him, we would definitely welcome them», then I would say the following: «oh idiot who talk like infidels! If you saw the companions who migrated together with the Prophet, you would look at them with contempt and consider them madmen, because they wrapped themselves in straw dresses or were poor. When you saw them in those clothes, you would escape from them and reject them and thus join the group of hypocrites. Now the immigrants match the hosts (Ensar).

(Hilmi Baba, pp. 74-76)

While Hilmi Baba supported the idea of migration of Muslims due to oppressive administration and policies of the Austria-Hungarian state, the Sublime Porte (Babiâli) tried to prevent the migration in order to be able to continue its sovereignty rights over the region and also prevent the distribution of the properties of the migrating Muslims among the Christians in the

region. The Ottoman State considered the increasing Bosniak migration as something dangerous for its existence in the region. The Bosniak media of the era too explained the harms which would result from the migration of the Muslims from Bosnia and asked the people not to migrate (Genç Osman Geçer, 2010, pp. 195-196).

Hilmi Baba wrote Tefsirü Sureti'd-Duha in Arabic. The year 1303 A.H. is seen at the end of the work. According to the manuscript, he completed his exegesis in 125 chapters after returning from Hejaz to Istanbul. The part on the Chapter of al-Duha is composed of 40 sections (bölüm) and 250 sheets. The original manuscript of the work is currently at Süleymaniye Library, but at the beginning of the work, it is written that the pamphlet was endowed to the library of Fatih Sultan Mehmet Han. We could not find out if the work has other manuscript copies. In the first 18 pages, i.e. first three sections one finds exegesis of verses related to the story of Zu'l-Qarnayn. The fourth and seventh sections mention Chapter of Cave (al-Kahf). The exegesis of the Chapter of al-Duha starts on page 40. And the last two pages of the work deal with the oaths (qasam) found at the beginnings of some Qur'anic chapters.

Although this work is in the form of a pamphlet in terms of its physical dimensions, it has content with a concise expression. It generally explains the issues through transmission (naql) by quoting references from the sources of Islamic tradition, namely exegesis, hadith, and history. He cites varying narratives in accordance with the contents of Qur'anic verses. Also, he provides one or two narratives which he considers as occasions or circumstances of revelation (asbab al-nuzul). He also quotes hadiths, with or without their chain of narrators. The work analyzes the Qur'anic verses by dealing with one or a few words with respect to their grammar, etymology and meaning.

Hilmi Baba penned his work by making use of trustworthy works of exegesis, hadiths, works on theology and jurisprudence as well as views of prestigious historians. Among the sources he uses in his work Tefsirü Sureti'd-Duha are the following: Tefsir-i Suyuti, Tefsir-i Kurtubi, Tizkar fi Afdali'l-Ezkar Kurtubi, Tefsir-i Hazin, Tefsir-i Vasit, Ruhu'l-Beyan, Tefsir-i Bağavi, Kadı Beyzavi, Şeyh Zade, Tefsir-i Nesefti, Mişkätü'l-envar, Futuhat-i Mekkiyye, Makrizi, Tenbihü'l-Ğafilin which emphasized admonitions, Ravzu'l faik, Şerh Tarikat-i Abdül Ğaniy Nablusi,

Kuşeyri, among hadith books Zehebi's Telhis ala Şerhi Müslim, Tabarani, Beyhaki, İmam-ı Birgivi's commentary on forty hadiths, Mirkat ala Mişkati'l-Mesabih, Behçetü'l-Feteva, Bahru'l-Feteva, Feteva Ali Efendi. He quotes from the sources as they are and then firstly gives religious ordinances and fundamentals, then mentions Sufi interpretations and adds aspects related to Encouragements and Admonishments (Terğib ve Terhib).

In this pamphlet written about exegesis, Hilmi Baba mentions Turks (pp. 15-16) and also virtues of learning languages (p. 69). It seems that he believes that the universe is created out of Mohammedan Light (Nuru Muhammedi) (p. 80). He narrates some stories about Tamerlane (pp. 84-85) and Akşemseddin (p. 108). He also discusses issues related to Messiah (Mahdi) (p. 88). He also deals with various fatwas pertaining to jurisprudential matters. He replies to the following question by saying that it is the time of silence: Is it permissible to sing some words of praise for Prophet Muhammad with the purpose of celebrating his birthday? (p. 69) He also provides the views of the four Sunnite legal schools about buying and selling dogs (p. 4-3).

