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MANUSCRIPT *AHVAL-İ BOSNA*
BY MUHAMED EMIN ISEVIĆ (EARLY 19th CENTURY)*
Introduction, translation from Turkish and annotations by author

INTRODUCTION

Bosnia was not spared of severe internal crises of the Ottoman Empire late 19th century, caused by, amongst other things, international position of the Empire, fractions within its own system, and the emergence of liberation movements in the entire Empire. As the most forward province in Europe and towards Europe, which was to defend the interest of the Empire in that region, Bosnia faced its own difficulties internally. On the one hand, Bosnia was forced to defend its own integrity preserved over the centuries, while, on the other, it constantly waged wars against either revolutionary forces in the Belgrade eyalet – *dahis* and *janissaries*, Serbian rebels who were an immediate threat to Bosnian territory, or against the Montenegrins and neighboring Christian tribes supported by Montenegro. Bosnia was also forced to constantly safeguard its northern and western borders from Austrian and French raids. Although at the time Bosnia was not exposed to organized uprisings within any of its ethnic groups, the difficult situation could not be overcome simply through the strong patriotic sentiment of the Bosnian people and their awareness of the need to protect their homeland. Confrontations with the Porte would nonetheless gradually evolve and manifest themselves in the form of changes in certain social structures, which had a crucial impact on Bosnia's politics that was, in a way, independent from the politics of the Porte. However, a portion of the feudal class supported by the Porte stood firm in preventing progressive ideas in Bosnia from developing and propagating. In that way they impeded armed conflicts between the Porte and the Bosniaks. Conflicts between the Porte and the Bosniaks, recorded in the earlier periods of history, due to the position of the feudal class, that they should pull back any time a progressive tendency emerged, did not have significant results. Its significance lay in the fact that it accelerated the emergence of new social structures, to take over the influence on politics in Bosnia. Those new structures represented the combination of the feudal class, predominately the cap-

* See: "Manuskript Ahvali Bosna od Muhameda Emina Isevića (poč. XIX v.)". In: *POF 32-33/1982-83*, Sarajevo, 1984, pp. 163-198.

tains, the lesser *dahis*, lesser *ulama* and the most vital group in the then Bosnia society, the urban stratum, merchants and craftsmen who were protected by guilds and the *janissary* organization. The ideas of uniqueness of Bosnia and its autonomy conclusively matured in this newly formed social strata. It is understandable why were such ideas regarded as anti-sultanic and anti-Islamic. The individuals who propagated them were pursued and prosecuted as anarchist and revolutionaries who disturbed their nation and disseminated disorder throughout the country. High ranking officials, including eminent members of the *ulama*, were not able to recognize what the real reasons for the difficult conditions in the country, and the same was with all the social structures, all the way up to the Sultan. That is why inadequate measures were often undertaken, including ineffective so-called reform actions. We can say for sure that it was evident that the administrative and major feudal ruling structures had been disintegrating ever since the 16th century. That issue was even publicly addressed but the modus that would stop such tendencies was not found. These conditions were at their peak in late 18th and early 19th centuries. Anarchy was spreading throughout the Empire. Injustice and negative occurrences were publicly condemned, but the ruling social structures, which were, in fact, the major generator of the negative occurrences and injustice, were intact. Reform actions always passed them by. The purposes of reformatory efforts by Sultan Selim III were, in the first place, to form new armed forces and then focus on remedying the general conditions by affirmation the previous values which, of course, did not have any success. Admittedly, these measures pointed out the direction of reform activities, but not the course of action. Similarly, reforms by Mahmud II did not succeed, even though he deployed all of his resources to revive the absolute power of the Sultan and attempted to improve the entire administrative apparatus by transferring some of the European administrative institutions into it. Unfortunately, he also did not undertake overall reform of the society. Resistance to both Selim's and Mahmud's reforms came precisely from that highly bureaucratic and extremely corrupted administrative apparatus. The most important social structure coupling with that apparatus was the feudal class, for whom the unlimited power of the Sultan was not suitable. Both Sultans' reforms were negatively labeled as regression to "the good old times." That was also something that indicated Sultans' immaturity to undertake comprehensive reforms. That provided ruling clique and high ranking official with an opportunity to prevent every criticism of the administrative apparatus before it gained momentum and labeled it as an attack on the Sultan himself.

If a process with a broader social background starts to evolve, it can hardly be suppressed by repressive measures. That was the situation in Bosnia in early 19th century. The aforementioned emergence of the social class which, by some of its elements, had attributes of the middle-class, could not be suppressed by repression of individuals or larger groups. That process was reflected in the confrontation with the bureaucratic apparatus and those social strata which supported them in their struggle for power and exploitation

of different types of population involved in the economy both in urban and rural areas. The most authentic description of the extent of confrontation and the general situation in Bosnia was captured by Muhamed Emin Isević in his tractate *The Conditions In Bosnia*. Isević's essay is different from similar essays and commentaries because it precisely indicated the causes of the difficult conditions, without providing old recipes for resolution of the problems. It is evident that Isević was aware of the fact that the society needed fundamental changes, imposed by force if necessary, which would remedy the entire society by, in the first place, removing all the causes that had led to such difficult conditions. Additionally, he indicated individuals responsible for the difficult conditions, which, at the time, was quite unusual. Therefore, he was courageous and straightforward in his elaboration, ignoring the consequences of such approach. At the same time he showed that our people, with different social backgrounds, were aware of the causes of such difficult condition and that they struggled to remove those causes by either the pen or the sword.

Muhamed Emin Isević was born in a distinguished intellectual Sarajevo family, somewhere around the middle of the 18th century. Most probably, his father was Ismail Efendi, the Sarajevo *mufti* in late 1760's. Identically to the other members of this family, Muhamed was also educated and became a *qadi*. As a young man, in late 18th and early 19th century, Muhamed Emin was already one of the most prominent members of the Sarajevo society. This was the period in which open confrontations between Bosnians and the Porte were increasing. One of the most prominent figures in these confrontations was Muhamed Emin, a person who was well informed on the conditions in Bosnia and the Empire. Since his activities were regarded as damaging to the Sultan's rule, or to be more specific, to the rule of regional governor and the local authorities subservient to the Sultan, Muhamed Emin was accused before the Sultan so he was exiled in early 19th century. It is not known whether he was pardoned or his exile lasted for a short period of time, but it is known that he returned back to Bosnia and reunited with the group opposing the official authorities. It seems that he particularly exasperated Hilmi-pasha, a Bosnian administrator during the period of the fiercest conflicts with the Serbian rebels, and his collaborators, so he was accused again and convicted to exile on the isle of Lemnos in the Greek archipelago. That happened in 1809. It is not known exactly how long his exile was, but it is known that he was a free man in 1812. Serving his sentence he wrote a literary-historical tractate on conditions in Bosnia, which represents an extraordinary description of the difficult conditions in Bosnia and as such it was a significant research source for investigation of the early 19th century history of Bosnia. Therefore, the tractate is entitled *The Conditions In Bosnia*. He wrote it directly to the Sultan with the purpose of showing that he was innocent and to point out to the most important problems and the looming catastrophe that might strike Bosnia and the Empire. We do not know how the Sultan got hold of this tractate, but it served its purpose because immediately after Muhamed Emin was freed,

he was promoted into the rank of professor of Edirne and *shaykh* of the Sarajevo Army Command. It was obviously a gift from the Sultan for his open and straightforward narrative on a region in the outskirts of the Empire, standing as a defense wall towards Europe. Muhamed Emin died in 1816 in Sarajevo and was buried at the cemetery in Alifakovac residential area where this family lived. The details of Muhamed Emin's activities upon his return to Sarajevo from his exile are not known. It is possible that he spent most of the time working out of Bosnia, probably as a professor in Edirne.

The tractate or the brochure written by Muhamed Emin Isević is in the Istanbul University Library, under index number 6647. It is a unique item and an autograph. I possess the microfilm, whereas the copy of the tractate is in the Oriental Institute in Sarajevo. The essay's dimensions are 20,5 × 13,0 and it contains 49 sheets, or 98 pages, each having 11 lines. The letter of the tractate is italics and the text is relatively readable and masterfully written. The style of the essay is rather difficult but it indicates that the author was well educated and proficient in the Ottoman language and, judging from the content, well acquainted with other Islamic sciences. He was also sufficiently familiar with politics and law, because his narrative connects society, law and politics by a causal relationship. The fact that he sent this essay to Sultan is very fascinating, because he did not spare anyone. He wrote against anyone whom he believed or knew to be responsible for the difficult conditions in Bosnia, particularly focusing on difficult conditions both Muslim and Christian were in. He wrote about some people with so much bitterness that one would have an impression that he was exaggerating. On the other hand, his narrative is so convincing that one cannot avoid the feeling that it is absolutely truthful. His criticism was particularly directed to the Bosnian prefect Ibrahim Hilmi-pasha, who was extremely negligent in his office and bribable as well. Hilmi-pasha is, in fact, Ibrahim-pasha who Ivo Andrić describes in his *The Travnik Chronicle* as a person of positive qualities and who stands out against the majority of the Bosnian society! Isević presents him as a plain and indolent Anatolian who sits, smokes and plays checkers all day and does not care for everything else. His incompetence is also very noticeable, particularly in terms of creating politics of Bosnia and commanding the Army because of which Serbian rebels were most successful during his office. He is accused of neglecting the people and people's grievances as to the different sorts of injustice. Because of his collusion with the *qadis* and *muftis*, during his reign, but in general terms as well, the justice lost its meaning and without justice a country cannot progress. Significance of the essay is also in the fact that the author criticized all the then structures of authority, regional, local, senior feudal and military circles. This essay and other contemporary military archive records indicate almost identically the persons most responsible for the disorder and demise of the country. On the other hand, the author presents that the only upright are the Muslim and Christian *raya* but they are oppressed by various tyrants and greedy predators so they are forced to rebel and flee Bosnia.

Notwithstanding the subjectiveness which he, to some extent, entered into his narrative, possibly because of the bitterness for being in exile, this essay definitely represents paramount source for reseating the conditions in Bosnia at the time. The events that followed confirmed Isević's narrative. After the period he described Bosnia faced even worse disturbances, which were supposed to be resolved by Husein-kapetan Gradašćević's movement. However, that happened only after the occupation by another superpower – Austria, which did not, more or less, bring anything better to the subdued social structures. After that, Bosnia lost or was planned to lose its centuries-old identity characterized by the fact that Bosnia was always standing alone and was in some sort of autonomy.

Translation:

THE CONDITIONS IN BOSNIA

1-a

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

We praise You, Allah, who ordered those who were given the Book to interpret it reliably to the people and not to hide anything from it.

Blessed and saved be His Prophet Muhammad, who Exalted Allah sent to warn people whose ancestors were warned as well, but they neglected the warring. Blessed and saved be his family, his companions who recommended good to be done, who ordered for good to be done and forbade for evil to be done as they were taught to do so.

1-b I pray to the Truthful, praised and exalted He is, to help to the magnificent, noble and merciful Czar, the protector of the world and the Czar of all the czars, the divine shadow on Earth, his Excellency, our master who sits on his throne until the Judgment Δ Day, be victor and the pleased one, and may He help him to be successful in everything he does and be strengthen – please God make our prayers true with honor – “Allah is the only one, and Muhammad is his prophet.”¹

And now I will elaborate the causes for disorder on Earth and what are the causes of rebellion in Adam's tribe and the recommendations for paths of order will be described. Amongst other issues, I will briefly discuss on the poor and those who can not provide for themselves, on the Muslim and Christian *raya*, particularly the secret complaints from the good and godly individuals who follow the righteous path of Muhammad and the Islamic community, submitted against the wretched villains. Also I will discuss the circumstances involving the prominent officials in our country: *qadis*, *naibs*,

¹ Admission to Islam; Islamic credo.

