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\*ŠAĆIR FILANDRA\*

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Yugoslavian Key

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## Abstract

*The different views on identity politics in Ottoman Bosnia presented by Ivo Andrić and Safvet-beg Bašagić in their respective doctoral dissertations stem from differences in the historical and socio-economic experiences of each of their respective religious and confessional communities. Andrić, oriented towards the future, perceives Bosnia from the perspective of a newly introduced concept of Yugoslav national unity that does not value diversity. Bašagić, romantically looking into the past, sees Bosnia through rose-coloured glasses. Both Andrić and Bašagić share distinct notions of their historical periods and allow for non-scientific influences to shape their academic discourses.*

*Keywords: Yugoslavism; Bosnianhood; Orientalism; Islam; Christianity; identity politics*

## Introduction

There are few local literary authors who have been able to express themselves through such complex relations between discursive, scientific, and artistic texts. Two such were Ivo Andrić and Safvet-beg Bašagić, who each gained a Ph.D. in humanities. This paper will identify and illuminate the reasons for the opposing “images” of Bosnia in their doctoral dissertations, from the perspectives of cultural and socio-political discourses. In terms of methodology, we will analyse the texts of the dissertations themselves. Thus, we will not make comparisons with the respective authors’ later literary works, a task which has previously been done by Andrić scholars. Even though we do not contest the above comparisons at all, they are deliberately left outside this paper’s scope. The working hypothesis of this paper is that the different perceptions of Bosnia in Andrić’s and Bašagić’s doctoral dissertations are non-scientific, and are written in a non-scientific manner. Rather, they are the products of the strongly different experiences of history that affected the interpretative positions of the ethnocultural communities, Croat and Bosniak, where the authors come from, in relation to the socio-political structure of Bosnia during the Ottoman period. These contrasting perceptions of this period of Bosnian and Herzegovinian history, the several century-long Ottoman rule of Bosnia, were represented in the different political and social positions of Catholic Croats and Muslim Bosniaks.

## Both: Foreign and Familiar

In the first sentence of the “Preface” to his doctoral dissertation titled *“The Development Of Spiritual Life In Bosnia Under The Influence Of Turkish Rule”* (Graz, 1924), Andrić refers to an untitled source, or rather a once-popular European Christian opinion, in expressing a stance that both opens and closes the horizon

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of his research<sup>1</sup>. He writes that the conquest of Constantinople (the very year of the Ottoman conquest is 1453), “dealt a wound to European man”, and that “Few countries could have taken that blow harder or felt it more deeply than Bosnia”. With simplistic exaggeration and in a Manichean manner, he observes the world and the position of Bosnia in it, as caught between a cultural polarisation, between Christianity and Islam, Good and Evil, Light and Darkness,. The author agrees with the essentialist ideas of the time in which he lived with regard to the issue of validation of cultures. The practice of dividing cultures into higher and lower ones, or valuable and less valuable ones, is an intellectual achievement of the 19th century Eurocentric West, which has remained unshaken for a long time. This point in history also marks the culmination of Orientalist discourse in social and humanistic sciences. This type of discourse was primarily the product and property of a narrow, elite group of researchers, intellectuals, and imperial politicians. This discourse omitted the fact that during the period, the ideologically-subjected Islamic world had its own fair share of issues with totalitarianism, nationalism, and fascism. However, they did not diminish the fact that the Orientalist perspective has already become an almost general stance in Western public opinion. Despite American president Woodrow Wilson’s widely promoted principle of the right to self-determination, the colonial reality of the world in the first few decades of the 20th century was still not disputed. Postcolonial theories and anti-colonial political movements only appeared later, in the middle of the century.

Enes Duraković is of the first Bosnian and Herzegovinian researchers who noted that Andrić’s work should be seen, “in the context of global Europocentric relations to the Orient...” (Duraković, 1997, p. 98). Regarding the first publication of the dissertation, Zoran Konstantinović stated that it reveals, “the genesis of everything that Andrić stylised and expressed as a literary author” (Konstantinović, 1982, p. 275). In contrast to this and similar views that see Andrić’ dissertation as the notional source of his literary opus, Duraković deems the connection as non-vital, since any analysis of Andrić’ literary opus is inherently and “unequivocally directed at the author’s Europocentric ideological attitudes that were radicalised