Hilmi Baba explains why he authored this work: in one month of Ramadan, he saw that some students in Istanbul were busy with the exegesis of the Chapter al-Duha in the Qur'an and noticed that they needed some reference books on exegesis, hadith, history of prophets and stories of the saints. Out of love and desire to help, he wanted to write a book in 40 chapters (corresponding to the number of 40 saints) by making use of authoritative books in relevant fields. Yet he worried about the possibility of authoring such a work in such a short time. Nevertheless, like many rulers and the leading figures in the Ottoman geography did, one day he had a dream which he narrates as follows:

One day in his dream one of the saints came to him and told him to go on what he intended to do, as Allah's help was with him. Then he was given a drink and told to drink it, an order that he obeyed. When he woke up, he was in a state of intoxication, but after recovering from it, he started to work on this pamphlet.

Hilmi Baba also wrote Pamphlet on the Miracles of the Prophet (Muhammad) (Mucizatü'n-Nebi) in Arabic in 1303 A.H. The original manuscript of the work is currently at Süleymaniye Library, but at the

beginning of the work, it reads that the pamphlet is endowed to the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Han Library. We could not find out if the work has other manuscript copies. The work has 300 sheets.

For this work, he made extensive use of a 3-volume biography of Prophet Muhammad titled *Es-Siretül Halebiyye* (İnsanü'l-Uyun fi Sireti'l-Emini'l-Me'mun), Şehab ala Şifa-i Şerif, *Ruhu'l-Beyan*, Zürkani's *el-Mevahib*, Ali el-Kari's *Mirkat ala Mişkati'l-Mesabih*, Demiri's (d.1405) *Hayatü'l-Hayevan*, Müslim are among the other works he made use of.

Hilmi Baba provides an index of subjects at the beginning of the work which has 164 /chapters (bölüm). The following subjects are covered: the miracles Prophet Muhammad experienced in his childhood, migration of the Muslims, phenomena that will appear near the doomsday (Saints, Mahdi, Dajjal). At the end of the work, Hilmi Baba mentions matters related to Tanzimat and equality and asserts that those who say the following will destroy both their world and the afterlife:

“Quran is the law of the Arabs. We must leave the ordinances of the sharia and adopt the laws of the Christians.”

He wrote *Mecalisü'l-Bosnavi* too in Arabic. The date written at the end of the first volume is 3 Recep 1289 A.H (6 September 1872). The work has two volumes. The first volume has 254 sheets, while the second has 260 sheets. The original manuscript of the work is currently at Süleymaniye Library, but it is stated the work is endowed in 1303 to the library of Fatih Sultan Mehmet Han. At the end of the pamphlet, Hilmi Baba writes that he took lessons at Fatih Sultan Mosque in Istanbul from El-Hacc Ali Efendi El-Bigavi (from Biga) and received a diploma (icazet) from him. As he mentioned in his pamphlet on Chapter *al-Duha* too, once Hilmi Baba heard a voice in his sleep and saw saints who told him to go to Damascus. When he arrived at Damascus a wonder (keramet) occurred and Druses and Christians began to fight with each other.

Among the sources Hilmi Baba made use of are Şeyh Ahmet Kalyubi's (d.1659) *Nevdirü'l-Kalyubi*, Mizanü Şa'ravi, Demiri's (d.1405) *Hayatü'l-Hayevan*, *Ruhu'l-Beyan*, *Mefatih şerh Mesabih*, İbni Melek's *Şerh-i Vikaye*, *Mişkat maa Mirkat*, Şeyh Zade, *Tefsir Hazin*, *Tefsir Kevaşi*, *Tefsir Kebir*, *Tefsir Kurtubi*, *Tefsir Teysir*, and *Tefsir Ebu Leys*.

Except for the last chapter, *Kitab mine'l Fıkh ve'l-Fetava* is written in Arabic. *Hicret Risalesi* (Pamphlet on Migration) in the last chapter has 21 sheets and its last 5 pages are written in Ottoman Turkish. This work on Islamic jurisprudence has 39 sections (bölüm) and 76 sheets, including *Hicret Risalesi*. Hilmi Baba provides an index of subjects at the beginning of the work. Some major issues discussed are: 1) Issues on prohibition of the voice of müezzin and imamate; 2) Saying Allahu ekber (God is great) during fires and earthquakes; 3) Permissibility of the Friday prayer in lands like Crimea and Kazan; 4) Non-Muslims' entering the mosques; 5) Urinating while standing; 6) Drinking water while standing; 7) Issues pertaining to lust; 8) A view on Ibn al-Arabi; 9) On the permissibility of smoking, opium, marijuana, coffee, and intoxicating drinks; 10) Inclination towards the oppressor.