2-a *muderises, muftis, pashas (valis), mirlivas (sanjakbeys), waqf mutevelis, cizye collectors, captains, fortress crews, spahis, beys, janissary agas* and the disorders they arouse and I will lay it out truthfully.² Δ

The Exalted said: "And when it is said to them, Do not make disorder in the land, they say: 'We are but peace-makers'. Now surely they themselves are the disorder-makers, but they do not perceive."³

CHAPTER 1

ON QADIS AND NAIBS

2-b Generally they are unjust and ignorant. Not even one in the thousand is worth of the office and is capable. Some by bribe, some by lobbying, some by their previous service at the court managed to register in the book of *qadis*. Most of them have no idea what the law is, what the *diwan* is, what taxes are and what examination is. They all say: "I would like to become an influential figure in my district" and then use money to strengthen their position. By their endeavor to become influential and more important than those in their rank and those similar to them, in ten-fifteen years they disturbed a hundred-year old system established in the *qadi* order. By succeeding to unjustly obtain the position of *qadi* in a clandestine way, Δ some became eminent officials (*eshrafs*) in the country, some advanced in the *qadi* order even though they never sat on the czar's *diwan*. They were amongst eminent *qadis* for a long time, however, they have not been to Istanbul. They are even proud of their ignorance and they say: "We have paid for our office. Some received a hundred and some two hundred bags of *akchis*."⁴

So those who accept bribe and those who bribe are eminent figures in the regions. It has been forty years now since the religious *ulama*, who are educated and who have been educating others, and good people, the true believers, are afraid to speak up in their courts. They are superior, whereas those who follow the truth are inferior. Every one of them opened the doors of cor-

² He divided his tractate based on the above structures and the data he entered in each of those are almost to be believed as presented because he speaks as an eyewitness.

³ Besim Korkut (translation) *The Qur'an*, Oriental Institute in Sarajevo, Special Editions VII, Sarajevo, 1977, Surah II, chapter 11. All the following quotes from Qur'an are from the translation by B. Korkut.

⁴ He was particularly hostile towards *qadi* order because the appointment of *qadis* represented demise of moral principles. The old appointment process required that *qadis* were to be included onto the special *qadi* lists and than appointed in to the service in the sequential order. However, they were required to spend some time in some sort of an internship service (*mulazemet*) and to submit habilitation essay in their area of expertise in order to constantly improve. What Isević presents is that now *qadis* do not go to Istanbul, not to mention the specialist's studies. On the contrary, both the office and diploma are assumed by means of bribe.

3-a ruption and gave loose rein to luxury, swaggering, fancy tittles and envy. There is no one to seek solution for the *raya*'s insurrections and demise of the country. Allah's Prophet once said: "Allah cursed those who bribe and those who accept bribe."⁵ Δ And Allah says: "But on account of their breaking their covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard",⁶ or "Those are they whom Allah has cursed, and whomever Allah curses you shall not find any helper for him."⁷ So in the sense of these God's words this group of God-cursed man will have no success in their work, and no hope and accomplishment. All the lands of Rumelia, Anatolia, and Arabistan are in disorder because of the incapable, but in Bosnia the situation is the worst. Since this is my country, in order to describe the conditions trustfully, I will briefly present the necessary information about it.

3-b *Eyalet* of Bosnia is a region consisting of forty-eight *kazas*. In it there are more than five-hundred *qadis*, *naibs*, and *muderrises* serving in their towns.⁸ Every one of them desires an office and *niabet*, to work as *qadi* so for only one *niabet* fifteen to twenty of them barge. Δ The one who sets the highest price leases the license to practice *sharia*. Those who are honest, capable, educated, good believers and godly persons and those who keep away from the God forbidden work (*haram*) are not regarded highly. And as the saying indicates, and the saying is surely correct," An ignorant person is your enemy, even if he is your brother," they show their hostility towards all of those who are competent and upright. No doubt, the hearts of the honest religious *ulama* are wounded and bitter. Since the educated *ulama* who from the very begging belonged to this order, were deprived of the service, they gave up the profession and stopped amalgamating with the rest of the population, and the above-mentioned people utterly subdued those who believe in God and led all the Islamic countries into disorder. They completely ceased to enforce provisions of the God's law as if, God help us, and again God help us, they are not necessary. That is the reason why the all over the world Δ the mislead sects and heretical tendency are emerging. Because of their heretical belief, the Muhammad's righteous path and Islamic community followers are hiding and being hidden. And Allah says: "Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice..."⁹ Because they do not honor this order of the Truthful, the entire Islamic world will be struck by a catastrophe.

4-a Allah's Prophet said: "If a man emulates another man in his activities, whereas in his community there is a man who is more important to be emu-

⁵ The author included number of hadiths, Muhammad's sayings or his practical conduct which today is officially label as Islamic tradition and it is one of the four major sources of Islamic teachings.

⁶ Surah V, chapter 13.

⁷ Surah IV, chapter 52.

⁸ Under the rules of the *qadi* order, a local could not be *qadi* or *naib* in his town. There were exceptions to this but now that was widely spread practice.

⁹ Surah IV, chapter 58.

lated, that man betrayed Allah, His Prophet and community of Muslims.” Under this honorable *hadith*, majority of the prefects and officials are the traitors. For those who are obliged to be righteous and reach righteous rulings (*fatwa*), it was said in the legal books: “Once his rulings are influenced by bribe he accepts, he cannot be qadi anymore and his rulings are not binding.” Therefore, it is crystal clear where the disorder originates on the Earth.

Qur’an says: “...and the unjust shall have no helpers,”¹⁰ as well as” will any be destroyed but the infidel people?”¹¹

4-b Very soon the *niabets* of thirty *grosch* became a *niabet* of three hundred *grosch*, and the *niabet* of three-hundred *grosch* became a *niabet* of thirteen-hundred *grosch*.

5-a Only in the eyalet of Bosnia several hundred moneybags are spent on *niabets*. Of course, that money is taken away from the poor and those who cannot provide for themselves, weather they pay it willingly or unwillingly, by force and violence. Bosnian emissaries to Istanbul sell out the practice of Muhammad’s *shari’a*. Similarly, abusing their subordinates and ignorant people, those who have the real political power made a big fortune selling *niabets* they paid fifty *grosch* for more then hundred or hundred-and-fifty *grosch*. Džabić Ali efendi who is in Hafiz-pasha’s *madrasah* on Sulatan Ahmed’s and Mehmed-Bey who is in Shekerjihan,¹² member of *spahis* who was later discharged from the Sultan’s army, should both be, in fact, punished because Δ for seventeen years now they have been going to Istanbul and purchase *niabets* (*qadi* service) for forty eight *kazas* and then they would send them to the *qadis* in Bosnia. By that they sell out enforcement of God’s laws as a commodity. The certificates are sold from hand to hand and the ultimate user is either forth or fifth person. These two emissaries are protected by very powerful high-ranking individuals so they, supported by those deviants, dare to create such disorder. Additionally, they have been secretly conferring offices to a great number of incompetent individuals, they have been increased their ranks and have been charging them for that and have fearlessly selling the honorable *shari’a* as if it were a commodity in a market and” who pays more, he has it.” The disorder and violence in the Bosnian *eyalet* Δ

5-b have not been caused by any alleged enemy but the enemies of the faith which is the most spread. As far as those are concern, by constantly accepting bribe they have been inflicting damage to their country.

In the above-mentioned period several thousands *naibs* relieved each other in the office using purchased *niabets*. In the entire Ottoman Empire none of the actual certified *qadi* is on his real position. Those are all their *naibs*. If they do not earn as much as their monthly remuneration is, a *qadi* instantly removes that *naib* from office and in his place puts the worst one who can

¹⁰ Surah II, chapter 270.

¹¹ Surah VI, chapter 47.

¹² The two individuals are unknown, apart from what the author wrote about them.

- earn their share no matter what, by hook or by crook. Since that is the case, the poor and those who cannot provide for themselves are destined to the violence, wrongdoing, injustice, frauds and torture. The *raya* and other Allah's slaves who He as heritage left on Earth and ordered for them to be protected are burdened too much. Majority of *naibs* is involved in the trading while Δ the court of *shari'a* law is in session and they say: "I paid this *niabet* that much, that is the lowest price and I am paying as well." In that way they sell out rulings of the God's court of law. Court recorders and the bailiffs are their middlemen and they are worst than any highwayman. If a poor or wretched person says something against a judge, they instantly resort to thousands of lies, persuasions, frauds or fabrications and in form of a dispatch or a secret letter inform the biggest of all the despots, viziers, that that person is immoral, whereas for themselves they claim they are grateful judges and then they severely punish such a person. They only respect those who write beautiful praising letters to the Porte saying that a *naib* is not an villain but a hard-
- 6-a
- 6-b
- 7-a
- working person trying to do his best in the office bestowed onto him. Δ If a *naib* is a religious person and constantly abide to the *shari'a* law and if he constantly protects and speaks in favor the poor at the vizier's, they have no respect for him, they hate him and they are his enemies. Anyhow, by different deceits and intrigues, contrary to what is informed about them, they banish and punish him. Taking that into account, there aren't any *naibs* who abide to the *shari'a* law. If there are few of them, they left the office and as a poor and satisfied men they withdrew. It is not possible to enforce *shari'a* and receive a righteous ruling with *naibs* and *qadis* in who are now in office because not one in thousand of them open the book and even if they open it, they do not know how to read, and if they know to read, they do not know the procedure. There is a well-know saying: "Whatever is based on the wrong is wrong."¹³ Depending on who offers more bribe, they will rule in favor of that man and issue him an endorsement. Δ They treat the property of orphans as the war booty. They to not respect the orders of the Exalted and they do not refrain from what he forbade: "And do not swallow up your property among yourselves by false means, neither seek to gain access thereby to the judges, so that you may swallow up a part of the property of men wrongfully while you know."¹⁴ They do not understand anything because of their negligence and ignorance. How can then the *raya* and the Muslim poor,

¹³ Qadis made their rulings based on the sheria law books and the state laws. Those were the codes of Islamic law adopted by one of the four sheria directions or codes of fetvas (decisions) based on the Islamic sources and adopted by the distinguished jurists. The state laws represented Ottoman State law positive regulations harmonized with the sheria law. It is obvious that Isević feels that it is wrong, and that was probably the regular practice, for someone to become qadi or *mufti*, and especially *mufti*, with no legal background to use sheria law books written in Arabic.

¹⁴ Surah II, chapter 188.

- who are under the authority of such qadis, with no way out and utterly helpless, not to flee their homes and leave for the enemy countries. Ever since Ibrahim-Pasha¹⁵ came, in less than a year and half more than 100,000 men, women, and the poor *raya* fled from Bosnia on the Serbian, infidel side and settled there. Therefore, it is known who are those who betray their faith and the state and who help the cursed enemy and strengthen them. Δ The religious *ulama* and true believers who ordered for good to be done and forbade for evil to be done are fools for the tyrants and they are those who instigate the disorder and mischief and inflict damage to the God's slaves. That is why they attack them and, contrary to what is ordered, punish them, by all means. The villains feel that it is great evil and a great sin to elucidate truths of Qur'an and *hadiths* and to elucidate orders contained within Qur'an. Even though there is nothing more sacred and esteemed than the Muhammad's *shari'a* and what is contained within it, in this period under our viziers there is nothing more less esteemed and despised. *Qadi's* books are written by Egyptian felases, Anatolian Turks, Albanian shepherds, Janjina Greeks, Bosnian religious converts, Rumelian *chataks* (highwaymen), escorts to the high officials and nobility, servants to pashas, flatterers from inns Δ and craftsmen from Istanbul. Only on Rumelian list there are more than 10,000 qadis. Similarly, on the Anatolian and Egyptian lists there is a myriad of them, thousands and thousands, thus on one *qadi* position there are several hundreds of *qadis* applying for the position. Isn't that a downfall of the world and aren't those the mischiefs of Adam's tribe. Allah's prophet said: "If a *ulama* is corrupt, the entire people shall be corrupt." He also said: "When two groups of my followers become corrupt, the entire people shall become corrupt, and those are the *ulama* and high ranking officials. If two groups of my followers are upright, the entire people shall be upright, and those are the *ulama* and high ranking officials." Δ

8-b

In the Qur'an it is said: "but what is the matter with these people that they do not make approach to understanding what is told (them)?"¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibrahim Hilmi-pasha, Bosnian prefect from 1809 to 1813. Previously served as the Great Vizier. He was not successful in Bosnia. He failed to establish rapport with the people. He also failed to confront the Serbian rebels because he was indolent and negligent. He was addicted gambler who most of his time socialized with the European consuls in Travnik. He was a typical representative of the Oriental indolence. Therefore, it is quite unusual that Andrić in his *The Travnik Chronicle* described him as a one of the positive figures amongst the Muslim population. Possibly the reason for that is the fact that he used all the means possible to discredit Bosnian Muslims. In the prevailing spiritual darkness in Bosnia his figure was to some extent distinctive. Obviously it was a distorted image of a prefect based on information provided by the consuls. If we add to his character what Isević says on his being a corruptive person who did not care for justice and his subjects, it would be fair to say that in the "Bosnian darkness" the most obscure force was the protagonist of the Andrić's *The Travnik Chronicle*.