1 Zoran Konstantinović was the first to notice that Andrić did not present his thesis about Bosnia as a question that had yet to be answered. “The answer is already certain for him, the meaning of the terms has already been given, so it is only necessary to form a complete picture, to create a synthesis from all chapters, each of which is also a synthesis” (Konstantinović, 1982, p. 268). In the thesis, the initial and final claims about Bosnia, which we find in Andrić’s first sentence, Konstantinović finds in the latter part of the text. At the beginning of the second chapter, it reads: “It was of decisive importance that Bosnia was at the most critical moment of its spiritual development, at the time when the turmoil of spiritual forces reached its peak, and was conquered by an Asian warrior people whose social institutions and customs stood as a negation of every example of Christian culture and whose faith - that arose under other climatic and social conditions and was not suitable for any adaptation - interrupted the spiritual life of the country, distorted it, and made something completely personal out of that life” (Andrić, 1982, p. 51).

to the point of true racism” (Duraković, 1997, p. 104). Furthermore, Duraković claims that this example of Europocentric demonisation of the Other is quite evident, since there is no other literary author in ‘Yugoslovenian literature’, “who has portrayed a nation and its history with such a great sense of hostility and dark tones only because it belongs to a different circle of civilization” (Duraković, 1997, p. 103). The truth is that the dissertation presents Andrić as the child of his time that witnessed the rule of several European ideologies focused on the extermination of ethnic, ideological, and conceptual Other (through demonstration of nationalism, fascism, and Stalinism). Being that every epoch’s self-opinion is never definite or wholly truthful, Andrić’s findings in his dissertation share the same destiny.

Almost as a rule, every linear history of Bosnian cultural identity has almost always begun with the Bosnian Church. Andrić uses the term Bogomilism for this type of spirituality. It is seen as a heterodox movement under the auspices of Christianity that, “had begun to erect that wall of stone between Bosnia and the Western world which in the course of time was to be enlarged even more by Islam and raised to such mighty heights that even today, although long since crumbled and fallen to pieces, it still produces the effect of a dark, demarcating line that one dare not step over without effort and danger” (Andrić, 1982, p. 39). “Bogomolism with its stiff-necked refusal to be subjugated to the West, inevitably brought the country under the yoke of the East” (Andrić, 1982, p. 41). Does it seem that Andrić laments over Europe and Christianity? In my opinion, it does not. This represents a wider and incidental framework of his discussion. Previous studies have shown that Andrić was not particularly a religious devotee or a clericalist. Instead, his motives were ideological. Andrić was primarily interested in a new political and ideological reality, the newly established Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and the unity of its peoples. Since his youth, Andrić was one of the advocates of a firm Yugoslav attitude. As a member of Young Bosnia, he was a supporter of unitarian Yugoslavism. Yugoslavism was his, “main and primary political idea...” (Tutnjević, 1994, p. 449), as well as a driving force behind his latter collaboration with the Communist authorities. In the 1920s, he pragmatically and politically adapted to the circumstances of the time, trying to become part of the new state administration. It was because of this he began, quite quickly, colloquially, and with ultimate pragmatism, the preparation of a doctoral dissertation in order to fulfil the formal prerequisite for diplomatic service. In his dissertation, his entire stance is based on the idea of Yugoslav cultural, national, and political unity. It should be seen as both his theoretical and political origin and his personal / professional goal. We believe that it is precisely from this standpoint, the desire for national unity, and that of Serbs and Croats above all that Andrić interprets Bosnia, and in doing so, performs a kind of defamation of the Ottoman government and Islam that came with it. For that ideological reason,

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both of these categories are a foreign and disturbing factor for him, colloquially speaking: they spoil his concept or at least make its realisation more difficult. According to Milanović's view of Andrić, Bosnia, as the geographical centre of the "ethnic space of one and the same people", was prevented and slowed down the establishment of this unique national and Yugoslav cultural body by Ottoman conquest and non-participation in European cultural integrations. The Ottoman conquest had marked the border between the two empires, the Austrian and the Ottoman, which passed through the middle of the space that Andrić considered unique (Milutinović, 2018, p. 304). Krešimir Nemeč is also of the opinion that in his dissertation, Andrić presents the idea that the Ottoman conquest was a tragedy for the peoples from the South Slavic area they were, "forced to live at the crossroads of worlds, East and West, which determined their national history and individual destinies" (Nemeč, 2016, p. 135). Andrić's identity politics is thus, fully in line with European national and state-building models of the 19th and early 20th centuries. His model is synthesising, necessarily violent in cultural matters, authoritarian, totalitarian and undemocratic (only similarities have the right to life), and the search for such a concept of Yugoslav culture and nation was described by Andrew Baruch Wachtel in *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation*.

