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# From Orientalism to Self-Orientalism in the Bosnian Context

## Abstract

Austro-Hungarian Monarchy left an indelible mark on the culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of the pillars of Dual Monarchy's strategy was cultural policy, which cannot be understood without insight into contemporary postcolonial theories and oriental studies. The focus of this paper is the issue of self-Orientalism in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was present during the Habsburg period, but also after it. A good example of self-Orientalism is the Sarajevo *sebil*, a fountain built at the end of the 19th century during the Austro-Hungarian rule.

**Key words:** Orientalism, self-Orientalism, *sebil*, Sarajevo, cultural policy, Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bašćaršija, Benjamin von Kállay.

## Prologue to Orientalism

“The provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be occupied and governed by Austria-Hungary”<sup>1</sup> – this is the sentence of the 25<sup>th</sup> Article

<sup>1</sup> “Die Provinzen Bosnien und Herzegovina werden von Österreich-Ungarn besetzt

of the Treaty of Berlin (1878) and could be considered as an overture to the Austro-Hungarian period of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The forty-year rule of the Dual Monarchy in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be viewed from many points of view,<sup>2</sup> such as the colourful kaleidoscope of the Orientalist narrative – which is partly the reason for this text. “Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between “the Orient” and (most of the time) “the Occident”,<sup>3</sup> writes at the beginning of his study of Orientalism Edward W. Said. This is where the role of the Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy came into play, which was zealous to get to know the world of the Bosnian Orient, but with a pronounced dose of Orientalism – which ultimately led to the Orientalisation of the Orient.<sup>4</sup> The culmination of the Orientalist saga is when Orientalism is no longer just a domination and representation of the East by non-Easterners (Westerners), but when the role of Orientalisation is taken over by the Orientals themselves.<sup>5</sup> In recent decades, several different terms have been proposed that refer to the Orientalisation of the Orient by the Orientals, “ethno-orientalism”, “self-Orientalism”, “internal orientalism” and “reverse orientalism”.<sup>6</sup> In the context of the topic we are dealing with, it will be clear that the term self-Orientalism is the most appropriate.

Bosnia does not stand out from the Orientalist stereotype. This could be seen in an interview with Benjamin von Kállay<sup>7</sup> given to the English

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und verwaltet werden”, see: *Deutsches Reich: Reichsgesetzblatt 1878*. Berlin: Kaiserl. Post-Zeitungsamt, 1878., (accessed Aug 20, 2021, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11365824-5), p. 326.

<sup>2</sup> For a general insight into postcolonial theories see: *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman, Columbia University Press, 1994; Peter Childs and Patrick Williams, *An Introduction To Post-Colonial Theory*, Routledge, 1996; For postcolonial discourse regarding Austro-Hungarian Monarchy see: Clemens Ruthner, “Central Europe goes post-colonial: new approaches to the Habsburg empire around 1900”, *Cultural Studies*, 16:6 (2002), p. 877–883.

<sup>3</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, Penguin Books, 2003 [1978], p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 67.

<sup>5</sup> Lisa Lau, “Re-Orientalism: The Perpetration and Development of Orientalism by Orientals”, *Modern Asian Studies*, 43 (2009), p. 572.

<sup>6</sup> Lisa Lau and Ana Cristina Mendes, *Re-orientalism and South Asian identity politics: the oriental Other within*, London, Routledge, 2011, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Benjamin von Kállay (1839–1903), was an Austro-Hungarian diplomat and historian. During his political career, he served as a member of the Hungarian Parliament, Consul General of Austria-Hungary in Belgrade, Head of the Ministry of Foreign

newspaper *The Daily Chronicle* in 1895, where he said that one of the roles of Austro-Hungary is “carrying civilization to Oriental peoples”.<sup>8</sup> From 1882 to 1903, Kállay was appointed Minister of Finance of Austria-Hungary and Governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina, *de facto* he was the first name of the Austro-Hungarian administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The period of his appointment was marked by thoughtful politics, which would later be recognized as the Kállay’s regime.<sup>9</sup> “The thesis about his civilizing mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina had a central place in the ideology of the Kállay’s regime”, points out Tomislav Kraljačić.<sup>10</sup> In the eyes of Austro-Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina was nothing but colony, similar to the overseas colonies of other European countries, with the difference that its colony was geographically closer to it.<sup>11</sup> Robert Donia uses the term “proximate colony” to mean that Bosnia’s history, tradition and culture were not unknown to Austro-Hungary, and that “Austro-Hungary’s colonial administrators had a better understanding of the colony’s history, traditions, and culture than officials of European lands who governed more distant colonies”.<sup>12</sup>