¹⁶ Surah IV, chapter 78.

In brief, those who are the most responsible for the disorder are the corrupt *ulama*.

9-a There has been a quite some time now that the religious *ulama* and scholars have been defeated and subdued in all the countries under circumstances only God could arrange, they are ill treated and abused. Traitors who deviated from the *shari'a* law, present-day eminent intellectuals amongst *ulama* and officials in Sarajevo bribed their way up to the positions they hold. Hajrić Mehmed Seid efendi, who is in my country Bosnia known as a man most complained of and the greediest of all, a man who deviated from the righteous path and who entices others to do so, for forty years now has been in the business of selling *qadi* certificates in Bosnia. He brings the *niabets* from Istanbul and sells them illegally for the amount manifold higher. Robbing in that way, he gained enormous fortune. His annual income is 15,000 *grosch* and he is also a proprietor of several real estates and lots. Δ For his sons who are ten-fifteen year olds and are children and still learning how to read, he furnished ten-fifteen different offices although none of them have gone to Istanbul. Similarly, he furnished the young Albanians serving in his escort with high positions so they are making a great fortune. The actual emissary to Istanbul, earlier mentioned Džabic Ali efendi sends and sells to him every *naib* position certificate he gets hold of and then Mehmed Seid efendi sells it to one whoever pays more. Because of that the Bosnian counties are falling in to pieces and are in the state of disorder. They are completely responsible for such condition. God willing, I will mention few other names. The said Hajrić was sentenced to exile because of his wrongdoing, once during the late Selim-pasha's reign and once during the Vanli Mehmed-pasha's reign Δ but he never compiled. He was either hiding from authorities or he paid not to be punished himself. Four or five times he paid more than 40,000 *grosch* for his freedom. Since he could not go to public places, he would gang up with villains that he is and they would drink all night long and do other forbidden things, whereas they completely neglected what must be done and what God ordered to be done. Since the rumors about him started to circulate he joined the *janissary* order, he become close to them and as such he gained three *ulama* positions and eventually became the Bosnian governor. He was the first amongst the high-nobility to use his stamp. How can they expected to be victors and helped by God since they acted in that way and how could

9-b the say and write what was true. Δ From the generosity *vali* bestowed upon him

10-a the income he received was more than 3,000 *grosch* and in order to be on good terms with them, they were his support. He warned all of us to make sure that we do not write grievances like those before us and that we do not complain on the tyranny he imposes on us, as well as not to request his removal from the office. For the five years in the Bosnian counties, under the excuse that it was for the campaign against the Serbian rebels, together they assessed contributions as high as 19,000 loads of wheat, oat and meat and collected special taxes for the army (*saliyans*) and everything without the high czar's order. Every load weighed 100 okes and in almost every *kaza*

10-b they converted okes into the money, each oke being 12 paras. For every tax collection assessed in that way they collected 1,140 moneybags. There are five years since the problem with the Serbs emerged Δ and since then the tax was collected six times but the army was allocated only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the money. The soldiers waging war are forced to provide for themselves. Once every forty days they would be issued a ration. The *valis*, together with other traitors, counterfeited the records and by that they would devastated the people, ruin and scatter the poor while on the contrary Allah said: "Nay, the unjust do not hold out promises one to another but only to deceive."¹⁷

11-a Besides that, during the authority of the previous *valis* several thousands *grosch* was assessed and collected, ostensibly for the needs of 8,000 police officers, cannon towing and other expenses. The actual exchequer, the Bosnian villain, Imšir-Bey by name¹⁸, the traitor of his faith and his country, exploiter of the poor and *raya*, coupled with Bosnian high-nobility Δ to steal from the poor and do other sorts of mischief. Their accessory is the current Travnik Mufti, Čohadžić Muhamed Džudi,¹⁹ as well as one of the pashas, Suleiman-pahsa.²⁰ The traitors of our country are earlier mentioned Hajrić, Ćurčić Ešref Mehmed efendi, Šerifović Mustafa Nuri efendi, Deputy *nekib* and *muderris* of Edirne, Sejjid Šakir efendi, Sarajevo *mufti*, Hadžimuratović Abdi-aga the first aga of *serdengenhdies*, *turnaji* Zildžić Hadži Salih-aga, haseki Hadžibektašević Abdullah-aga, and Šehović Mehmed Seid efendi, a former Bosnian *mullah* who was before that a Belgrade bully.²¹

11-b Every kind of violence, Δ disorder, insurrection, tax assessment and special levy, impoverishment and other damages and all sorts of different tributes

¹⁷ Surah XXXV, chapter 40.

¹⁸ He has been mentioned quite frequently as the Bosnian exchequer.

¹⁹ Muhamed Džudi efendi was qadi and *mufti* in Sarajevo where he was born as well. Later he was transferred to Travnik and served as *mufti*. As a member of divan, he was very influential figure in Travnik. He also tried to be a writer but without bigger success.

²⁰ Founder of the Sulejmanpašić family from Skopje, Macedonia. Many eminent figures descended from this family. Suleiman-Pasha himself became vezir and as such he served as perfect in Belgrade and in Bosnia. During the Hilmi-Pasha's period he was the prefect of Bosnia and head commander of the Bosnian army in Serbia. However, neither him nor his master Hilmi-Pasha were successful on the position they performed. Additionally, Suleiman-Pasha was accused of the separatist ideas and actions in Bosnia in early 19th century but he managed to refute the accusations. He was the proprietor of the large estate in Zvornik sanchak and several real properties in Travnik sanjak.

²¹ Persons listed above were the elite amongst Sarajevo *ulama* and janissaries and Isević believed they were the biggest traitors and culprits for the difficult conditions in Bosnia. Isević may have exaggerated with some of them, for instance with Muidović, in terms of education they acquired. However, being their contemporary it is difficult for us not to regard his claim as credible. At any rate, they were in collusion with other authority structures and perform illegal actions and wrongdoing in Bosnia.

imposed on the poor is put in to effect based on their opinion. Every one of them is highly regarded by the prefect, he dresses them in sable and marten fur, as token of his generosity, he exempts their estates from the *saliyana* (special tax for the army), he grants them what ever they want and he gives them special attention, gives them promises of positions in their area of expertise, and he completely condoles that they can perform their duties as they want, and even if they turn the whole world upside down and chase all the people out no one would dare to complain. All of them are helpers of the tyrants and they are persecuting those who follow the truth." The scholars are obliged to order for good to be done and forbade for evil to be done in order to deserve God's observance, Δ and that of angels and *jinn*s and all the people," so said the God's prophet.

One Qur'an chapter says: "Surely those who conceal the clear proofs and the guidance that We revealed after We made it clear in the Book for men, these it is whom Allah shall curse, and those who curse shall curse them (too)."²² Ebu Hureyre²³ once said: "Even if God's Book had not one chapter to explain you something, this chapter would suffice." They have, God help us, reached the point in which they deny that. To illustrate this, I will mention a very important thing. For the repair of the Sarajevo fortress, as approved by the czar's order, the enormous amount of taxation money was assessed four times in the *eyalet* regions, but since the tax was collected by above mentioned exchequer Ibrišim-Bey, he have consumed it greedily and the fortress still has not been repaired and now it is ruin on which no one works.

The other important thing is: Δ when indigent Bosnian soldiers heard rumors about the rations and when they started to ask" What ever happened with those more than 140,000 loads collected so far as the war contribution? What happened with 40,000 kilos of oat and wheat our esteemed state committed to us? Why did Ibrahim-pasha and the exchequer sell that to our enemies?" Then the above-mentioned traitors and the *vali* started to panic. In order to soothe the soldiers, using different deceptions and tricks, they took out *peksimets* (toast) supplies warehoused in the fortresses in Zvornik, Gornja and Donja Tuzla, Jajce, Jezero and Sarajevo. They spent that and depleted the supplies instead of what was collected as regular taxation Δ and in that way they left the barracks empty, with out any food. God forbids, if the enemy arrives and attacks, there is not enough food in barracks to withstand attack not even for one day. Due to such wrongdoing of the above-mentioned group, in our in our neighborhood, in the area of the Belgrade Administration, the enemy vanquished 32 towns and four fortified cities, including Belgrade, Smederavo, Šabac, and Užice. Two years ago, the traitors I mentioned did not allow for the help to Užice to be sent. They hid in blood written petitions

²² Surah II, chapter 159.

²³ Ebu Hureyre was one of the closest and most loved associates and companions of Muhammad. His citations as to the Islamic tradition are quite significant and often regarded as reliable.

- of the people requesting help and they prevented the large-scale mobilization of the army. In the Užice fortress more than a thousand Muslims, men and women, starved to death. Δ They relinquished the fortress along with their estates to the enemy and accepted to surrender. How truthful is the Qur'an chapter that says: "And thus do We make some of the iniquitous to befriend others on account of what they earned."²⁴ Few months ago the areas within Bosnia itself were devastated and the entire districts were displaced, and those are: Novi Pazar, Sjenica, Nova Varoš, Prijepolje, Srebrenica, Bijeljina, Birče, Bijelo Polje and the *raya* were forced to save their lives and run away on the enemy territory. *Raya* who stayed in Bosnia will not be able to pay neither extremely high required tributes to the above-mentioned tyrants nor the state taxation. If that continues to be the case, they will also run away and that is obvious and clear. When the taxation from the *raya* who stayed Δ was collected for the *naibs*' monthly salaries, Muslim peasants left their villages and run away to the towns. Similarly, the Christian peasants (*raya*) have left their estates and fled from the wrongdoing came to the towns. Some have joined the carpenter's guild, some the fur-makers guild, and some have joined various other guilds. Their lands are now unattended and uncultivated. How will they pay their taxation? Some *raya* fled wherever they could, to Montenegro, Venice, Austria, France, and Serbia leaving their homeland behind. The mentioned high nobility did not like poor Muslim young men in the towns as well and because of that they would revoke their *janissary* salaries. Being without support and any income, they dispersed all over the world. Additionally, they prevented the tradesmen and craftsmen to open their shops and workshops because of the war Δ and, as God ordered for that to happen, seven years after that as a result of the wrongdoing Bosnia faces famine and privation. Because of that the majority of strong young men, capable of serving the army, decided to leave the country and scattered all over Rumelia, Anatolia and Egypt. It is obvious that this will result in the lack of the army personnel in Bosnia. God help us if the solution to this problem is not found and if even those who stayed leave, there will be no one to neither pay taxation nor no one who you could ask to pay taxation. They are all infatuated by the negligence and they do not understand. They gave loose rein to luxury, swaggering, passion, they are enjoying themselves and they are playing, they are possessed by the mischief of bribe. Allah says: "*Surely Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition.*"²⁵

What should Czar Mahmud do,
 A master of the seven regions
 His subjects are mostly the traitors
 To tell the truth no one could.

²⁴ Surah VI, chapter 129.

²⁵ Surah XIII, chapter 11.

