

OTTOMAN BOSNIA ~ TEXTS, MATERIALS, INTERPRETATIONS

8th – 9th June 2001, St Anthony's Monastery, Sarajevo

Ottoman Bosnia - Texts, Materials, Interpretations, held in June 2001 in Sarajevo, aimed to stimulate current research and thinking about the history (politics, administration, society, religion, culture) of Ottoman Bosnia. In addition to the Bosnian experts in this field, specialists in universities in America and Europe who have worked on these materials, or with expertise in the interpretation of similar materials in other Ottoman archives, came together in the setting of St Anthony's Monastery.

Background

Participants

Programme

"Looking into Ottoman Bosnia" by Maja Lovrenovic

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BACKGROUND

Aims:

This conference has two related aims. The first is to stimulate current research and thinking about the history (politics, administration, society, religion, culture) of Ottoman Bosnia. The second is to mark, and make use of, the achievements of the “Bosnian Manuscript Ingathering Project” (“BMIP”), which has recovered copies of a significant proportion of the manuscript materials formerly held in the library of the Oriental Institute in Sarajevo. This collection was completely destroyed by incendiary shells in 1992; painstaking research by the BMIP (organised by Andras Riedlmayer at Harvard) has traced microfilms and other copies of many of these documents in collections all over the world. The organisers of this conference feel that it is important not only to recover such documents physically, but also to stimulate their study and use. In addition to the Bosnian experts in this field, there are also specialists in universities in America, Western Europe and Turkey who have worked on these materials, or have expertise in the interpretation of similar materials in other Ottoman archives. We hope that bringing these scholars together will provide a valuable experience for both them and their Bosnian colleagues.

Subject-matter:

Many academic conferences turn out to consist of a somewhat random presentation of work-in-progress. We hope to achieve something more focussed. We should like each speaker to talk about some aspect of the documentary evidence used in the study of Ottoman Bosnia – about a particular type of source-material (e.g. early defters, or legal records, or “Aljamiado” texts, or nineteenth-century salnames), or a particular text (e.g. Evliya Celebi, or one of the Ottoman Bosnian chronicles), about the problems of interpreting (or editing) such evidence, or coordinating and reconciling it with other contemporary evidence of a different kind, or about the history of the modern historiography based on such evidence (e.g. the hunt for “Bogomils” in the early records, the changing assumptions of demographic historians about how to extrapolate from defters), and so on. The term “materials” in the title of the conference is broad enough to include, for example, architectural evidence such as the chronograms studied by Machiel Kiel. While the primary focus will of course be on Bosnian materials, it is hoped that some experts on other Ottoman archives, etc., who may not have any direct experience of Bosnian materials, will also have useful contributions to make.

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Speakers/Expert participants

1. Alicic, Ahmed (Oriental Institute, Sarajevo)
2. Balic, Smail (Vienna)
3. Buzov, Snjezana (University of Michigan)
4. Car-Drnda, Hatidza (Oriental Institute, Sarajevo)
5. Carlton, Richard (University of Newcastle)
6. Causevic, Ekrem (Zagreb University)
7. Faroghi, Suraiya (Institut fur Geschichte und Kultur des Nahens Orients sowie Turkologie)
8. Gara, Eleni (Foundation of the Hellenic World, Athens)
9. Gazic, Lejla (Oriental Institute, Sarajevo)
10. Hickok, Michael (Air War College, Maxwell)
11. Hafizovic, Resid (University of Sarajevo)
12. Imamovic, Mustafa (University of Sarajevo)
13. Jahic, Mustafa (Gazi Husrev-Beg Library, Sarajevo)
14. Kafadar, Cemal (Harvard University)
15. Karpas, Kemal (University of Wisconsin)
16. Kiel, Machiel (University of Utrecht)
17. Koller, Markus (UNI Bochum)
18. Kupusovic, Amina (Oriental Institute, Sarajevo)
19. Malcolm, Noel (The Bosnian Institute)
20. McCarthy, Justin (University of Louisville)
21. Mahmutcehajic, Rusmir (International Forum Bosnia)
22. Moacanin, Nenad (Zagreb University)
23. Murphey, Rhoads (University of Birmingham)
24. Pinson, Dr Mark (Cambridge, USA)
25. Riedlmayer, Andras (Harvard University)
26. Rushworth, Alan (University of Newcastle)
27. Silajdzic, Adnan (University of Sarajevo)
28. Zirojevic, Olga (Institute for History, Belgrade)
29. Zlatar, Behija (Oriental Institute, Sarajevo)