According to Andrić, this "wall" of separation divided the Serbo-Croatian "racial" and linguistic group into two parts. In his geopolitical fantasy, Bosnia should have connected, not separated, the Danube region with the Adriatic, the two peripheries of the Serbo-Croatian element, and thus participated in European culture. Instead, an "Asian warrior nation" (Andrić, 1982, p. 51) alien in "faith, spirit and race" (Andrić, 1982, p. 53) established a wall of separation from Europe in Bosnia, keeping it "in that unnatural position" during Turkish rule. Muhsin Rizvić thinks that in his cultural-historical speculations about Bosnia Andrić, "...ended with the immanent suggestion that there is no place between Serbs and Croats for Bosniaks as bearers of the guilt of separating these two peoples..." (Rizvić, 1995, p. 38). The representation of Bosnia as comprised of national elements which integrated Yugoslav ideologies and cultures in those years, was also advocated by a Herzegovinian, Dimitrije Mitrinović, in the text "The Mission of Sarajevo". He differed from Andrić in that he added the role of the key spiritual integrating factor of the country to Sarajevo and Islam<sup>2</sup>. While Mitrinović, as the artistic and

2 After 18 years spent in London, Mitrinović suddenly found himself in Yugoslavia in the summer of 1930. He was greeted with great publicity and a warm welcome. The Yugoslav press, especially Belgrade's *Vreme*, praised Mitrinović's personality with undisguised enthusiasm, following his every step. Thus, on May 21, 1930, it brought the news that Dimitrije Mitrinović, a "publicist and famous cultural worker", held a lecture in Sarajevo, and before that a conference with the intellectual elite of Ljubljana and Zagreb. In a comment, *Vreme* further states, "The basis of Mr. Mitrinović's attitude towards culture and civilization is of a purely idealistic nature. He advocates the so-called philosophy of nationalism. Mr. Mitrinović sees the realization of the idealistic philosophical basis for Yugoslavia's position on general peace among nations in the solution of the religious problem, in the creation of a special harmony by extracting and synthe-

spiritual leader of the generation of Young Bosnia who also had a significant influence on young Andrić, went to London and evolved spiritually and politically, Andrić firmly insisted on the concept of Yugoslavism as an exclusively monic Serbo-Croatian and culturally Christian category. Andrić's Yugoslavism was by definition, anti-democratic.

The literary activity of Bosniaks / Bosnian Muslims during the Ottoman rule, the subject of research in Bašagić's dissertation, is beyond Andrić's interest. "Their activity - even when it was not insignificant and certainly deserved attention - cannot be the subject of our work because they belonged in language and spirit to the sphere of another culture" (Andrić, 1982, p. 187). In that other culture, "Islam proved to be extremely restraining and fruitless" (Andrić, 1982, p. 191). Such a conceptually divided vision of the world is the reason why Andrić, as he himself says, "cannot" rather than will not, mention any Bosnian Muslim author from that period. Obviously, he was partly acquainted with their work, at least as a curious mind, but due to the methodological/theoretical settings of the entire dissertation, he had to exclude them from consideration. Of course, when it comes to the achievements of local Christians written in Latin or Italian, they are positively valued, considered part of a single national, in this case, Croatian culture.

In the paper evaluating Andrić's dissertation, signed by Dr. Heinrich Felix Schmidt, there are certain exceptions to his basic thesis, and they are of a purely scientific nature. Namely, Schmidt emphasises that the dissertation managed to avoid the extremes of praising the positive influence of the Ottomans on the spiritual life of Bosnia, on the one hand, or underestimating the influence of Turks and Islam, on the other. However, it is further stated that due to ignorance of the Turkish language and non-use of Turkish sources, Andrić did not have a complete insight into the subject of research, and therefore his thesis may suffer objections (and continues suffered to this day at least in part of the Bosniak intellectual community). "One of the author's theses, his denial of every culturally stimulating in-