The Monarchy “sought to consolidate its power and establish its hegemony in Bosnia, not only through numerous legal regulations, but it also did so through the entire network of cultural institutions and activities”, concludes Stijn Vervaeke.<sup>13</sup> A special segment of the

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Affairs in Vienna and Minister of Foreign Affairs. From 1882 to 1903 he was the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Finance and Governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina. See: Tomislav Kraljačić, *Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini: (1882–1903)*, Sarajevo, Veselin Masleša, 1987, p. 45–61.

<sup>8</sup> See: Diana Reynolds-Cordileone, “Displaying Bosnia: Imperialism, Orientalism, and Exhibitionary Cultures in Vienna and Beyond: 1878–1914”, *Austrian History Yearbook*, 46 (2009), p. 29–50.

<sup>9</sup> See: Kraljačić, *Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini*.

<sup>10</sup> “Centralno mjesto u ideologiji Kállayevog režima imala je teza o njegovoj civilizatorskoj misiji u Bosni i Hercegovini”, see: Kraljačić, *Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini*, p. 61.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Donia, “The Proximate Colony: Bosnia-Herzegovina under Austro-Hungarian Rule”, *Kakanien Revisited*, Sept 11, 2007, (accessed Aug 20, 2021, <http://www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/fallstudie/RDonia1.pdf>), p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Donia, “The Proximate Colony”, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> “Nastojala da konsoliduje svoju moć i uspostavi svoju hegemoniju u Bosni ne samo brojnim zakonskim regulativama već je ona to učinila i preko cijele mreže kulturnih institucija i aktivnosti”, see: Stijn Vervaeke, *Centar i periferija u Austro-Ugarskoj: dinamika izgradnje nacionalnih identiteta u Bosni i Hercegovini od 1878. do 1918. godine na primjeru*

Austro-Hungarian administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the “soft power”, probably best conducted during the reign of Benjamin von Kállay.<sup>14</sup> Cultural policy, which he relied on a lot, was reflected in the establishment of new cultural institutions,<sup>15</sup> and one of the most important of its kind was the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>16</sup> The three primary tasks of the National Museum, according to Robert Donia, were: 1) scientific research and learning in line with the mission of introducing Western civilization, 2) fulfilling Austro-Hungarian geopolitical interests in the region by proving that the Monarchy can promote and spread knowledge in the newly acquired territory, and 3) support for Kállay’s idea of Bosniakhood (bošnjaštvo).<sup>17</sup> What Donia sees as the fundamental goals of the National Museum is the core of Kállay’s policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### First step: Orientalisation

In the absence of Orient’s own representation and in the absence of its own voice, the Occident (Austria-Hungary) was given the

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*književnih tekstova*, Zagreb: Sarajevo, Synopsis, 2013, p. 91.

<sup>14</sup> Like any other political program, Kállay’s cultural policy had its pros and cons, i.e. its realization of its ups and downs, see: Robin Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism: The Habsburg ‘Civilizing Mission’ in Bosnia 1878-1914*, Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 65–73.

<sup>15</sup> Risto Besarević, *Iz kulturne i političke istorije Bosne i Hercegovine*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo, 1966, p. 7–25; Risto Besarević, *Kultura i umjetnost u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom*, Sarajevo, Arhiv Bosne i Hercegovine, 1968, p. 25–60, 683–778; *Naučne ustanove u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme austrougarske uprave*, ed. Hamdija Kapidžić, Sarajevo, Arhiv Bosne i Hercegovine, 1973.