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Friday, 8 June 2001

08.45 – 09.00	Coffee
09.00 – 09.20	BEHIJA ZLATAR: 'The Oriental Institute Sarajevo: A brief history'
09.20 – 09.40	ANDRAS RIEDLMAYER: 'The Bosnian Manuscripts Ingathering Project'
09.40 – 10.00	LEJLA GAZIC: 'Conditions of the Sarajevo collections of oriental manuscripts' ('Stanje sarajevskih zbirki orijentalnih rukopisa')
10.00 – 10.30	Discussion
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee
11.00 – 11.20	EKREM CAUSEVIC: 'Chronicle of Bosnian Turkology: The Franciscans and the Turkish language' ('Kronika bosanske turkologije: Franjevci i turski jezik')
11.20 – 11.40	MARK PINSON: 'The Bab-i Bosnia Project'
11.40 – 11.55	Discussion
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 14.20	MUSTAFA JAHIC: 'The source materials in the Gazi Husrev-beg Library' ('Historijsko-rukopisna gradja u Gazi Husrev-Begovoj biblioteci u Sarajevu')
14.20 – 14.40	SMAIL BALIC: 'Preparing and publishing of Ottoman and Bosnian texts in Vienna: Observations on a New Catalogue'
14.40 – 15.30	Discussion

16.00 – 16.20	RHOADS MURPHEY: ‘Ottoman geographical writing as a source for understanding as well as misunderstanding Bosnia in early times’
16.20 – 16.40	CEMAL KAFADAR: ‘Local and Imperial Histories: Integration or Confederation’
16.40 – 17.00	OLGA ZIROJEVIC: ‘About the ethnonyms Bošnjak, Bosnali’ (‘Oko etnonima Bošnjak, Bosnali’)
17.00 – 18.00	Discussion

Saturday, 9 June 2001

08.45	Coffee
09.00 – 09.20	SNJEZANA BUZOV: ‘Ottoman perceptions of Bosnia as reflected in the works of Ottoman authors who visited or lived in Bosnia’
09.20 – 09.40	SURAIYA FAROQHI: ‘Ottoman attitudes to piracy in the Adriatic’
09.40 – 10.00	MACHIEL KIEL: ‘The Demographic History of Bosnia, thoughts about its sources and the way we can extract information out of them not recorded elsewhere’
10.00 – 11.00	Discussion
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee
11.30 – 11.50	BEHIJA ZLATAR: ‘Vakuf registers in defters of the Bosnian Sandjak as historical sources’ (‘Registri vakufa u defterima Bosanskog Sandjaka kao istorijski izvori’)
11.50 – 12.10	AMINA KUPUSOVIC: ‘Tapu tahrir defters that relate to Bosnia’ (‘Tapu tahrir defteri koji se odnose na Bosnu’)
12.10 – 12.30	NENAD MOACANIN: ‘Defterology and Mythology: Ottoman Bosnia up to the Tanzimat’ (‘Defterologija i mitologija: Osmanska Bosna do Tanzimata’)
12.30 – 12.50	MICHAEL HICKOK: ‘Bosnian homicide investigations in the 18th century’
12.50 – 13.30	Discussion
13.30 – 15.30	Lunch

15.30 – 15.50	HATIDZA CAR-DRNDA: ‘Forms of existence of the timar system in the Bosnian eyalet in the second half of the 19th century’ based on the only surviving sidžil of the Foča kadiluk’ (‘Oblici egzistencije timarskog sistema u Bosanskom ejaletu u drugoj polovini 19. stoljeća’ baziran na osnovu jedinog sacuvanog sidžila Fočanskog kadiluka)
15.50 – 16.10	KEMAL KARPAT: ‘The Demographic Situation of Ottoman Bosnia and Migrations in the Nineteenth Century’
16.10 – 16.30	JUSTIN McCARTHY: ‘Archival Sources Concerning Serb Rebellions in Bosnia 1875-76’
16.30 – 17.30	Discussion
17.30 – 17.35	NOEL MALCOLM Closing remarks

LOOKING INTO OTTOMAN BOSNIA

Maja Lovrenovic

>I was born in Romania, in a family belonging to the Turkish minority. I grew up in an environment where Romanian, Bulgarian and Turkish were spoken. But throughout that whole time people would forever be saying to me, even friends: AOh, you Turk!@, insulting me as if I were a foreigner or parasite. Later on, when my family had to emigrate to Turkey, the Turkish authorities wanted to give me a Romanian surname. So in Turkey, which should supposedly have been my proper homeland, I continued to be a Romanian for them. I rejected that surname and named myself with the one I now carry: Karpat [Carpathian]. When they asked me why, I replied: AThe Carpathians were here before the Romanians.@ It wasn=t until later on, in America, that I became a real Turk, which means - Muslim, liberal, republican.=