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sizing everything ethnic from certain religions professed by the citizens of Yugoslavia. This allegation, better than others from the press at the time, largely outlines Mitrinović's global position. The text also brings information about the audience's enthusiasm for the lecture, as well as his trip to Skopje and the Zeta Banovina. *Jugoslovenska pošta* announces the "lecture of Mr. Mitrinović" at the hotel "Europe" on the 7th of August. The title of the lecture is "Knowledge Of Eternal Life Or Organogenesis" and includes thematic problematization of nation, culture, civilization, and duty of future Yugoslavia, which is "a function of our three churches, Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim in the synthesis of Yugoslavia." Also, *Novo Vrijeme* brings the news on August 2 about Mitrinović's lecture "On The Orientation Of Muslims In Yugoslavia" and is most positive about it. In addition to a series of lectures given to the cultural and political public, which, according to the press, are attended by the highest dignitaries, Mitrinović also published two texts. One in *Politika* ("Vidovdan Jugoslavije", *Politika*, No. 27, 1930, 7952. p. 2), one in *Jugoslovenska pošta* ("The Mission of Sarajevo", *Jugoslovenska pošta*, Sarajevo, year II, pp. 1-2, No. 265, August 1930) and gives an interview to *Vreme* (*Vreme*, X / 1930, 3051, pp. 5-6, June 28). (See Mitrinović, 1990, pp. 216-218).

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fluence of Islam and Turks, will not remain without objections, regardless of the multiple arguments with which Andrić supports this thesis; it is in this area that his research has set certain limits due to the spatial inaccessibility and linguistic inaccessibility of Turkish sources” (Schmidt, 1982, p. 241). It is reasonable to assume that Andrić knew, or could have known, about Bašagić’s, Kemurin’s and Ćorović’s research of Bosnian cultural history, which could have been used in favour of a more positive, or at least more objective, evaluation of Islam and Turks, but as it is quite clear that to his basic thesis, this did not interest him. His recent biographer, Michael Martens testifies that his dissertation was not of an adequate scientific nature. As its great weakness, Martens cites Andrić’s methodological essentialism. Namely, the time of the fall of the Ottomans, which, as we know today to the same extent, although for different reasons, left all its inhabitants regardless of ethno-confessional affiliation dissatisfied, Andrić uncritically identifies with the time of the entire Ottoman rule, “...as if backwardness was its core from the beginning” (Martens, 2019, p. 101). The first centuries of the imperial presence of the Ottomans in the Balkans testify that they were on the same level with the Europeans if not more advanced than them, which means that this culture, just like any other, changed and developed over time. According to Martens, near the end of his life, Andrić acknowledged this anti-Ottoman stereotype of the nineteenth century as his shortcoming. From the aspect of personal and group identity of the communities to which they belong, Andrić and Bašagić had different historical experiences, different memories (according to different principles of the constituted culture of memory), and were susceptible to different identity politics; their gazes are different: while one longs for the past, the other looks to a bright future and these are some of the reasons for the incompatibility of their judgments on Bosnia’s cultural history. In both cases, the experience of the Other is excluded, Christians with Bašagić, and Bosniaks with Andrić. While Andrić belongs to the modern, ideologised nation-building world of the Yugoslav state union, things are different with Bašagić. He is still fully part of the traditional milieu, but ready and determined to look for ways to overcome it. The diversity of origins and horizons of interpretation of the same world has its deep socio-economic and national-political causes, and in order to understand this difference in terms of the same structure, it is necessary to shed light on the class-social and ethnoreligious contradictions of 19th-century Bosnian society.

### The Absence of the Egalitarian Level

Bosnian Muslim loyalty to the Ottoman system was based on their belonging to that society, a common political system, culture, and religion. The development of collective consciousness and perception of oneself as individual in the middle of the 19th century did not take place in the same way as it did with the neighbouring Bosnian Catholics and Orthodox. The fact that they were part of



the Ottoman society in the country of Bosnia for centuries most importantly determined the ambiance and the way of forming their collective consciousness, making it different from the Serbian and Croatian national-formative flow. The process of becoming a nation among Bosniaks did not flow through confessional-national identification nor through religious institutions but was more tied to the country, territory, and government - the state. Church was the earliest symbol of identity and at the same time, an instrument of collectivisation among Orthodox and Catholics, future Serbs and Croats. Although they shared a common territory, language, and folk culture with Muslims for centuries, through their confessional-national division in the mid-19th century, religion would become, and remains to this day, the most important factor in differentiating between the Bosnian population. In fact, one should look for reasons for the overemphasised political engagement of religious institutions among all peoples in Bosnia, from then until the present day.

In contrast to Bosnian Catholics and Orthodox, Bosniaks could not seek a distinctive sense of collective belonging in religion, because Islam was practised in common with the Ottomans, nor could they find it in elements of the existing Ottoman regime, since in 1831 they were already fighting against it in the name of their own land rights. Identity awareness and the practice of one's own cultural life have been expressed for centuries in a specific tradition, literacy, and literature (Bosnian Cyrillic and medieval Bosnian literature, Begovica and Krajina literacy, Arabic and Aljamiado literature, folklore and oral poetry). Awareness of social exclusivity and continuity with the medieval nobility were the source of this notion of particularity<sup>3</sup>. It should be immediately pointed out that the first Bosniak modernists of the early 20th century relied on all these ethnocultural elements, but that they failed to create a collective-identity structure from this material that would take on the character of a separate nation as a political community. This same ethnic and cultural material was successfully nationally articulated only a hundred years later, which only testifies to the fact that among Bosniaks, as with most other peoples, political assumptions played a decisive role in the constitution of the nation.