Seeking for a masterly doctor He is
To render a remedy by his sagacity
For all the *raya* shall leave
No one would stay taxes to pay.²⁶

“...and know that Allah is with those who fear Allah and guard themselves (against evil).”²⁷

CHAPTER II

ON MUFTIS

15-b In most of the countries, particularly nowadays in Bosnia, *muftis* are ignorant and incapable. Of the fourteen *muftis* in the Bosnian Eyalet none became *mufti* after they passed the bar exam or after they deserved the position. They are all overqualified *qadis*. However, when two individuals graduate from madrasah and they prove that they are capable and that they, based according to the requirements of the period, deserve to have an office, they are destroyed and subdued, and, contrary to the law, those who collaborate with the tyrants become *muftis* based on *qadi's* proposal. Particularly in Sarajevo, which is the *mullah* seat and the capitol of the province and a big city with many *mi-hrabs*, mosques and *masjids*, now in it resides a *mufti* who is an ignorant, re-qualified *qadi* who never took the exam, who is a bully and a villain, greedy and corrupt man with no mercy and sense of justice, the one who first was a court recorder, who is a helper of the villains, the enemy of *ulama* and the clear faith, Sejjid Šakir efendi.²⁸ Ever since, relying on his father-in-law who is the *muderris* of Edirne, deputy *nekib* of Sarajevo and the former *vali* of the province, Šerifović Mustafa Nuri efendi became the *mufti*, on his father-in-law's

²⁶ All the chapters in the tractate Isević concluded with verses which obviously were his. As much as these verses and some other contained in different manuscripts prove that Isević had poetic talent, the conclusion is that he was not a born poet. We are inclined to believe that this was widely accepted convention in which author concluded their thoughts or chapters with verses. Above verses can not be greatly appreciated artistically but they sufficiently indicate one of the causes for the difficult conditions in the country, namely, that the clique around sultan's was unscrupulous and that there was no one in the country to tell the truth.

²⁷ Surah IX, chapter 36.

²⁸ Šakir efendi Muidović served in Sarajevo as *qadi* and *mufti* for many years. He lived longer than Isević for many years but he Isević's records indicate that he used bribe at the beginning of his career to achieve his goals. As far as his education is concerned, it seems that Isević exaggerated because it is known that Muidović tried his skills as a writer. It is unknown whether Muidović knew Arabic language and to what extent, but at the same time it is difficult to disregard Isević's allegation that he did not have higher education because they were contemporaries.

- 16-a intervention and request and by bribe and the *qadi's* recommendation, he has been issuing *fatwas* from the books written in Turkish, Δ since he does not speak any Arabic. It is one gold piece per *fatwa* and sometimes even from three to five gold pieces. Even if the matter in question is insignificant he charges hundred paras. He never charges *fatwas* less than two *grosch*. He bargains and trades as if he was a horse merchant. He does mischief and injustice to the God's slaves and inflicts all sorts of damage on them so that it is impossible for the poor to get a *fatwa* from him. Many are deprived of their rights because of that and they finally renounce them. He never issues *fatwas* against those who support him. He conceals what is written in the books and what is obvious, saying: "It is written somewhere else, take it." However, the towns have only but one *mufti* so *fatwas* are issued by those who constantly do mischief and injustice Δ or issue *fatwas* concealing the real truth to those who support them based only on an unreliable source. However, Allah said: "*They have taken a small price for the communications of Allah, so they turn away from His way; surely evil is it that they do.*"²⁹ The said *mufti* takes advantage of his position and earns the fortune and, besides that, he squanders the funds committed to *ulama* teacher service at the Czar's Mosque, while he completely neglected that occupation. The teachers and scholars who spent long time teaching in this city are so underpaid that they can barely make a living. No doubt, that entered doubts into the hearts of those who deserve to perform that duty. How can it be possible that they sincerely prey to God for the Czar's
- 16-b health? The type of the *muftis* Δ described here obviously belongs to the group of those who order for the evil to be done and forbade the good to be done. They are never content with the order and the law on Earth. And he aware of the fact that if a just vizier, who desires to act in accordance to law and order in the Earth, came to power, the *mufti* office would be conferred to a capable person. That is the reason why he appreciates and seeks for disorder and those who are ignorant. A person with the same moral features, the biggest and the most skillful mischief-maker and deceiver from the order of *qadis*, is aforementioned Travnik *mufti*, Čohadžić Muhamed Džudi Efendi, notorious by his wrongdoing and intriguing, a tyrant and a greedy person, one of those who provide support for mentioned traitors. He was the role model for the prefects in how to become tyrants and create disorder on the Earth. By their solicitation and letters they wrote he became like a highwayman robbing all over the counties and he earned enormous fortune. Additionally, he has appropriated large amount of public revenue funds. Δ Even though he benefited greatly from the prefect's generosity for he did not reveal the real truth, he was not content. He set a goal to achieve: "I want to become administrator the province" and so he moved to Travnik, the seat of the province. Based on the prefect Ibrahim-pasha order's, an educated, hardworking and virtuous *mufti* from this town was, without any reason and because of his devotion to the faith, removed from office and replaced by Čohadžić Muhamed Džudi
- 17-a
- 17-b

²⁹ Surah IX, chapter 9.

- 18-a efendi. That is how the wretched El-Hajji efendi was exiled, a person who free of charge for forty years perform *mufti* service for 40 counties. He was banished to Skopje and he is now in exile. Also Čohadžić Muhamed Džudi Efendi managed to procure Bursa Madrasah diplomas for his sons and relatives who are both ignorant and uneducated. In order to introduce them to the distinguished qadis and lecturers, Δ he even managed by begging to secure an exalted *firman*. By such conduct he created disorder in the country. In Sarajevo he established janissary units and multiplied them under the parole: "the more of my adherents, the better for me" and he used that to gain support from the high-ranking officers of the *janissary* command. As the result of that, many poor people and those who cannot provide for themselves were left out of salaries, which were paid off to those above-mentioned, saying that they were already released. That is the reason why he was twice sentenced to exile during the Vanli Mehmed-Pasha's time. Even though soldiers arrived to apprehend him, he did go the exile destination. After he harbored at Gurdžu Osman-pashas', he came back and was freed. After that, he started to indulge his corrupted nature again. He neglected God's ordered and he tyrannized
- 18-b people more than ever. Δ Allah said: "*And do not incline to those who are unjust, lest the fire touch you, and you have no guardians besides Allah, then you shall not be helped.*"³⁰ As this chapter says, it is clear that this type of people shall not be helped (they shall have no victory). Also" ...and every insolent opposer was disgraced."³¹ Therefore, it is true that those who do evil deeds will be stricken by evil. Allah said: "*Therefore do not think Allah (to be one) failing in His promise to His apostles; surely Allah is Mighty, the Lord of Retribution.*"³² Our Lord, hear our prayer and do not destroy us because of what villains amongst us have done.

CHAPTER III

ON MUDERISES OF EDIRNE AND BURSA MADRASAHS

- 19-a Sarajevo has had no *muderris* who graduated from both Edirne and Bursa *madrasahs*. However, for quite some time now, above-mentioned Čohadžić has traded with such positions, despite high-ranking and distinguished *qadis* and from mere envy, with only one goal and one thing on his mind and that is to become the highest-ranking and to put on the honorable attire Δ and to become support for all of those who are corrupted. By the false pretense, bribe and saying: "*They deserve it, they are learned and accomplished*", he secured diploma from Bursa for his bribable sons, Mustafa and Ahmed, who were

³⁰ Surah XI, chapter 113.

³¹ Surah XIV, chapter 15.

³² Surah XIV, chapter 47.

- ignorant and incapable, and for his adherent as well. He called his sons, whose fathers were peasants (laborer), out of mere vanity, as Bey-efendi and that is how they became distinguished and influential men in such a big city. By a *firman* he secured for them to be highest-ranking and beyond all others and in that way he opened doors of corruption in Bosnia. They spend nights and days in offices of *qadis* and officers. They are those who have the final word and that is the reason why *raya* flees from Bosnia to the enemy countries, while czar's lands are left without any population. The enemy captured many Muslim men and women and, God help us, our tormented country is overcome by fear Δ because of such illegal deeds. Similarly to these individuals, imam and *hatib* of Czar's Mosque who does not perform his duty, Šerifović Nuri efendi, also Hajji Mehmed efendi who neglected his duty at Husref-Bey mosque, and Ahmed Rešid efendi in Travnik, adulterated and re-qualified *qadi*, have obtained diplomas from Bursa *madrasah* giving bribe for five-ten years now, and in that way jointly proliferate this sort of false title in which they support one another. They express hatred, hostility and disdain towards learned and capable *ulama*. Since they gained supremacy by their ignorance,
- 19-b they appropriate vacant positions of *ulama* whenever Δ they have opportunity for that. Learned and educated people are left without the salaries and they are desperate condition. Humiliated and incapable *qadis* who collaborated with these people were even worst. It is impossible for those who are capable to testify truthfully because they would instantly forge the testimonies to suite them best. How can then someone speak out and tell the truth when they presented lies as truth and truth as lies and they constantly represent those who are traitors of their faith and country. With no reason at they have punished and banished all the *ulama* who ordered for the good to be done and forbade the evil to be done and in that way the canceled their preachments and lectures in the mosques. Once those positions are vacant the hands of incompetent would seize them. They are negligent in their offices and they have impoverished *waqf*. None of them come to group prayers in the mosques, which also indicates that they neglect religious duties as well.
- 20-a
- 20-b all of them are in possession of many Δ , at least five, seven, or even ten *janissary* salaries and the remuneration would be delivered to them personally. However, when the time for them to go to war comes, they say: "*Ulama* does not go to war." Thus none of them goes to war. The rest of the poor *ulama* are in the army. Additionally, they have gotten a hold of five *madrasahs* in Sarajevo and conferred the principal's positions to incapable individuals who have not paid any attention to the fact that they are paid to teach the students. They rent their quarters to the students for 2 gold pieces per year. Some well-to-do students pay even three or even five gold pieces, otherwise these would not give them a room. That is the way in which they abuse the rooms of the God's endowment as if it was an inn, or even worse than that, because they request the money to be paid in advance. They all emulate one another in such vanity, luxury, swaggering, and smoking so they have not had time for the daily prayers. The quarters in which they live are worse than

- 21-a any inn. Δ Former Sarajevo *mullah qadi*, one of the remaining Belgrade villains, Šehović Mehmed Seid efendi, a tyrant, rascal, greedy and corrupted person, was the Bosnian *mullah* three times in 15 years. He knew everything and was well informed, but because he was thousand-time greedier and bigger villain than the rest of them, he did serve neither his faith nor his state. He utterly destroyed any benevolence and justness. He would say: “*I do not care even if the entire world burns down as long as I have enormous fortune,*” and that is why he would not work. He opened the door of bribe so whoever offered more, he would rule in his favor, while he would conceive the truth. God’s Prophet once said: “He who conceives the truth is worst than the devil” (*hadith*). During his service in the three different periods, he earned more
- 21-b than 500 moneybags. Under him thousands of peasants Δ were deprived of their rights. He sold his certificates to work as *qadi* in four different counties to, whose cost less than fifty *grosch*, as *niabets* for 500 and even 1,000 *grosch*. No doubt, they stole from and destroyed the poor as if they had been highwaymen. His comment to such situation was: “I was in Istanbul previously charged 4,000 *grosch* for the extension of my service.” In fact, the above-mentioned was one of the Belgrade *dahis* and since he and his companions caused great deal of disorder, he was exiled here. During the Pekmedži-pasha’s³³ time he was twice banished to Bursa. Šinekči El-Hajji Mustafa-pahsa³⁴ also banished him from Belgrade. Since he, seemingly, possessed diploma of Bursa *muderris*, now he is the holder of the Bosnian *mullah* rank as well. Currently he is, after he was removed from the office, in Sarajevo and says:
- 22-a “*My money will help me re-gain the position of Bosnian Mullah*”. Δ Since he co-operates well and is on good terms with other villains, he instructs them on how to deceive and how to perform even worse wrongdoing. He is the cause of disorder in Bosnian eyalet and he must be punished. Since Ibrahim-pasha, two times he assessed and collected special taxation for the poor to pay for the military contributions which was more than 2,500 bags of oat, wheat, meat and most of that he collected in cash.³⁵ The above-mentioned *mullah* wrote the circular letters and inventories. When they were produced to the *vali*, he signed the decree by which he extended his mandate for another four months and ordered that it should be taken to the *mullah* personally. There are many of those who follow him in his wrongdoing and surely they are all helpers to one another. Only Allah knows the condition in which the poor are. The aforementioned Mullah’s son Rašid adheres to him, and he is
- 22-b an ignorant person and adulterer Δ who became Muderiss of Istanbul, probably by means of bribe and interceding. However, the truth is that he cannot adequately read not even Qur’an and yet Allah said: “*And when it is said to*

³³ Prefect in Belgrade in late 18th century.