This little autobiographical story, from which an entire novel by Ivo Andric could be constructed, was recounted by Kemal Karpat (University of Wisconsin), an internationally recognised historian and one of the participants in the Ottoman Seminar held on 8 and 9 June 2001 in the Franciscan Monastery of Saint Anthony in Sarajevo. The seminar was organised by The Bosnian Institute from London and chaired by Noel Malcolm, while the participants were welcomed by the Guardian of the Monastery, Brother Petar Andjelovic.

Oriental scripts, chronologies, the Franciscans

The event brought together twenty of the most prominent historians and specialists whose work is concerned with study of the Ottoman Empire and archival materials dating from that period. The seminar began with an introduction to the history of the Oriental Institute in Sarajevo, delivered by Behija Zlatar, and one to the current state of its oriental manuscript collection by Lejla Gazic. The Oriental Institute, along with the National Library, was one of the first targets at the beginning of the siege of Sarajevo, when in just one night most of the precious manuscripts and documents written in Arabic, Turkish, Persian and *Alhamijado* were destroyed with incendiary shells. Two projects were next presented to the Seminar: the results to date of the *Bosnian Manuscripts Ingathering Project*, described by András Riedlmayer of Harvard University, one of a number of attempts to restore and reconstruct the destroyed collections; and the *Bab-I Bosnia Project*, reported on by Mark Pinson also of Harvard University, which involves locating and researching bibliographies for Ottoman Bosnian studies. The chronology of Bosnian Turkology was next traced by Ekrem Causevic of the Philosophy Faculty at Zagreb University, including the contribution of Bosnian Franciscans, who in the 19th century published grammars and organised Turkish language courses.

The purpose of the Ottoman Seminar was to establish an international academic framework, within which important questions and neuralgic points related to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and to Ottoman studies in general, could be identified and discussed in a more scholarly perspective. Historical studies were designed to cover various aspects of the Ottoman period in Bosnia, from two standpoints: one looked at Bosnia from the perspective of the structure of the Ottoman Empire as a whole, while the other portrayed the Ottoman authority system within Bosnia (Behija Zlatar, Hatidza Car-Drnda, Amina Kupusovic). Various themes were analysed, relating to different periods during the more than four hundred years during which Bosnia was under Ottoman rule.

Geographical scripts, defters, piracy

According to Rhoads Murphy of the University of Birmingham, how people from the Ottoman Empire saw Bosnia, and generally the whole territory conquered in south-eastern Europe at the beginning of the 14th century, can to a certain extent be traced in geographical manuscripts, which in the early period refer to the area simply as the >northern regions=. As shown by Snjezana Buzov of the University of Michigan, moreover, by reading works written by Ottoman authors and travellers who visited Bosnia, one can follow how their perceptions differed over the years.

A lot of attention was paid to the question of interpretation of certain sources and the possibility of subjecting them to fresh readings. Core sources for research on the Ottoman period are the register books or *defters* that were used for keeping various records, from taxes to censuses. Through study of the *defters* it is possible to reconstruct the structure of the Ottoman Empire to a large extent, hence also the social structure in particular places. Here again, questions of methodology and comparative approach influence interpretation, according to Nenad Moacanin of the Philosophy Faculty at the University of Zagreb, and are of crucial importance in two major themes of Bosnian Ottoman studies: Islamization in the second half of the 16th century, and the status of Bosnia within the Empire.

Questions of methodology and interpretation were also part of the discussion regarding the demographic picture of the Ottoman Empire, during a presentation on the comparative study of its demographic history by Machiel Kiel of Utrecht University, and in studies on the demographic situation in Bosnia in the 19th century by Kemal Karpat and by Justin McCarthy of Louisville University. An academic study of the Ottoman outlook on piracy in the Adriatic Sea by Suraiya Faroqhi - carried out by studying archives in Istanbul and Venice, subjecting them to a masterly interpretation and bringing the archival documents to life - demonstrated in a very plastic manner the multi-layered relationship between Porte and Signoria, serving also to give a foretaste of a similar seminar on *The Social and Economic History of the Ottoman Empire*, to be held in Dubrovnik in August 2001.

Translated from *Zarez* (Zagreb), 21 June 2001