<sup>16</sup> Almaz Dautbegović, “Uz stogodišnjicu Zemaljskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine u Sarajevu”, ed. Almaz Dautbegović, *Spomenica stogodišnjice rada Zemaljskog muzeja*, Sarajevo, Zemaljski muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, 1988, p. 11–13; Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism*, p. 70.

<sup>17</sup> Kállay’s concept of “Bosniakhood” differs from its present-day, modern use. Kállay saw “Bosniakhood” as multi-confessional Bosnian nationalism that he hoped would repeal the waves of Serb and Croat nationalism that were sweeping Bosnia’s borders at the time., see: Robert J. Donia, *Sarajevo: Biografija grada*, Sarajevo, Institut za istoriju, 2006, p. 86, 112–113; Kraljačić, *Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini*, p. 186; Valeria Heuberger: “Benjamin von Kállay und seine Rolle für Bosnien-Herzegowina”, Brückenschläge – “Bosnischer Islam” für Europa, Stuttgart-Hohenheim, 20–22. 11. 2009, (accessed Sept 1, 2021, [https://www.akademie-rs.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/download\\_archive/interreligioeser-dialog/091120\\_heuberger\\_kallay.pdf](https://www.akademie-rs.de/fileadmin/user_upload/download_archive/interreligioeser-dialog/091120_heuberger_kallay.pdf)), p. 3.

possibility to interpret the Orient (Bosnia and Herzegovina). With a complex administrative apparatus and a meaningful cultural policy, Austria-Hungary formed its vision of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is essentially Orientalism.<sup>18</sup> At the moment when the Orient begins to voluntarily accept the role of the “assumed Orientals”, self-orientalisation occurs, consciously or unconsciously – which is noticeable in the case of Bosnia.

An interesting detail that helps to understand the self-orientalisation of Bosnia can be found in an article in the newspaper *Bosnische Post*, dated February 13, 1889.<sup>19</sup> The translation of the article entitled *Bosnische Hausirer in Wien* is presented below:

“Bosnian peddlers in Vienna.

The street life of Vienna has recently been enriched with a new and truly picturesque figure, who could be found many times in the city. These are the well-known peddlers from New Austria, [...]. In Vienna, too, they wear the national slippers, the tight quilted trousers and brightly bordered jackets, and their heads are crowned with the inevitable fez. According to the local newspaper, they are sturdy, strong figures, with wide belts in which are placed almost threatening arsenals of knives, which is why they have a particularly warrior appearance. At the same time, these belts are used to store goods, because the beautiful knives with ivory handles inside represent their finest commercial product. In addition, they also sell small cute lighters, rosewood pipes and sweet little fezzes. Their presence gives the streets of Vienna a touch of the Orient, and also reminds us of our “eastern mission” ... [...].”<sup>20</sup>

*Bosnische Post*, 13<sup>rd</sup> February 1889

<sup>18</sup> Further about Austro-Hungarian Orientalism see: Johann Heiss and Johannes Feichtinger, “Distant Neighbors: Uses of Orientalism in the Late Nineteenth-Century Austro-Hungarian Empire”, *Deploying Orientalism in culture and history: from Germany to Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. James Hodkinson, et al., Rochester, New York, Camden House, 2013, p. 148–165.

<sup>19</sup> In the text “Displaying Bosnia”, Diana Reynolds Cordileone gives an interesting interpretation of the article in *Bosnische Post*, see: Reynolds-Cordileone. “Displaying Bosnia”, p. 33.

<sup>20</sup> “Bosnische Hausirer in Wien. Das Wiener Strassen leben ist seit Kurzem um eine neue, und zwar recht malerische Figur bereichert worden, der man wiederholt in der Stadt zu begegnen Gelegenheit hat. Es sind dies die dort sattsam bekannten Hausirer

Although the description is scanty, it is not difficult to imagine a Bosnian peddler wandering the streets of Vienna, dressed in traditional Bosnian costume, ornate, decorated with various items he offers for sale. He dressed and presented himself as the Viennese imagined him, not as he really was. This is an obvious example of self-orientalisation in the Bosnian context in which the Oriental himself applies the Orientalist imagination.