³⁴ Prefect in Belgrade during the period of *dahis*. The *dahis* murdered him and for that they were mercilessly punished.

³⁵ This indicates that Isević personally witnessed his year-and-a-half rule during which the special taxation for the Army was collected twice.

them, Come to what Allah has revealed and to the Apostle, they say: That on which we found our fathers is sufficient for us. What! Even though their fathers knew nothing and did not follow the right way.”³⁶

Should they ask a Sufi, he would say let God ease this problem
 Should they ask an ascetic, he would say this is unbearable
 What should Czar Mahmud do,
 A master of the seven regions
 His subjects are mostly the traitors
 To tell the truth no one could.

CHAPTER IV

ON PASHAS

- 23-a Currently in the Bosnian eyalet there are nine pashas with two *tugas* and two seats of *sanjak* towns. In Bosnia only, Δ there are five persons pretending on every position. Therefore, between them there must be envy, intolerance, contentions, and hostility. Majority is incapable and feeble persons. They are debtors, greedy, prone to luxury and swaggering, they prefer to emulate prefects and they yearn to assume offices. They wish no well to one another. Most of them managed to obtain *mirmirranluk* (pasha's rank) by bribing viziers. Every single one wishes: "*If I could only become highly esteemed with valis and caught their attention,*" and in order to become wealthy and powerful, they tyrannize *raya* and the poor. Hoping to acquire a position, without any reservation they subdue themselves to exercising the injustice. Even if the entire world collapsed, they would never say a word of praise for their country. Their multitude represents a great benefit to the viziers. Their rascals stand in every corner. Δ How can such a group of pashas do to win the war and help to preserve the order? In this time of Serbian infidels' attacks, one of the Bosnian pashas and one of the best know villains, Suleiman-pahsa by name, who was in the rank of *beglerbey* of Rumelia, went out with 30,000 soldiers and established military camp four hours from the infidels. As the Bosnian *vali* ordered to him, he was highly negligent and he procrastinated the overall preparation by camping there for three whole months without any reason so the soldiers were completely demoralized and started to dissipate at the end." *Yet the unjust shall have no helpers.*"³⁷ When this secret wisdom of Qur'an became more and more obvious, the infidels said: "Now it is the chance for us." Then they desolated and battered Nova Varoš, Novi Pazar, Prijepolje, Sokol, Bijeljina, Srebrenica, Bijelo Polje, and nine other *kazas* Δ , and they took thousands of live stock, all sorts of different food, and they
- 23-b
- 24-a

³⁶ Surah V, chapter 104.

³⁷ Surah II, chapter 270.

taken with them more than a hounded *raya*. When the infidels sieged Sjenica, no one went to help them and they surrendered, on mercy of infidels. The enemy seized cannons and other military equipment. They took 50 loads of black gunpowder and thousand bags of different personal effects alone. They violated and enslaved every girl and maiden they fancied and went back to their country. Similarly, when they besieged the Novi Pazar fortress and the roar of cannons and guns could be heard, the powerless Muslims requested help but Bosnian *vali* did not fulfil his obligation. He was playing the checker and enjoying himself and he cautioned Suleiman-pasha not to rush to help them. The mentioned town Δ was burned down utterly, it was demolished and devastated, mosques and *masjids* were leveled. Several thousands of people were murdered. Finally, Allah sent his unseeable help. The moment the enemy realized in what sort of condition they were, the animal fear consumed them so they left the fortress and went back. Similarly, none of the Albanian pashas, who were in the proximity, did not try to help. The remainder of the poor, after they saved their lives, compiled a grievance to the Emperor on what really happened. Those who were to hand over the grievance were somewhere along the road intimidated and forced to return home, telling them that it was useless to do that and than they took the grievance and modified it to suite their personal integrity and desire. At the time, from vizier and councilors it was not possible to find out the details on what was really happening in the country because they were the generators of the most of the disorder and sins. Δ Previously it was also heard and truthfully conveyed that when the enemy sieged the Ozi fortress, Sultan was not informed about it. When he finally heard it from others, the traitors denied it again and yet, willingly or unwillingly, they said: "*Little Oziya is in the hands of our enemies, but we control Big Oziya.*" That is how they informed wrongfully. Now it is a thousand times worst. This time the Serbs have destroyed, burned down, dishonored and devastated eight or nine *kazas* and Bosnian eyalet *nahiyas*, which were highly prosperous and respected, in which many *raya* lived and in which there was plenty of food, and they also lure all the *raya* to withdraw with them. In the Bosnian territory there is not even one place in 60-70 hours of walking distance that has not been affected one way or the other. Together with the aforementioned high-nobility, the *vali* once again informs about Bosnia in the way that suits them best, as if they, ostensibly, had done the right things and that every traitor had deserved generosity and commendation and they also say: "We have seized so and so number of facilities and military camps in the region," whereas the Serbs Δ withdraw from there without struggle, after they destroyed and devastated them. In fact, out of 40 military camps, they seized only one by combat and it was the one that the enemy did not need because they already decided to withdraw towards Nis. The heads and ears they brought were of Bosnian poor and *raya* and only one in hundred belonged to a Serb. Belgrade, Smederovo, Užice, Šabac are the fortress which are still in the hands of the enemy and no one is planing to regain them. If the attack from the Rumelian side is not

organized, the Bosnian I, taking into account what kind of persons he and his dignitaries are, is capable to seize not even a village. They say: "*We have no food,*" or they would say: "*It has been so and so time since our soldiers have not eaten.*" Also when Austria attacked, Hekimoğlu Ali-Pasha³⁸, may he dwell in Eden, was complete run out of food. All of his soldiers Δ took as much as could fit into their bags and succeeded to reach there on time, even though the weather was unbearably hot. They were not stationed on one location for three months but they, whit their dusty feet, relaying on Aillah who only could help, destroyed 50,000 infidel enemies in the attack and that will be in the history books until the Judgment Day comes. He resolved the situation in fifteen days and seized unutterably large territory. And now four or five years after that the contributions for the army and other type of taxes have gone up and reached several hundred thousands moneybags. All that money has been wasted. Several thousands merchants who possessed capital have bankrupted. Because of the enormously high taxation, *raya* have fled over to the enemy side so the lands left uncultivated. The enemy is growing stronger by day, while Islamic countries are becoming weaker and they demise. Doing wrong-doing cannot secure a victory. The *Raya*, who wishes harm to no one yet no one pays any attention on them, Δ must be protected by His Royal Highness the Czar. Otherwise, if they are to rely on those who run this country, they will be in a very difficult position. They are having a hard time suppressing a group of Serbian serf. However, for some years now, the French infidels has been building fortifications out of the evil intentions, around us and in our neighborhood and they constructed several roads around Bosnia. They are preparing day-and-night and the seaboard is packed with the war equipment. God help us, if they break the treaty who knows what would that bring to Bosnia as it is right now. Yet Allah said: "*But how will it be when misfortune befalls them on account of what their hands have sent before? Then they will come to you swearing by Allah: We did not desire (anything) but good and concord.*"³⁹ The population of aforementioned devastated *kazas* Δ found out about the Serb's evil intentions and their movements six months ago so they several times sent the grievances to Ibrahim-Pasha and they published several *ilams* as well, they sent off thousands of requests for the military units to be sent to protects those areas but no one cared at all. Even with 80,000 demobilized soldiers in Bosnia who could protects the border, he designated

³⁸ Hekimoğlu Ali-Pasha was conferred with two Bosnian Prefect mandates. He particularly became celebrated after he and Bosnians defended successfully Banja Luka in 1737. That was one of the most glorious Bosnian battle victories. That victory had a major impact on the literature at the time for many writers took the victory as motive of their works. That also significantly reflected on the social and political development of Bosnia from that point to the end of the Ottoman Empire. Seemingly, this victory and further clashes with Austria definitely shaped the Bosnians awareness on their singularity and since then their autonomy aspirations became more and more articulated.

³⁹ Surah IV, chapter 62.

27-b none. The enemy came, did not encounter any resistance, took what they wanted to take and left behind the wasted land. He himself plays checker all the time. In the past two years he only went twice to mosque to offer *jumma* prayer, that is how good a vizier he is. Allah's Prophet once said: "*Warn adulterer about his wrongdoing so that he stays away from them.*" And when it is said to him, guard against (the punishment of) Allah; pride carries him off to sin, therefore hell is sufficient for him; and certainly it is an evil resting place."⁴⁰ Δ The ammunition, black gunpowder, and powder charged and other equipment sent to Bosnia last year by the Sultan, everything was correctly sent via Rumelia but when it arrived at the Bosnian border and was sent towards inland, because of the fact that the Eyalet in state of disorder and run by an incapable and negligent *vali*, a lot of the equipment was missing or was completely destroyed. The gunpowder was stolen from many bags and instead of it in some bags the straw was and others the rocks and dirt. Many loads would be scattered around and than the gunpowder would be dispersed with empty bags whirling around. What happened was that the gunsmith would relinquished the weapon in to the hands of Christians and ammunition and the biggest portion of the equipment never arrived to its destination. During their trips they would leave ammunition in the unattended mosques and then the outlaws and highwaymen would break the windows

28-a over night Δ and steal the gunpowder. Since the 50 loads of the gunpowder were left in earlier mentioned town of Sjenica, Serbs confiscated the entire equipment. The ammunition sent to the Bosnian Army was easily captured by the Serbs solely due of the *vali*'s negligence, procrastination and carelessness. How can a *vali*, who in six months was not capable to ship in few hundreds loads of gunpowder and store them in the fortresses, defend Islamic provinces? Similarly, when he was coming back from the Bosnian border to his seat, the people from the places in the vicinity submitted to him thousands of grievances none of which he neither resolved nor even bothered to listen about them. He did not entertain many accusation in cases involving murder,

28-b dishonoring, private lawsuits, etc. All the poor are grieved because of him. Δ He only pays attention to aforementioned traitors. The are very much contended with him because, as they believe, for God's sake, a vizier who is honest, courageous and a vizier who virtuously performs his religious and stately duties and who enforce the order, cannot be a good vizier. Yet he is know as a person who loves to be excessively rich.

"...Allah is sufficient for us and most excellent is the Protector."⁴¹

What should Mahmud-Han do, a master of the seven regions
His subjects are mostly traitors
To tell the truth no one could.

⁴⁰ Surah II, chapter 206.

⁴¹ Surah III, chapter 173.