Liberating, revivalist, and modernising socio-political movements among Bosnian Catholics and Orthodox in the middle of the 19th century were characterised – in addition to all historically justified and progressive tendencies – by a pronounced anti-Turkish, as well as anti-Muslim, attitude in general. Within the nascent national movements of Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina,

3 On the language, script, literature, and literacy of Bosnian Muslims in the Ottoman period, see Rizvić, M. (1999). *Bosna i Bošnjaci: Jezik i pismo* [Bosnia and Bosniaks: Language and Script]. Sarajevo: KDM "Preporod"; Nezirović, M. (2004). *Krajišnička pisma* [Krajišnik Letters], Sarajevo: BZK "Preporod"; Nakaš, L. (2010). *Language and Graphics of Krajina Letters*, Sarajevo: Lingvistički komitet.



Bosniaks were equated with Islam and Islam with Turks. These identifications were the birthplace of all future ethno-confessional conflicts<sup>4</sup>. The hostile positioning of Islam and Bosniaks in Serbian and Croatian national ideologies in the middle of the 19th century is a fact of fundamental importance for understanding modern relations between these peoples. Bosnian Muslims, despite their will and due to historical and social contextualisation, were positioned as guardians of a declining society and empire within this interpretive flow. They were placed on the “Turkish side”, against their neighbours, the Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs, whose movements for their own national liberation, being anti-Turkish and anti-Muslim, became anti-Bosniak. At this time, the so-called “Eastern Question” was being debated and eventually resolved by the European powers. This positioning of Bosniaks on an international scale (having in mind the support of European forces for all anti-Turkish movements in the Balkans) was not at all favourable. When the Ottoman Empire withdrew from the Balkans, Serbian nationalists expected Bosniaks to go follow them as their alleged servants, as expressed by the slogan “Turks to Asia”.

The social demands of the Bosniak feudal elite had been limited many times since the beginning of the 19th century. Once by the Ottomans, who suffocated in blood an attempt to make the province independent, and the second time by the intra-Bosnian growing national and social demands of the Serb and Croat masses. Among the historical formative reasons that determined the Bosniak responses, in terms of importance was the internal limitation, i.e. the subjective and objective inability of the Bosniak feudal elite to meet the modernising demands of the new age. Its unwillingness to reform and adopt the idea of social justice and social equality that became generally accepted in Europe after the French Civil Revolution (See: Hobsbaum, 1996), definitely split Bosnian society along ethno-confessional seams and further prevented the creation of a unified Bosnian political people<sup>5</sup>. Confessional and class-social divisions in Bosnian society co-

4 Ivan Lovrenović, writing about the national perceptions of Ivo Andrić’s work, testifies today that the issue of historical and cultural evaluation of the Ottoman era is still more than relevant in an indirect way. Lovrenović finds that from the period of modernization of Bosnian society to the present day, there have been two differentiated views on the issue of valuing the Ottoman era. According to him, one interpretation can, (...) mainly be characterized as an Orthodox Christian / Christian, Serbian / Croat, and the other as a Bosniak-Muslim point of view” (Lovrenović, 2008, p. 31), i.e. one as Turkophobia and the other as Turkophilia. The first view emphasizes the occupational dimension of the arrival of the Ottomans and Islam, the repressive nature of government, the subjugation, disenfranchisement, and social misery of the non-Muslim population, while the second view speaks of the system’s tolerance of non-Muslim communities, of Ottoman Bosnia as a paradigm of multiethnicity and tolerance. In both interpretive relations to history, the focus is not on, “(...) the longing for truth, which is a feature of science, art, and any rational politics, but the pursuit of a monopoly on the interpretation of the past, which is the ambition of national ideology and exclusivism” (Lovrenović, 2008, p. 33).