Hilmi Baba does not inform us about his purpose of writing this book, nor when he started writing it. Yet when one examines its content, it might be inferred that he gathered fatwas from various fatwa books in order to answer issues that people face in their social life. The sources he often uses in this work are *Dürrü'l-Muhtar*, *Haşiye Tahtavi ale'd-Dürri'l-Muhtar*, *Tefsirü Neseî*, *Kastallani*, *Fethül Bari*, *Şerhü'l-Zürkani ala Muvatta*, *Fetavay-ı Hindiyye*, *Abdülvehhab Şa'rani's Letaifü'l-Minen*, *Envarü'l-Kudsiyye Şa'rani*, *Bahrü'l-Mevrüd Şa'rani*, *el-Cevahir ve'd-Dürer Şa'rani*, *Hadimi ala Tarikati'l-Muhammediyye*, and *Ruhu'l- Beyan*.

Hilmi Baba prepared an index for İsmail Hakkı Bursevi's (d.1137/1725) four-volume work titled *Ruhu'l-Beyan*. The index provides subjects, headings, sub-headings as well as volume and page numbers. The index ensures easy access to the subjects. At the end of the work, he writes the following: “Praise be to Allah who made me successful in exposing several states and words of the people of divine love and passion (jazba) as well as various narratives. We have opened the doors of strange stories and special words and expressions written in *Ruhu'l-Beyan* and titled our work as “*Fethu'l-Esrar ve'l-müşkilati ala ruhu'l-Beyani bi'l-İşarati*”.

Conclusion

Hilmi Baba criticizes in a dissenting stand some policies of the Ottoman government and undertaken reforms (tanzimat), especially in his work *Siyaset*. Indeed, considering contextual writing of this work and time of its publication, it implies that Hilmi Baba's work was one of the first exemplary texts that tackled the Westernization process in the Ottoman Empire. In that period only a few members of the ulema who were against Westernization had the courage and competence to express their thoughts in writing and, therefore, Hilmi Baba's work, which included his views against Tanzimat, is very important.

It is obvious that the reforms that started in the Tanzimat era were influential in the transformation of the identity of the Ottoman state. The Tanzimat Edict brought equality, freedom and property rights for all the regions of the empire. As seen from this perspective, this change brought in the foreground a new "Ottoman identity" which transcended the millet system that was dominant in the empire and gathered in itself all the subjects of the empire regardless of their ethnic and religious differences. Thus, Hilmi Baba was among the first who challenged this change of identity. Hilmi Baba also explained why Muslims of Bosnia opposed Tanzimat because they thought that they would lose their privileges with its application. In particular, high taxes, military service and more importantly equality with Christians.

In spite of the relative spread of books, newspapers, and telegraph among the social classes, there was a gap between traditional strata of the society and those who adopted Western culture and lifestyle (Mardin, 2016, pp. 48-49). Similarly so, the rulers and the ruled still shared the same religion, language, and daily habits, but the similarity between the two continued to decrease and differentiation became more visible. As the difference increased between the ruling elite who entered a process of losing their traditional cultural identity and customs and the common people who still followed the traditions, cultural polarization and conflict gained momentum (Karpas, 2017, pp. 82-83). In such a process where religious values were gradually replaced by worldly values and many started to imitate Western culture, some people from among the ulema class like Hilmi Baba were against such a change. He developed his views during the social and popular awakening in Bosnia, Balkans, and the whole empire.

Hilmi Baba's work on migration carries the characteristics of the Ottoman Turkish language of the 19th century. He wrote his work on politics in Arabic due to his desire to send his message to different regions of the empire. The work also contains interesting information on Ottoman political history. His other works penned in a simple and smooth style do not aim at bringing something new to any discipline, but try to strengthen the connection with the Holy Qur'an, of those who are busy with scholarly studies and also continue the traditional form of Qur'anic exegesis. Hilmi Baba used the Qur'anic exegesis written by commentators like Beydâvî, İbn-i Kesir, and Fahreddin er-Razi. Hilmi Baba's particular selection of the Qur'anic verses and hadiths in his works are also important for identifying the Ottoman emerging culture and functioning of Muslim collective consciousness. In this light, it is significant to assess Hilmi Baba's views on the reforms and migrations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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