CHAPTER V

ON LIVA ALAYBEYS

- In the Bosnian Eyalet there are four *sanjak* towns and there are twenty-four *alaybeys* removed from their office. Six persons are applying to every single one of these positions. In fact, under the old law, only the most distinguished persons were appointed to this position, those who were skillful warriors, well acquainted to the wars, battles and combat, bright, courageous, goodly and capable of advisory service and they were appointed free of charge. There has been some time now that the prefects would not be looking for the capable persons but they would assign the position of *alaybey* to any fool who pay more money. There are many of those who assigned those positions to immature, 15-16 years-old adolescents. From all of them they would accept several thousands *grosch* of bribe. The money they paid to pashas they instantly divide on *spahis* and *zaims* as the taxation assessment and then collect it as the annual taxation, only they collect two times more than they paid. At the time, the *spahis* also were not satisfied with their one-tenth and other taxation imposed on *raya* and *beraya* so they went ahead and collected a so called *indadi seferiye* (special type of taxation for the army) and in that way they exploited the poor. So there is no one who has merci. When war breaks out they collect the property of well-to-do people also. They excuse from the army contribution those who are required to pay amount of 5,000 and 10,000 *grosch*, whereas they take money from them. When they exert pressure on less important *spahis* with lower amounts to pay, than these say: "Why so and so does not want to go (to war)? We all need to go." That is how the names of those individuals get in the punishment books. In that way they create disorder in the Army and impact the disobedience of the soldiers. Even though the old financial records indicate more than 3,000 estates and their owners and five to six thousands of those who are, together with them, beneficiaries of that mutual property, it has been twenty years now that not even 50 soldiers cannot be grouped into one squad to fight the enemy. This time when the Serbs showed up, less than seven *spahis* came to join one squad.
- 29-a
- 29-b
- 30-a
- Even though the Bosnian *vali* knows that, he is silent because he himself is most incompetent. Should have not he collected the money from the *alaybeys* in advance and then to give it to those who deserve it and who are capable, and should not have he feared Allah? The Prophet once said: "For the one who fears Allah, Allah will render that everything fears him, and for the one who fears not Allah, Allah will render that he fears everything." (*hadith*) The old regulation is as follows: As long as the treason is not established, the *alaybeys* shall not be removed from office without a reason. Yet now every *vali* in power removes either two or three of them and appoints another from who he accepted bribe and in that way he trades with the positions. That is the reason why most of the impoverished *dahis*, willingly or unwillingly, either sell or renounce their property because of their weakness. They buy the rest of the

- 30-b cultivated property from *spahis* and *zaims*, then combining 5-10 estates make one and then bribing and exceeding the set quota,⁴² they have it registered in their name. Even though it is against the law Δ that a man should have two salaries, today there are even twelve salaries per one man. When last year the state inspector came, as ordered by the Czar's decree, to inspect the *berats*, he summoned the Bosnian *vali*, Ibrahim-Pasha, the exchequer, the city officials, and other corrupted *spahis* and *zaims*, and in order to remove any suspicion and to leave the condition as it was, he receive several moneybags from them to be silent about the truth. The result of his inspection was such that the conditions became even worst than before. Their war flags came down to seven soldiers per flag. Some of the *spahis* and *zaims* had connections with the Bosnian high-ranking officials and in big cities so they were pardoned form military service and some of them obtained the permit to go to their estates in other areas based on pashas orders. Who read the provisions about the army service stipulated in the Czar's *berat*, who listened to them?
- 31-a Bosnian *vali* did not care what people did. Δ Imam Shafi said one: "Two things in Islam are abominable: bribe and influencing the court rulings."

What should Mahmud-Han do,
A master of the seven regions
His subjects are mostly the traitors
To tell the truth no one could.

CHAPTER VI

ON CIZYEDARS

- 31-b In the Bosnian Eyalet, *cizyedars* lease all the *kazas* from the *Vali*. He sends different *cizyedars* to every *kaza*. They are merciless and unjust. In the houses where they dwell they all do all kinds of wrongdoing, offences and humiliations. The food and drinks sufficient for them are not enough for them but they exaggerate in everything else. They slaughter the livestock and take different things. They seek for the food that is not there and the food forbidden to Muslims. They beat, coerce and imprison people. Beside the tortures of even one-year-old babes, Δ and the nurslings who still cannot walk, and contrary to the *shari'a* and the law they collect *cizye* and in that way the do an enormous injustice. They openly do extreme injustice, while the wretched *raya* have no one from whom to request help when on the Earth there aren't any viziers who trz to enforce the *shari'a* and the law. If someone says something, they say that they gave money for that, that it belongs to the state, that they cannot collect less than that and that they will continue to collect. They

⁴² The kilich property is a feudal levy conditioned by the participation in the military campaign.

- are supported by those who granted them the lease. Because of this poor *raya* are slaves and sufferers in their hands. Some Christians have many children and they do not have money because they are poor. In order not to pay poll tax on their children, they flee over night on the enemy side because they have no other solution. When their lands are deserted, who will pay their taxation? Those who request the *cizye* from the children are not able to take it from their fathers. Δ Therefore, it is know who debase the state-own property. When *cizyedars* are told: "Currently, there are fifty thousands infidels in the Serb camps, they have not paid *cizye* for four-five years. Why don't you collected it?" They understand and know that the prosperity of the Islamic countries relies on *raya*. Many thousands years ago it was said: "*Authorities (a state) cannot exist without people, people cannot exist without property, property cannot exist without cultivation of land, cultivation of land cannot exist without raya, cultivation of land cannot exist without justice, kindness, and politics, and justice cannot exist if positions are entrusted to incapable men.*"⁴³ The *raya* of the Bosnian Eyalet has been obedient and loyal since ancient times. They have also fought against the infidels. They grated the conqueror of Bosnian, Sultan Mehmed, as well as the Sultan Murat in Kosovo and accepted *cizye*. Δ Some of them now posses the *berats*. Presently, there is no one who would pay any attention to them, who is mercifully and who is gentle to them. Otherwise, they would be even more obedient and loyal then before. However, presently if they have five or ten livestock, the villains have pique on them, without any serious reason. No one does anything to preserve their honor, property, and lives. Bosnian *vali*, Ibrahim-pasha says: "*What do I care. This are the conditions I encounter, and I will leave it like that!*" Yet everybody tries real hard to punish those they hear are honest and righteous. "*They said: Surely we augur evil from you; if you do not desist, we will certainly stone you, and there shall certainly afflict you a painful chastisement from us.*"⁴⁴ (Qur'an) He had this slave of yours has banished to the Isle of Lamnos Δ because I spoke nothing but the truth, professing: "He instigate the disorder and does wrongdoing to the God's slaves." and all that relying on different sorts of lies and fabricated accusations. The aforementioned traitors were also silent. Other Muhammad followers submitted *mahzar* and said the real truth. Only the Exalted and the Just knows in which the circumstances I am. In this wartime, he left sadden and helpless infant children of mine in the hands of the enemies of our faith. All God's slaves are grieved and they are cursing. This humble slave has also humbly departed to the exile destination. "*Our Lord! cause us to go forth from this town, whose people are oppressors, and give us from Thee a guardian and give us from Thee a helper.*"⁴⁵ (Qur'an) "*And thus did We make for every prophet an enemy, the*

⁴³ All the state and law theoreticians pointed out to this principle and believed that every Sultan, as well as the other authorities, should honor it.

⁴⁴ Surah XXXVI, chapter 18.

⁴⁵ Surah IV, chapter 75.

- 33-b devils from among men and jinn, some of them suggesting to others varnished falsehood Δ to deceive (them), and had your Lord pleased they would not have done it, therefore leave them and that which they forge."⁴⁶ (*Qur'an*) "... and Allah knows the mischief-maker and the peacemaker."⁴⁷ The two knaves, the current Captain of Stolac, Mustafa-bey and his brother Hajji Mehmed-bey, on one side and their first cousins from paternal side, Ali and Omer on the other side, assembled the armies and for the last few years have been fighting over the inheritance. When the inheritors of those 95 for whom is was established that they were killed by above-mentioned Captain and his brother, Hajji-bey, filed a law suit with the Bosnian *vali* and when those who were apprehended and taken to the *vali*, he accepted 40 moneybags of bribe, even dressed them up with fancy garbs and acquitted them of the accusations.
- 34-a Additionally, they destroyed and wrecked the stored state military effects and gunpowder, and tore down and devastated the aforementioned town, mosques and masjids, *waqfs*, *mektebs*, and *hans* but have never been punished for those crimes. The inspector *kolçehaya* Bekir-aga was sent under the Sultans order to investigate aforementioned misdeeds, and even though he was ordered to enforce order and law, he was given 20,000 *grosch*, as ordered by the *vali*, and did not mend the wrongdoing. Similarly, when a villain called Baybut,⁴⁸ who generated disorder in Krajina, committed murders and dishonoring and robberies, was also apprehended and took to *vali* who accepted 45 moneybags and acquitted him. Also, when a *naib* who barricaded himself in the Derventa fortress and waged armed campaign from there and expelled and mistreated his successor *naib* when a *mirmiran* Sujelman-pasha, was sent to replace him, Ibrahim efendi was apprehended and he was nonetheless acquitted for the *vali* accepted 8,000 *grosch* from him. The population of Rogatica, Gacko and Banja Luka *grosch* have logged numerous grievances against *muteselims* and other officials and they suffered severe injustice. However, he accepted bribe from them in the same way and did not remove them form their positions, authorizing them to undertake even worse wrongdoing an injustice. The poor *raya*, willingly or unwillingly, move and flee to the enemy leaving their homeland behind. For quite some time, two Pashas in Novi Pazar have been impoverishing that *kaza* because the contention over *muteselim's* position. The poor are not able to provide the contributions they have been collecting
- 34-b for Veizer Δ as the token of their loyalty. When the *raya* previously complained to the *vali* Ibrahim-Pasha because of this and because of incapability to defend themselves against the Albanians from their escorts and when they asked for their removal, because of bribe and *vali's* preference, they were left on their own. When the disappointed *raya* was completely left out of mercy and propensity, they did not have any choice then to leave with the Serb infidels. Sowing and harvest of crops were lost. In that *kaza* alone there was 15,000
- 35-a

⁴⁶ Surah VI, chapter 112.

⁴⁷ Surah II, chapter 220.

⁴⁸ His full name was Osman-beg Kulenović – Baybut.

- Christians and now there are no descendant of Adam's. The other eight *kazas* are in the identical situation. When the *ulaczs* travel five-six days riding burdened horses because the *menzilhanes*⁴⁹ are deserted and there aren't any before Sarajevo. Δ In Bosnia, in the Herzegovina *sanjak*, in the town of Mostar, there is the *haseci* from the *janissary* headquarters, a villain, a rascal, and a tyrant, Dadić Ali-ago. He has an army. He always fraternizes with the bad people and outlaws and they are disobedient. Even though he was to be executed, the Bosnian *vali* expresses his proclivity and mercy towards him. From the collected war contribution funds he collects two times more for himself and all that using force. In that way he collects every year several hundreds moneybags. The *raya* from that area can not endure this any more and that is why they flee to France which is not far from there or they, leaving their homeland, desert to the Montenegrin outlaws. Some poor *raya* fled to high mountains. But let us see what is the result of this. Although the families with many children took the refuge, some of the units were able to find. All the tormented *raya*'s Δ children, who was so hungry that they ate skin of the trees, they enslaved and killed the *raya*, telling afterwards that those were the heads of the Serb's and captured Serbs. Some of the wretched people they caught alive. Then they put them in the dungeons and no one was given any food and they were starved to death. God help us, our dignitaries deserve to be cursed. All in all, there has been some time now that injustice, oppression, mercilessness, and tyranny upon the poor and those who cannot provide for themselves, the *raya* and Muslims have become utterly indescribable. It is know for the fact that the Serbs are strengthening, while the Muslims are becoming weaker and constantly suffer defeats. If there had been an agreeable place, all the *ulama*, all the good and honest people would have moved there. You can then imagine the condition of *raya* because of the drunk dignitaries, those who do not even pray to God, Δ the ignorant *muftis* and corrupted official. In one word, the peasant will be left with not even one pair of oxen to plow.

“And nothing devolves on us but a clear deliverance (of the message).”⁵⁰

(Qur'an)

Should they ask a Sufi, he would say let God ease this problem
Should they ask an ascetic, he would say this is unbearable.

CHAPTER VII

ON WAQF MUTEVELIS

In all the countries, and particularly in Bosnia, *waqfs* are not cared of. There has been quite some time now that they deteriorate and are not cultivated. *Mutevelis* and other *waqf* officials have impoverished and steal *waqf* property.

⁴⁹ Post Offices and postmen.

⁵⁰ Surah XXXVI, chapter 17.