The issue of the Bosnian kilim is another example of self-orientalisation. Today, there is widespread opinion in Bosnia that the form of the Bosnian kilim originated from Bosnia's tradition. The other side of the coin shows that things are not as they seem.

During the Ottoman period Bosnia and Herzegovina produced its own kilim and some of the most beautiful examples are kept today in the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo.<sup>21</sup> With the arrival of Austro-Hungary the changes took place, most of them during Kállay's rule in Bosnia. Wanting to pursue his goal of curbing national tendencies that were threatening Bosnia and Herzegovina by neighbouring countries, Kállay insisted on Bosnia's cultural and artistic specificity, and therefore supported the development of Bosnian traditional crafts and arts, including kilim production. Two years after he was appointed governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kállay placed

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aus Neu-Oesterreich, [...]. Sie tragen auch in Wien die nationalen Opanken, die enge gehaftelten Hosen und bunt bordirte Jäkchen, und ihr Haupt krönt der unvermeidliche Fez. Es sind, wie ein dortiges Blatt schreibt, stramme, kräftige Gestalten, und die noch durch breite Gürtel, in welchen schier bedrohlich ein ganzes Arsenal von Messern steckt, ein besonders martialisches Aussehen gewinnen. Diese Gürtel erfüllen eben gleichzeitig auch den Zweck von "Waarenmagazinen", denn die darin befindlichen schönen Messer mit Elfenbeinheften repräsentiren ja ihren vorzüglichsten Handelsartikel. Ausserdem handeln sie aber noch mit niedlichen Feuerzeugen, Tschibukrohren aus Rosenholz und kleinen netten Fez. Den Wiener Strassenleben verleihen ihre Figuren jedenfalls einen nicht üblen orientalischen Tric, sowie sie es auch stets an unsere "östliche Mission" gemahnen..." see: "Bosnische Hausirer in Wien", *Bosnische Post*, IV, Nr. 12, Sarajevo, 13. 2. 1889, p. 2–3.

<sup>21</sup> The exhibition "Bosnian kilims" (Bosanskohercegovački ćilimi), held in the Gallery of the Municipality of Novi Grad Sarajevo during the month of April 2018, is the last in a series of presentations of kilims that are a product of local carpet tradition. The most interesting are certainly those that were created before 1878.

the Sarajevo Carpet Factory under state control in 1889.<sup>22</sup> It was to be expected that traditional Bosnian carpets would be woven in the factory, but in fact the design of the kilims and rugs was an innovation most credited to Carl Pantischek, the newly appointed factory manager. If we compare the artistic elements of the Bosnian kilim created before the Austro-Hungarian times and those created in the Sarajevo Carpet Factory, an obvious difference is noticeable. The Bosnian kilim created in the Sarajevo Carpet Factory reflected the eclectic style, because it features “motifs taken from old Bosnian kilims, then from kilims from our and other countries”.<sup>23</sup> Diana Reynolds Cordileone states that “the standardization of carpet production was an unmitigated success, not only in technique and aesthetics, but also in pedagogy and financial rewards”.<sup>24</sup> It was believed that the Bosnian kilim had lost its own “oriental significance [...]” and “it seemed most appropriate to return to the true homeland of this art, to the Orient itself, especially to Persia”.<sup>25</sup> That was the reason why a Persian painter was invited to Sarajevo with the task of making “true oriental patterns for kilims”.<sup>26</sup>

The products of Sarajevo Carpet Factory were intended for the domestic and international markets, and were also used as part of the decoration of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s pavilion at world fairs in Vienna (1892, 1898), Budapest (1896), Brussels (1897) and Paris (1900). The Bosnian kilims of the Austro-Hungarian period found in these exhibitions were a part of the furniture, objects and architecture that Bosnia was orientalisised with, because neither the kilims, nor the architecture, nor

<sup>22</sup> Radivoje Papić, *100 godina Tkaonice ćilima Sarajevo*, Sarajevo, Tkaonica ćilima Sarajevo, 1979, p. 19.