5 Srećko Džaja emphasizes the social aspects of the Bosnian Autonomy Movement by Husein-*kapetan* Gradašević, to the detriment of his national-political dimensions. For Džaja, the ret-

incided at one point in time because Catholics/Croats and Orthodox/Serbs were mostly exploited (serfs), while Muslims/Bosniaks were landowners, exploiters. Of course, there were non-Muslim landowners, especially Serbs in the Austro-Hungarian period, as well as Muslim serfs, but this pattern of class-confessional division of Bosnian society in the Ottoman period was and remains dominant. That is why advanced European social and political ideas were perceived as a danger to the socio-political status of Bosniak Muslims. Add to that the year 1878, when Bosniaks were suddenly suddenly engulfed by a Christian empire, it is easy to understand the reasons for their anti-modernist stance, their indulgence in conservatism, autocracy and isolationism. Anything new frightened and threatened them. The fear of preserving physical and spiritual existence becomes, and remains until recently, a formative factor in their reactions and actions.

Bosniaks were not willing to easily lose or give up a centuries-old position as the ruling social element in Bosnia, which was an additional reason for the lack of will for independent national solutions and inertial adherence to the Ottoman framework. Confessionally identified with the Ottomans, and politically confused, Bosniaks in the 19th century failed to transform their confessional identity into a national one (as happened to Bosnian Catholics and Orthodox), which was a precondition for a successful struggle for a nation-state. This transformation did not take place until the end of the 20th century<sup>6</sup>.

The political-religious identification of Bosniaks with the Ottomans caused disunity, and eventually the collapse of the Gradašćević movement. The matter was further aggravated by the later slaughter of the Bosniak nobility, committed on behalf of the Ottomans by Omer-pasha Latas, as well as the Ottoman turn to its own modernisation trends. The Bosniak begovat has not been part of the power elite since the mid-19th century. It had stagnated, pauperises by agrarian reform, and decay. The Bosniak nobility remained lonely and without understanding in their possessive demands in the first half of the 20th century. The idea of social justice has already taken hold on the historical scene and it had legitimised the rights of individuals who lived from their work. The winds of history were now

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rograde political character of the autonomist movement is unambiguous. It was not a national movement, "which would fight for the political and legal equality of all members of one state" (Džaja, 2000, p. 12), referring to both Muslim and non-Muslim populations at the same time. It did not demand a new social and political paradigm, which something that all national movements were doing. Instead, it was fighting to preserve the existing paradigm. If there was any chance of forming a common modern Bosnian nation according to Džaja, it was "Bosniaks who cut it at the root" by their insistence on unequal social relations, blind to the need to introduce social and political reforms that would lead to civic equality in Bosnia.

- 6 On the modern political functioning of the church-nation-state trinity within contemporary Serbian political practice, see Popović Obradović, O. (2004). "Crkva - ključni faktor blokade" [The Church - the Key Factor of the Blockade], *Helsinkiška povelja, Glasilo Helsinkiškog odbora za ljudska prava u Srbiji*, 9(75-76), 23-25.

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behind the backs of serfs. The rentier society was coming to an end. European aristocracies had already transformed land capital into industrial or banking, and Bosniaks were late in doing so. Only decades later with the Communists, would a part of them once again become part of the Bosnian political elite.

Despite the trend of historical marginalisation and social conservatism, there were individual attempts at modernisation within the Bosniak intelligentsia<sup>7</sup>. With Mehmed-beg Kapetanović, Safvet-beg Bašagić, and Osman Nuri Hadžić, the founder of the secular Muslim intellectual movement, efforts to modernise and enlighten were overshadowed by the aristocratic conception of the nation. The development of the nation as a political community of horizontal communion would come only a century later. Bašagić, just like his entire generation, remained trapped by the contradiction of existing: “between nostalgic traditionalism and receiving modernism” (Zgodić, 2003, p. 132). Kapetanović also believed that there were one Bosnian people and that the ‘Serbianization’ and ‘Croatization’ of Bosnia was a matter of a newer political habit that would pass quickly. In the Begovate, he saw the continuation of the medieval Bosnian nobility. To this social stratum, quite historically, he gave the task of bearing the Bosniak national idea. At the same time, he lost sight of the fact that the nobility in the European context was already politically anachronistic. The problem was that the Bosniaks, apart from the peasantry from whose substratum the Communists much later made a nation, had no middle class. Tying the fate of the national revival to the Begovate’s social, political, and psychological identity was a preconceived notion. That layer was the object of strong social pressure from the peasantry of all denominations. Kapetanović was preoccupied with his own status, while the actions and opinions of the already few intellectuals were marked by “conformist functionalism” (Zgodić, 2003, p. 40) towards the established order.