- 37-a They completely have neglected the corresponding duties. Usually, every year the *vali* designates the officials who walk around with his orders and perform the inspection. Δ When they arrive in one of the *kazas* and after they open and read orders, without any inspection they write in *ilams* for several *kazas*. In them they write the following: "The inspection has been completed", and they return. And then they would register in the ledger of the *kaza* more funds than it was committed for the inspection expenses and subsistence and then that amount is assessed as taxation which the poor was required to pay. In Sarajevo, which is a big city with about hundred mosques with minarets, one cannot hear *ezzan* for the daybreak prayer from some of them. The *mu-ezzins* do not want to climb up the minarets out of mere laziness. No one asks weather that is possible or not. Those who run this country only go to mosque on Bayram and they also neglected majority of the duties for which they are responsible. Almost all of the positions held by imams, *hatibs*, teachers and professors are in the hands of the incapable. Δ One man often performs five, ten or even fifteen duties. He who has strength to say anything will surely be punished. The ostensible Sarajevo deputy *nekib* called Mustafa Nuri efendi, a ignorant and unjust person who bribed his way up to become the *muderiss* of Edirne, besides numerous other positions, he keeps that of the imam and preacher of the Czar's Mosque and he receives the salary of 1,000 *grosch* for that position. He also enjoys several other benefits provided by the vizers, including management of several *waqfs*, but he was not content with than either. In addition to that, he receives seven *janissary* salaries and probably possesses 150 estates. He is not content with that also, so he, nonetheless, lays his hands on land of the many orphans and widows and contrary to the Emperor's order Δ robs and steals lend from them. Some of the estates he keeps by force. Thus, for instance, he grabbed by force the endowed land near Medžuriječje in Bosnia that used to belong to the *waqf* of the Sultan Ibrahim's children, saying: "This is my estate." When few years ago an inspector came to investigate this by the Sultan's order, he forced few impoverished people to testify in his favor and when they said what he wanted refuting the accusations, the inspector ordered the *qadi* to issue an *ilam* and in that way he secured the aforementioned land as his rear property. The other case relates to the Isa-Bey's *waqf* consigned to the dervishes in *tekke*. Although there were two czar's firmans confirming that, the above-mentioned Mustafa Nuri and other villains did not want to hear about that and finally, contrary to the czar's orders, he consumed the *waqf* Δ, whereas the *qadi*, conforming with his character, issued the *ilam* to the above-mentioned briber and they personally wrote the grievance and by that inflicted great injustice to the sheik of the *tekke*. Similarly, his brother-in-law Sejjid Šakir Efendi, the known corruptionist, appropriated salary of more then thousand *grosch* allocated for the lecturer in the aforementioned mosque, whereas he has never perform that duty in his life. Undoubtedly, he neglected this position because he was not capable of performing it. *Muderrises* of other *madradas* rented the *muderris* quarters to students as if those facilities were the inns. Those who did not
- 37-b
- 38-a
- 38-b

- pay could not enter inside. Libraries were also closed. We cannot expect that those employed there will open them again. Those who run this country are responsible to punish muderises who, contrary to the *shari'a* and conditions on *waqf*, dare to behave like that and do such wrongdoing. Δ Even if there had not been for other crimes, the impoverishment of *waqf*, violation of the terms of use of the *waqf* and the fact that the traitors do not pay any attentions and do not attempt to prevent and sanction that, are sufficient as the cause for the demise of this country. Earlier mentioned *kapuçehaya* of Bosnian *qadis* and *naibs*, Džabić Ali efendi, keeps in Bosnian *kazas* twenty or even more different *ulama* positions. Yet there are many righteous people who do not have enough food at least not to starve to death. Current Travnik *Mufti*, former member of *qadi* order, aforementioned Muhamed Džudi efendi is also the site *qadi*, and Travnik *mufti*, Δ and *muderris* Sijemović's madrasah, and imam and muezzin of many mosques and *masjids*, and manager and supervisor of many *waqf*. He possesses two hundred real estates and ranches and lots, but that is not enough for him. From he generosity with which the *vali* endows him for false accusations he makes and other wrongdoing, he receives revenue of two hundred thousands *grosch*. In his desire to become administrator of the province and to secure the *kapuçehaya* position for forty-eight *kazas* he moved from Sarajevo to the *vilayet* seat in Travnik. He secured multitude of court guard titles for his supporters from janissary headquarters. They receive enormous salaries and whit that he greatly impaired the soldier's salaries. He exerts pressure on the poor around him, makes false accusations and generates quarrels, Δ instructs on different type injustice and disorder, and he always punishes those who speak out the truth. Every time when a *Vali* would arrive to Sarajevo, each one of the hundred quarters long way back had a state owned lodgings in which soldiers stayed over night. But the aforementioned greedy person used force to usurp homes of the poor in the quarter in which he lived and then he would lease them to Christians. Because of his immeasurable greediness he set the rent to 120 *grosch* per year so when a Pasha would to arrive in Sarajevo, he housed his soldiers in city inns and what ever the rent in those inns would be, in the ledger he would charge more on the poor and assess the tax on them. Following his example, other chieftains of the quarters would say: "Now it's the opportunity. If the *mufti* can do it, why can't we do it as well?" Than some would lease the lodgings, some would usurp and seize other people's lodgings, Δ some would demolish the houses and than make yards, gardens and lawns, some would expand their houses and erect the enormous lodgings, whereas in the financials ledger of the inn keepers all the expenses incurred during Pashas' stay would be charged to the impoverished *raya*. In that way the veizer's 3-day visit would reach cost of 25,000 *grosch*. How can the poor endure that!!! When a grievance is logged to Ibrahim-Pasha, he does not want to know about saying: "I don't care." And those whom he was supposed to banish and execute, he dresses up in fancy sable and marten fur coats and expensive garbs. By his negligence, their estates were exempted from the annual state taxation. Because of that,

41-a they have concealed his injustice and for his noncompliance to the regulations of which they know, they would say: "We shall always testify that everything is in accordance to *shari'a* and the law." Δ And that is how he secured himself. All in all, God help us, if these circumstances remain for another year, it will be difficult to find the way out. The corrupted *ulama* is the most responsible for all disorders. They prefer the harram over the hallal (something allowed). Their are only interested is bribe, jewelry, swaggering, silver boxes, silverware, horse equipment, knives, satin and silk garbs, gambling and they indulge in all sorts of vices, extravagance and misdeeds. If one says even a word about those ignorant people, or say to the public that they need to be stopped, they say: "We will see them when they go to Effedis, our masters." God's Prophet surely said the truth when he said: "If *ulama* is corrupted, the entire community is corrupted."

41-b The sin of a voluptuous scholar is great,
But the one of a ignorant believer is even greater. Δ

The Truthful sent one hundred and twenty four prophets, may Allah's glory and deliverance be upon them, to order the good and to forbid the wrong. The last one of them, Muhammad once said: "*Ulama are successors of the God's prophets.*" (*hadith*) The prefects disallow nowadays this *hadith* punishing those who are with exile far away from their homes and homeland, from their wife and children suffering numerous torments because in Bosnian Eyalet a loaf of bread costs 35 paras, and an oke (3 pounds) of salt 60 paras, which is beyond my aptitude.

"And He is the Supreme, above His servants; and He is the Wise, the Aware."⁵¹

42-a The traitors of the faith and the state sold food to the enemy countries. Today is the same, they sell food to France, while the poor is on the brink of the disaster. Δ

What should Mahmud Shah, the soul of universe, the heart of the world do.
There is no earnest teacher to come and say the truth.

CHAPTER VIII

ON CAPTAINS STATIONED IN BOSNIAN FORTRESSES

In Bosnian Eyalet there are 36 Captains. Every one of them is in command of both *kaza* and the fortress. Under their command are both Muslims and *raya*, all of them. They receive annual salaries. They also indulge in luxury, swaggering, titles, and altercations. Most of them are in quarrel and dispute

⁵¹ Surah VI, chapter 18.

- 42-b between themselves. They inflict injustice to the *raya* and the poor. Only under Osman-Captain *raya* lives in gratification. Their fortresses are ruined and deserted. Roofs of the ammunition warehouses have dilapidated long time ago. The military effects Δ and black gunpowder, which is stored in the towers, is deteriorating. The cannons, carts and riffles are also deteriorating, vanishing. The cannons are stuck in the one feet deep mud and only one out of hundred is functional. The gates and the walls are devastated and they must be repaired. Some of the fortresses can be repaired with minor expenses. Although the land is in their hands, because of the negligence and laziness they aren't being repaired. That is their enormous guilt. God help us if the enemy suddenly shows up, since they are in our proximity and neighborhood, and attack. It is obvious that in this way conditions in which they now live will change. Inspectors that previously came to inspect the fortresses by the Czar's order beheld that and entered it as such in reports but the Bosnian
- 43-a *Vali* Δ has never fulfilled his duty. He would tell them: "What should I care. That's not my province. I have been on this position for two years so if that needs to be done, let the Captains do that with the people." He summons the Captains once a year and fines them and than he dresses them up in fur coats and sends them off. Last year he fined Captain Nevin 45 moneybags for the murder. When Nevin returned, he assessed 90 moneybags to be collected from the people as taxation saying: "I had to pay as well." Identically, every one of them who is fined collects twice as much.

- If the people are disciplined by sword, all the strata shall obey
 If the Sultan supports that, it shall be applied
 If the capable are in the offices that shall be a friend's joy
- 43-b The craftsman who desires to show his skill pays visit to the people. Δ

CHAPTER IX

ON JANISSARIES

- 44-a The Sarajevo population mostly consists of the *janissaries*, craftsmen and merchants. Amongst them there are few agas from the previous wars that served in the court guards units. There was not any other sort or group amongst Sarajevo residents. However, for quite some time now, the aforementioned Travnik *mufti* Mehmed Džudi efendi, who is a rebel, attempting to instigate the disorder for his of personal goals and malice, secured to his followers and relatives numerous *haseçi* title from Istanbul. Δ He prefers them to the old agas and he arranged that rascals became high-nobility. When it became obvious that they, interfering in to the state related matters were in the position to influence *qadis* and *zabits*, even more rascals and villains decided that giving bribe they want to become members of janissaries so that they could say they were noblemen. In that way more than 50 local *janissaries*, *spahis*, and

- Christians who converted to Islam and many other such as fire wood sellers, bread makers, grocers and others secured the membership in the court guards. Since they secured enormous salaries, immunity and high social position, some of the wealthy men secured the *turnacı* titles, solely because of the desire to be highest ranking. In order to outclass this group, instead of the
- 44-b *haseçi* position the major of Srebrenica, who did not live in the town at all, Δ had the *silahşohor* titles and *kapucibaşı* titles. When the old agas were left at the lowest level, following their heart and desire and having no other alternative, they decide: "Let us outnumber them so that we can overpower them." Thus, ever since the problem with Serbs emerged, for four or five years now, every capable and incapable person, every dumb and every rascal have started to organize their own units and in that way now there are more than six hundred agas and lieutenants. The regulations of the *janissary* command and the old law are abandoned. Some individuals bribe the Sarajevo *zabit* and then with few men they go to war for few days, they accept the service in the shop and then they are entered in the *serdengeçi* payroll. This is how many
- 45-a of those privates, village *seymen* and sergeants Δ and army volunteers got on the *serdengeçi* payrolls. *Kolçehaya* Ebu Bekir-aga who came to review the payrolls took few gold pieces from each of them and entered all the data in the summary *janissary* payroll, he employed all of them and secured them salaries as if they had been agas and lieutenants. There even were the cases that father and son would go to war, they would somehow secure the *serdengeçi* title and become the agas. Even though they did not organised their squads, they would be registered in the payrolls and have the salary. The one who allowed that their number proliferate that much is Hadžimuratović Abdulah, a *serdengeçi*, the traitor of the faith and the state. That instigator of the injustice is the one who was twenty years ago sentenced to death by the Sultan's order, who bought his freedom but who still has not retired and desist to do injustice Δ, and who previously, publicly and secretly, used to send
- 45-b assistance to the Belgrade outlaws and *dahis*. And then three years ago he, together with the aforementioned traitors, accepted enormous amount of money from the Serb infidel. However, his accomplices sent a secret complaint in which they inform that they had nothing to do whit that. Later on he vacillated. After the disorder that they had created in collude with numerous high-ranking officials and dignitaries, as it is explained and described, begun to steal from the poor as much as they could: wax, rendered butter, fire woods, meat, coal, salt, late persons' belongings and what ever had good price on the market. The then *qadis* could not render court decisions against them so that the effects to be returned to the original owners. The *zabits* could not incarcerate them and confiscate the property. If they were accidentally caught
- 46-a in a bar Δ raid they would say: "The *zabit* cannot arrest me. I am a lieutenant." They are all villains and all the poor, those who cannot provide for themselves and honest merchants ceaselessly pray to the Almighty to send a capable and a law-abiding vizier. Particularly when their salaries arrive, *turnacis*, *haseçis*, *serdengeçi*, lieutenants, *qadis*, *muderrises* and some *mekteb* imams