<sup>23</sup> “Motivi preuzeti sa starih bosanskohercegovačkih ćilima, zatim sa ćilima iz naše zemlje i drugih zemalja”, see: Bratislava Vladić Krstić, “Ćilimarstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini”, *Glasnik zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu*, nova serija, sveska XXXII (1977), Sarajevo, 1978, p. 250.

<sup>24</sup> Diana Reynolds-Cordileone. “Inventing Traditions in Bosnia: The Sarajevo Carpet Factory 1878-1918”, *Wechsel Wirkungen: Austria-Hungary, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Western Balkans, 1878-1918*, ed. Clemens Ruthner et al., New York, Peter Lang, 2015, p. 196.

<sup>25</sup> “Orijentalski značaj [...] činilo se je najshodnijim vratiti se na pravu domovinu ove umjetnosti, na sam orijent, naročito na Perziju”, see: *Bosna i Hercegovina na Milenijskoj izložbi u Budimpešti godine 1896*, Sarajevo, Izdanje izložbenog ureda bosanskohercegovačke Zemaljske vlade, 1896, p. 32.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

the handicrafts at Bosnia's pavilion at world fairs had much in common with the tradition of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Andrea Baotić Rustanbegović concludes that the objects seen at these exhibitions were "created by foreign, not local people", and that "Bosnian culture and heritage at these exhibitions [...] were put in the background, because the goal was not to show them; a new local tradition was created that owed its existence to the broader idea of the Austro-Hungarian Empire."<sup>27</sup>

Unfortunately, the Bosnian kilim has not yet been the subject of a more extensive study, and for that reason some questions related to its history and artistic features are still open. However, based on what has been seen and presented so far, it can be concluded that before the arrival of Austria-Hungary kilims were woven in Bosnia, but significant changes occurred after the arrival of the Dual Monarchy (especially after the founding of the Sarajevo Carpet Factory). Bosnian kilims of these two periods, pre-Austro-Hungarian and Austro-Hungarian, differ not only chronologically, but also in the design. The far-reaching nature of Kállay's cultural policy is reflected in the fact that Bosnian kilim today is most often considered as the one originated from the Government's Sarajevo Carpet Factory, and the old Bosnian kilim from pre-Austro-Hungarian times is almost forgotten. Diana Cordileone concludes that "carpet designs of the Austrian era created an official canon, an 'invented tradition' of Bosnian styles, that endures",<sup>28</sup> which we could clearly understand as self-orientalisation.

## Second Step: Self-Orientalisation

Desmond Maurer addressed the topic of self-orientalisation in the Bosnian context through essay *Orientalism and Self-Orientalisation in Sarajevo*. At the beginning of the text, Maurer specifies three problems that he intends to deal with, i.e. in which he recognizes an obvious example of Orientalism and self-Orientalism among Muslims of Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely: 1) removal of the veil,

<sup>27</sup> "Tim izložbama su bosanska kultura i baština [...] stavljene u drugi plan, jer cilj nije bio prikazati njih; stvarala se nova lokalna tradicija koja je svoje postojanje dugovala široj ideji Austro-Ugarske imperije", see: Andrea Baotić. "Orijentalizam u prikazima Bosne i Hercegovine pod austrougarskom upravom na međunarodnim i svjetskim izložbama", *SOPHOS, časopis mladih istraživača*, 5 (2012), p. 127.

<sup>28</sup> Cordileone, "Inventing Traditions in Bosnia", p. 201.

2) shifting attitudes towards architecture and urban living in Sarajevo, and 3) constitution of the Bosnian Muslims or Bosniaks as a nation.<sup>29</sup>

The first question, the issue of the veil, Maurer puts in the broader context of early 20th century modernist movements in the Islamic world where the veil was understood as an obstacle to progress and an example of decadent currents in understanding Islam. The interpretation of the veil in this way was born under the influence of Orientalist ideas and precisely in the countries that were under colonial rule, which is also applicable to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Doubts and debates about the head covering of the woman continued during the early period of Tito's Yugoslavia, and ended with rejection of the veil. It is interesting that the rejection was "initiated" by the women themselves through the Women's Antifascist Front. The issue culminated in the enactment of the Law Forbidding the Veil in 1950, which states that "in order to remove the age-old mark of subordination and backwardness of Muslim women, to facilitate the full use of Muslim women's rights [...], the wearing of veils [...] and any covering of a woman's face is prohibited".<sup>30</sup>