At the same time, the Bosniak leaders did not offer anything new and really acceptable to the Orthodox / Serbs and Catholics / Croats, except for an open effort to further maintain the Bosniak-Muslim social and political superiority. The demand for freedom, self-determination, and equality is the birthplace of the national liberation Serbian and Croatian movements, cultural actions, peasant and military uprisings, such as the one from 1875 in Herzegovina. Kalay’s notion of Bosnia as a political nation, being part of the Austro-Hungarian national policy of separating ethnic from political identity, was left without a carrier, substance,

<sup>7</sup> Mehmed-beg Kapetanović Ljubušak, the first mayor of Sarajevo during the Austro-Hungarian rule, was an educator in the spirit of national revival. He collected folk artefacts in order to culturally legitimize his own nation. For twenty years he published the newspaper “Bošnjak”. His stirring up of national consciousness by invoking language, folk culture, literature, literacy, intellectual creations, folklore, did not gain wider layers for such a new concept of collectivity / identity. See n.a. (1992). *Zbornik radova o Mehmed-beg Kapetanoviću Ljubušaku* [Proceedings on Mehmed-beg Kapetanović Ljubušak], Sarajevo: Institut za književnost.

trust, and over time, support. It was already too late to separate the confessional and the national in the collective and personal identity of the Bosnian people.

## Aristocratic Image of the World

Bašagić's doctoral dissertation titled *Bosniaks and Herzegovinians In The Field Of Oriental Literature*, defended in 1910 at the University of Vienna and published in 1912 under the title *Bosniaks And Herzegovinians In Islamic Literature*, is a counterpoint to Andrić's dissertation. Without going into why Bašagić changes the term "oriental literature" from dissertation to "Islamic literature" and whether he uses them synonymously or in the published version of the dissertation, it is evident that he Islamises the position of Bosniaks and Herzegovinians more than he ethnicises it. Therefore, it should be pointed out that the term "oriental", concerned with the Bosniaks living in those decades, could still be found on the cover of Mustafa Mulalić's book *Orient in the West*.

In his dissertation, Bašagić is immersed in a typical aristocratic picture of the world. The division of society into "a mass of low and insignificant people" lost without mention and name, and "people who rose high above their surroundings" (Bašagić, 2007, p. 57) depicts the traditional social and value structure of an elitist and heroic understanding of the world. The aristocratic approach is also reflected in the double reference to the father. One time he mentions his story, an oral tradition about famous Bosniaks, and the second time he resents that his father rarely wrote about these persons. Thus, general history is approached through family history. In other words, family histories have resulted in general history, which is characteristic of all traditional aristocratic societies, for whom history is the work of great people. For Bašagić, the medieval ethic of honour is always presupposed to the modern ethic of dignity.

Bašagić promotes a culture of memory that puts his great ancestors in focus, and that memory makes him proud and pleased. By the time he writes the dissertation, he is already impoverished and socially declassed due to the spread of the egalitarian paradigm (demand for a fairer distribution of social wealth), brought about by modernisation and emancipation of the "mass of low and insignificant people". In Bosniak culture, Bašagić is a kind of bridge between tradition and modernity. He undertakes scientific research of textual canonisation of his father's oral tradition with the aim of translating it into a modern, Western statement and, "...thus reliving the dead memories of the glorious adventures and misfortunes of our heroes, statesmen, scholars, poets, and benefactors" (Bašagić, 2007, p. 58). In his first historiographical work, which refers to the preparation for the dissertation, titled *A Brief Reference To The Past Of Bosnia And Herzegovina From 1463 To 1850* (1900), he mentions 1850 as the watershed in Bosniak history. In that period, the nobility was cut down by the sword of Omerpaša Latas,

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emphasising again the view that the history of the nobility is the history of Bosnia and all Bosnian people.

Nevertheless, Bašagić is looking for modalities to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity in Bosniak culture. As Sanjin Kodrić points out, he tries to affirm his own image of the self from a special postcolonial position, acting, “from the system of values that implies his cultural memory and his horizon of expectations...” (Kodrić, 2018, p. 187). Bašagić is aware that his horizon is different from the newly established dominant cultural order and that in that order he is repressed, invisible, and unrecognised. He seeks to incorporate Bosniak themes, personalities, and artefacts from the Ottoman period into modern cultural and social reality and make them of central relevance. From the position of modernity (obtaining a Ph.D. in Vienna and studying theology at Al-Azhar), he de-orientalises but also ‘Bosnianizes’ the “Orient”. In accordance with his own culture and identity policy, which in this respect corresponds to the concept of the nation as an “imagined community”, he describes the “surplus of Bosnian” in the works of Bosniaks in Oriental languages. His thesis on a special genre is famous, but also scientifically disputed, “(...) poets from our region mostly make up a special genre in the field of Turkish poetry. Without any doubt, they stood under the influence of our folk poetry, which has Turkish poetry of unknown poetic expressions and images in abundance. Instead of borrowing all the poetic beauties from the Arabs and Persians, as all Turkish poets used to do, they would sometimes reach for the rich treasury of our folk poetry, and from it in fine form exhibit in Turkish Parnassus many precious innovations” (Bašagić, 2007, p. 172). Likewise, his translations of Bosniak Divan poets are closer in style, structure, and sensibility to *sevda* linka than to the original texts of Ghazal poetry translated into Bosnian (See Spahić, 2008, pp. 43-84).