- who support them, divide between themselves 81,000 *grosch* of the public money. All of them received numerous *janissary* salaries and other remuneration for different duties and by that they have been consumed and divide between themselves state treasury money, saying: "It is under our custody." There was not a condition to establish the physical existence? They would immediately divide what ever was there and no one ever checked that.
- 46-b The recorder Husein efendi from Istanbul Δ , a cheater, a traitor of the faith and the state who allocated the money, for every salary voucher he would paid off 7,000 *grosch*. He would tore the vouchers of those he did not like, of all the conscripts and those amongst citizens who were entitled to the salary, whereas he would pay off them, saying: "They are in the service." Presently, neither above-mentioned Bahs-aga, nor the *haseçi* Abdulah-aga, nor any other individual from that group, which inflicts injustice, has gone to war. They also requested that for each of the twenty *turnacis*, fifteen *haseçis*, and ten agas five *tayins* of provisions were to be procured. The poor soldier will starve to death without *tayins*. As far as they are concern, they have sold out the old regulation and rule of the *janissary* command. Many of those who fought in
- 47-a the war, those wounded Δ and those missing were brave young men without the salary vouchers. For salaries in Sarajevo, the state treasury use to commit 120,000 *grosch*. By the time the funds arrive in Bosnia it drops down to 81,000 *grosch*. By the time the money is to be divided, it drops down to 70,000 *grosch*. By the time the pay off of those who are entitled to the salary is to start, they hardly receive the amount they are entitled. When a new war break out they request the nation-wide mobilisation. However, in Bosnia there are 19 *serdars* towns. There are at least 20,000 *janissaries*, 33,000 decorated crewmen, as well as spahis and *zaims* and together with those whose jointly use property which exceeds 10,000. All in all, the nine Pashas have more
- 47-b than 80,000 paid soldiers. Nonetheless, they mobilize civilians, Δ the poor, peasants-laborers, All in all, the nine Pashas have more than 80,000 paid soldiers. Even thought the situation is such, in the case of war, they mobilize civilians, the poor, peasants-labourers and even Christians. They use this to demand and seize the money from those who are well-to-do and they pardon them from the military service. Using force, they mobilize to the army service those who are in the position to leave to their families not even 5 paras. Yet the poor will be required to pay all the taxation. Allah's Prophet said: "You all are the shepherds, and every shepard will be held responsible for his flock." (*hadith*) In the Islamic countries this *hadith* is neglected, denied, and regarded as false. When a disorder is created, the *valis* and *ulama* must inform the Sultan about that, whereas the Sultan is required to immediately act to prevent it. It is said that Aisha, Δ may Allah be pleased with her, said: "*God's Prophet, may Allah's glory and deliverance be upon him, said that when Allah wishes good to a ruler, he endows him with a honest vizier, who reminds him when he fails to recollect and when he recollects, he assists him. If He wishes differently, then He sends him a evil veizer who does not remind him when he fails to recollect and even if he reminds him, he does not assists*
- 48-a

- him.” (*hadith*) It was also said: “Faithful *viezir* is the one who befriends with rulers and with whom he consults with frankness, whereas the traitor is the one who befriends with rulers in hatred for of his own personal benefit.” The overall conditions in Bosnia are as described her. Not even a single detail is correct. Maybe the situation is even worse as to the disorder. In the Rumelia, Egypt, Sham (Syria), the situation is very serious. They are all in the state of disorder and mutiny. Δ All the Islamic countries and all the nations, even France (Europe) are beyond this. The Austrian *raya*, and even the Serbs, say: “As long as you sell your *shari’a*, your sword shall not be able to cut.” Even the two sacred cities are in similar situation. It is necessary to immediately resolve the problem so that we, by God’s permission and His help, obliterate all mischief and make all of our enemies and heretic and outlaws to listen so that the fear enters into their hearts. When they are content with Allah’s words, all the problems will be easily overcome. Δ Help us, help us! Save us our exalted Lord and absolve your slave. Thy power and hostility unfold only on those who are unjust. Our praise is due to You, the Lord of all the Worlds, may deliverance be upon the foremost amongst the God’s Prophets. Dear Lord, show us the truth as truthful and render us to follow it. Show us the untruth as untruthful and render us to stay away from it – Our Lord, hear our prayers.
- 48-b
- 49-a

Endless injustices of all the groups to count is not possible
I have spoken on one in thousand for the slaves must be intimidated
The Prophet’s law is not weak, other path should not be sought
For he who such path seeks shall be defeated by the Lord of the slaves.

The End

MANUSKRIPIT AHVAL-I BOSNA OD
MUHAMEDA EMINA ISEVIĆA (POČ. XIX ST.)

SAŽETAK

Muhamed Emin Isević potječe iz ugledne sarajevske porodice koja je živjela u kvartu Alifakovac. Rođen je u drugoj polovini XVIII vijeka. Na glas je izašao početkom XIX vijeka kada ga nalazimo među prvacima Sarajeva. Izgleda da je bio posebno cijenjen zbog toga što je davao otpor ondašnjim feudalnim i upravnim strukturama u Bosni. Zbog svoga djelovanja, suprotno želji pokrajinskih i lokalnih organa vlasti, dva puta je osuđivan na progonstvo. Kada je drugi put prognan na ostrvo Lemnos u Grčkom arhipelagu, tada je napisao svoj rad *Prilike u Bosni (Ahval-i Bosna)* koji se ovdje daje u prijevodu. Rad je podnio izravno sultanu s namjerom da mu sultan dade pomilovanje. U tome je uspio i bio, čak, nagrađen titulom *muderisa* od Jedrena i šejhom bosanske ordije. U svom radu koji je podijelio na devet poglavlja, zavisno od društvene

strukture o kojoj je pisao, on se nemilice obara na ondašnje vlasti i njene saradnike. Posebno se okomio na bosanskog namjesnika Ibrahima Hilmi-pašu i na kadije i muftije obilježavajući ih kao osnovne nosioce nereda u zemlji i prijetnju općem poretku. Rad je karakterističan po tome što je on poimenice navodio glavne uzročnike teških prilika u zemlji. U radu je redovno svoja izlaganja o pojedinoj strukturi svodio na njihov odnos prema raji muslimanskoj i kršćanskoj. Njegov rad se doima kao poziv na socijalnu pravdu i protiv ugnjetavanja siromašnim slojeva. Na udaru njegova pera je naročito korupcija u kojoj prednjače organi vlasti i posebno sudstva. Iz njegova izlaganja dobija se nedvojbena dojam da je on bio veliki patriot i izvrstan znalac prilika u Bosni, pa zato njegov rad predstavlja izvanredan izvor za proučavanje i sagledavanje prilika u Bosni. Nije nam poznato da se iko prije ili poslije njega sa toliko žara borio protiv nepravdi i nasilja i da je tako otvoreno žigosao sve nosioce nereda u zemlji.

Rad je nastao poslije 1809., a prije 1812. godine. Muhamed Emin Isević je umro 1816. godine, a sahranjen je na Alifakovcu. Šta je radio i gdje se nalazio od 1812. do 1816. godine zna se, ali se više ne pojavljuje u javnom životu Bosne. Iza sebe je ostavio ovaj rad i još nekoliko pjesama razbacanih po raznim zbirkama (medžmuama). Bez ovoga njegovog rada mnogo manje bi znali o prilikama koje su vladale u Bosni početkom XIX vijeka kada su inače prilike u cijelom carstvu bile vrlo teške.

MANUSCRIPT *AHVAL-İ BOSNA (THE CONDITIONS IN BOSNIA)*
BY MUHAMED EMIN ISEVIĆ (EARLY 19th CENTURY)

SUMMARY

Muhamed Emin Isević was born into a eminent family of Sarajevo intellectuals, from which for almost two centuries derived the most outstanding intellectuals who performed various services and held different office as public servants, primarily that of *qadis*. Muhamed Emin was born in the second half of the eighteenth century and was educated, similarly to the members of his family, to become a *qadi*. Living and working in Bosnia, he grew acquainted with those who attempted to uproot lawlessness and abuses of regional and local authorities and to protect the Christian and Muslim poor in Bosnia. Maturing in such a spirit, Muhamed Emin became very praiseworthy figure and on one occasion, Suleiman-pasha Skopljak, responding to an inquiry sent by the Porte, indicated that he was one of the most prominent citizens of Sarajevo. Suleiman-pasha also added that all the old prominent men had gone.

This is a period in which the idea of the autonomy and confrontation with the Porte was starting to gradually emerge. As one of the advocates of this idea, Muhamed Emin was accused and banished from Bosnia but soon after

he managed to return and started, with still greater intensity, to attack those responsible for the various malignancies in the society. He obviously found support in Sarajevo, particularly in the class of urban merchants and craftsmen, whose role in social and politics life of Sarajevo had begun to increase. A new social stratum to have a decisive role in Bosnia's social and politics life was starting to emerge. It was a mixture of certain feudal elements, such as the captains, low-ranking Muslim priests and minor *spahis* on the one hand, and the urban classes on the other. In such a situation, Isević's activity was considered as dangerous for the state and the Sultan and for the regional authorities as well so he sentenced and banished again. This time he was banished to the isle of Lemnos in the Greek archipelago in 1809. Muhamed Emin wrote there this small tractate pertaining to the Bosnian problems and sent it directly to the Sultan as some sort of a petition for pardon.

The content of the tractate is such that is quite extraordinary that it ever reached the Sultan, and Muhamed Emin received abolition and even a promotion in the service. He was conferred the title of the professor of Edirne and sheyh of the Sarajevo Army Command.

None amongst the Muslims had never spoken out with such an openness and fortitude and with so much supporting evidences about the regional and local authorities. His reports can be substantiated by the different data from various archives and historical records. He divided this essay into nine chapters and in each one he describes one of the elements of the regional or local government and judicial system. The essay is divided into the following chapters:

- On *qadis*
- On *muftis*
- On *muderises*
- On *pashas*
- On *liva alaybeys*
- On *cizyedars*
- On *mutevelis*
- On *captains*
- On *janissaries*.

He criticized *qadis* and *muftis* most violently, considering these institutions as central to the stable conditions in the country, accusing them of focusing only on bribing and of abandoning justice completely. They even enticed others to accept bribe and do wrongdoing. They had complexly corrupted their offices and turned the institution of judicial system in to the bargaining.

The *muftis* did not seek to protect justice by their decision and prevent *qadis* to sell their rulings to those who offer more. The *muderises* did not seek to perform their basic task, that of educating their students in the scholastical spirit and the spirit of enlightening the people.

The *liva alaybeys* fought their position solely by the means of bribery and not by their capability. Thus they provoked discontent of the *spahis* and the

people, for both former and the latter had to compensate for the bribes they gave to the governor of the province for their services. In addition to that, other alaybeys kept filling these posts, contrary to the established practice under which alaybey were not to be removed from the office, until proven guilty. This practice had an influence on the readiness and capabilities of the armed forces, which was very important for the state.

Quite violent is his criticism on the *cizya* collectors for their wrongdoing was outrageous because they collected *cizya* arbitrarily. They would use force and in addition to that, they collected the *cizya* from children and those who cannot provide for themselves. The consequence of that was that *raya* were dissatisfied and fled from Bosnia.

The mutevelis of the vakufs were negligent and caused the waqf property to dissipate and did all sorts of mischief in which regional authorities helped them greatly.

The captains neglected their fundamental duty of defending the country and guarding the towns. They indulged in a luxurious living and were interesting only in money. All executive and military authorities were in their hands but they themselves, because of their conduct, were weak defenders of their country.

The janissary order was in veritable chaos brought about by the chieftains of the order. They mostly sought the positions which enabled them to have influence on the political life in the country, where as the common citizens were most frequently denied their rights, particularly regarding their salaries.

The above-mentioned facts brought the country on the verge of the chaos. The most responsible individuals for such a situation were the governor and his lieutenants who were ruthless in acquiring riches and at the same time careless in performing their duties. They looked at Bosnia as a foreign country, justifying their attitude by saying that they were there only temporarily.

Isević's essay clearly connects the difficult conditions of the country with the position of the Muslim and Christian poor; the author, therefore, calls for social justice. He considers the *raya* obedient and loyal and claim that had there not been many abuses, they would have remained loyal. Therefore, both Christians and Muslim fled either to neighboring countries or to Rumelia, in search for better livelihood.

This tractate represents a very significant source for the studying of the early 19th century history of Bosnia, even though it includes certain level of exaggeration.