Architectural and urban interventions that followed the arrival of Austro-Hungary are the next topic that Maurer deals with. Due to lack of understanding of the Islamic heritage and Islamic concept of the city, the Austro-Hungarian government started the purification of the architectural heritage of the pre-Austro-Hungarian period. Urbanistic interventions in Sarajevo were made under the pretext that the old buildings did not meet the new needs – and in the end "imperial civil servants experienced some success in urbanizing their colony".<sup>31</sup> This is reminiscent of the words "carrying civilization to Oriental peoples", which Kállay uttered in the aforementioned interview for *The Daily*

<sup>29</sup> Desmond Maurer, "Orientalism and Self-Orientalisation in Sarajevo", *Godišnjak Bošnjačke zajednice kulture "Preporod"*, (2014), p. 184.

<sup>30</sup> "Izražavajući želje narodnih masa, radnih kolektiva i masovnih organizacija, a u cilju da se otkloni vjekovna oznaka potčinjenosti i zaostalosti žene muslimanke, da se olakša ženi muslimanki puno korištenje prava izvojevanih u Narodnooslobodilačkoj borbi i socijalističkoj izgradnji zemlje i da joj se obezbijedi puna ravnopravnost i šire učešće u društvenom, kulturnom i privrednom životu zemlje zabranjuje se nošenje zara i feredže i svako pokrivanje lica žene", see: *Zakonom o zabrani nošenja zara i feredže*, promulgated in Sept 29, 1950 and published in Oct 10, 1950 in *Službenom listu NR BiH*, No. 32, p. 427.

<sup>31</sup> Donia, "The Proximate Colony", p. 2.

*Chronicle* in 1895. The colonial view of the backwardness of Bosnia and Herzegovina was reflected several decades later, in the middle of the 20th century, when a significant part of the buildings of the Sarajevo Old Town was demolished.

The last topic at the focus of Maurer's interest is the question of the Bosnian Muslim nation, which is no less interesting when viewed in an atmosphere of orientalist ideas. The author views this issue in a broader historical, geographical and political context, problematizing the question of the nation above all. Within this topic, his parallel between colonialism – orientalism – nationalism is interesting. He notes that compared to the nascent Serb and Croat nationalisms of the late 19th century, Bosnian Muslims were seen as a kind of obstacle to resolving the national question within the colonized area. Maurer explains that Bosnian Muslims “represented the Oriental baseline, or, at best, what happens to Europeans when degraded by Orientalism”.<sup>32</sup>

Without denying the modernisation brought by the Austro-Hungarian administration to Bosnia and Herzegovina, one cannot escape the impression of obvious Orientalism in the Austro-Hungarian government's efforts to reshape Bosnia and Herzegovina's cultural heritage, with an emphasis on its Islamic component. Numerous cultural projects have been wrapped in the cloak of latent Orientalism, which ultimately resulted the “invented tradition”. The existing stylistic forms were denied, and new ones were set as an unavoidable norm. The complexity of the problem in which Bosnian Muslims were unknowingly involved led to the rejection of their own and embracing the new tradition, which ultimately led to self-orientalisation.

The layeriness of Austro-Hungarian Orientalism and Bosnian self-Orientalism is also evident by a seemingly benign “creative segment”, which appeared during the Austro-Hungarian period. “These are postcards [...]”, phenomenon researched by Mirza Hasan Ćeman in the study *Islam and Islamic Culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina as themes and motifs on postcards from 1878 to 1918*. In his work Ćeman” noticed the uninterrupted continuity of special views in relation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Islam and Islamic culture, Muslim tradition and Muslims”.<sup>33</sup> This special view is Orientalist's view and is visible on

<sup>32</sup> Desmond, “Orientalism and Self-Orientalisation in Sarajevo”, p. 215.