While for Andrić, Ottoman Bosnia is a kind of spiritual desert, Bašagić sees it as a the golden age belonging to Bosniaks and Herzegovinians. That is the key distinguishing fact between these two intellectuals. Bosniaks were an energetic, progressive, and self-sacrificing element during the Ottoman rule in Bosnia, while today, “the masses are neglected and mentally stunted” (Bašagić, 2007, p. 61). Furthermore, “a country that today feeds a limp and clumsy people, once gave birth to greats in education, politics, and heroism” (Bašagić, 2007, p. 62). However, Bašagić’s intention is not to restore the past, regardless of all the privileges it gave to his family, but to challenge and overcome the Manichean image of that past. He does not agree with the one-sided ideological victimisation of the Islamic elements of Bosnian culture, which in turn marked the national-revival ideologies of the non-Muslim Balkan peoples. At the same time, he is not pessimistic about the Bosniak and Bosnian future. He counts on the openness of the Bosniak mind and advocates receptivity to the values and principles of the new age. According to him, something like this had already happened in the history of

Bosniaks. Bašagić's thesis is that the Bogomils took refuge from the persecution of the Pope and the Hungarians under the protection of the Ottomans, accepted new values and a new religion, educated themselves, and increased their possessions, for which their neighbouring Christians never forgave them. Bašagić pleads for the "new" to be accepted again, this time referring to the European modernity of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. His goal is the social and economic modernisation of his own country and people. At the same time, he is aware of the fact that Christian intellectuals and historians do not share his image of Bosnia. "According to them, our entire history contains only those descriptions of various troubles, as if there is not a single bright page in it. The raven is not as black as they say, nor is our history as some portray it" (Bašagić, 2007, p. 63).

While Bašagić recognises Bosniaks and Islam, in a historical and contemporary sense, as equal and inherited participants in history, insisting on their differences from others in potential and wealth, Andrić as a social thinker is fully ideologised. He is loyal to the position of one identity policy that sees Islam and Muslims as foreign and archaic elements, and in line with this prejudice, as potential violators of the new Yugoslav cultural and political unity. In the optics of South Slavic *realpolitik* during the first decades of the 20th century, such notions of a common Yugoslav culture, nation, and society were more commonplace in the thinking of Unitarians, then Serbian and Croatian Great Nationalists, and even Yugoslav Communists. It suffices to recall two events important from that period. The first was to challenge the special national status of Bosniaks at the 5th CPY National Conference in Zagreb in 1940, and the second is Moša Pijada's party position, as one of the highest communist officials, on the need to assimilate Yugoslav Muslims at the 1948 CPY B&H Founding Congress in Sarajevo. Andrić's dissertation is a part of these views, and in "life" it will, according to Vedad Spahić, be maintained by, "mythomaniac instrumentalization of its politically conjunctural content" (Spahić, 1999, p. 150), until this myth is overcome by higher forms of consciousness.

## Conclusion

Both Andrić and Bašagić were the protagonists of the former systems of power and authority, which they have in common. They knew about the influence of politics on textual interpretation. Both of them reflect that stance in their dissertations. While Bašagić wants to include the spiritual and literary heritage of Bosniaks in the South Slavic cultural narrative, Andrić passes by that heritage as if by a Turkish cemetery. Fully in the spirit of the then reformist notions of the relationship between Islam and modernity, Bašagić believes in the inclusive nature of European institutions and the ability of Bosnian Muslims to accept the achievements of the new age while preserving their identity. Andrić speaks from



the national-political positions of a newly emerging narrative, whose ethnocultural concept challenges the right of Otherness to all who are outside the formula of a one and three-named people, and although he does not explicitly point to this idea - out of Christian / Christian spiritual-cultural provenance.

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