<sup>33</sup> “Zamijetio neprekinuti kontinuitet posebnog nazora u odnosu na Bosnu i Hercego-

the postcards of the Austro-Hungarian period through the themes of sensationalism, exoticism, irredentism, romanticism, cultural racism and “a kind of biological superiority of Western man”. In addition to an exhaustive interpretation of Orientalist themes on postcards, the author is particularly critical of contemporary uncritical reproductions of these postcards, which he sees as neo-orientalism – a continuation of Austro-Hungarian Orientalism.

### An Example of Self-Orientalism: Sebil in Sarajevo

“Sebil was built in Baščaršija”<sup>34</sup> – with this short remark, Mula Mustafa Bašeski, a Sarajevo chronicler, recorded in his *Chronicle* the construction of a *sebil* (fountain) in 1754. The *waqfnama* (endowment of deed), written four years later on July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1758 confirms the authenticity of the Bašeski’s words and reveals the name of the founder. It is Mehmed Pasha Kukavica,<sup>35</sup> Bosnian governor of the Ottoman period.

*Sebil*, built by Mehmed-pasha Kukavica, was located a little south of today’s *sebil* and remained there for a century, until 1858, when it was demolished due to decay. Some ten years later, around 1868, a new *sebil* was built on the same site on the initiative of Sarajevo coppersmiths and iron traders, probably modeled on the old one. Rare photographs from the second half of the 19th century allow a conclusion about its appearance – it was a one-room building with a dome, open on four sides, and inside there was a fountain.<sup>36</sup>

The *sebil* was demolished in 1891 and in the same year the Austro-Hungarian authorities commissioned the architect Alexander Wittek to design a new one on its place.<sup>37</sup> Two decades later, in 1913, the

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vinu, islam i islamsku kulturu, muslimansku tradiciju i muslimane”, see: Mirza Hasan Čeman, *Islamska kultura u Bosni i Hercegovini kao teme i motivi na razglednicama od 1878. do 1918. godine: prilog kritici neoorijentalizma*, Sarajevo, 2003, (neobjavljeni rad), p. 76.

<sup>34</sup> “Sagrađen je sebilj na Baščaršiji”, see: Mula Mustafa Bašeskija, *Ljetopis: (1746–1804)*, trans. Mehmed Mujezinović, Sarajevo, Veselin Masleša, 1987, [1968], p. 30.

<sup>35</sup> Historical sources do not reveal why Mehmed-pasha Kukavica delayed writing *waqfnama* for *sebil* for four years, see: Alija Bejtić, “Bosanski namjesnik Mehmed paša Kukavica i njegove zadužbine u Bosni (1752-1756 i 1757-1760)”, *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju i istoriju jugoslovenskih naroda pod turskom vladavinom*, br. 6–7 (1958), p. 89–90.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 95; Hamdija Kreševljaković, *Izabrana djela*, vol. III, Sarajevo, Veselin Masleša, 1991, p. 126.

<sup>37</sup> Kreševljaković, *Izabrana djela*, vol. III, p. 126.

Austro-Hungarian *sebil* was moved a few meters to the north, where it is still located today.<sup>38</sup> *Sebil* was repaired and restored several times (1981, 1984, 2005), but despite the latter interventions, it retained the original appearance given to it by Wittek.

According to Nedžad Kurto, Alexandar Wittek is a typical eclectic architect, which is visible in his most important project – Sarajevo City Hall (*Vijećnica*).<sup>39</sup> Wittek visited Cairo whose Mamluk architecture served him as inspiration for the City Hall in Sarajevo, today considered as one of the most famous Neo-Moorish buildings in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>40</sup> As *sebil* preceded the project of the City Hall, it is not known what inspired Wittek for final looks of *sebil*. Kurto believes that Wittek's *sebil* is very similar to a stone fountain next to the *türbe* of the famous Ottoman architect Mimar Sinan in Istanbul.<sup>41</sup> After comparative, formal and stylistic analysis, it must be admitted that the similarity is obvious, first of all, both buildings have an octagonal layout, the vertical division is similar – the first level consists of stairs, the second is with fountains, the third with *mashrabiya* and small openings, the fourth is a string course with a roof, and the fifth is a dome with an *alem* on the top. Compared to the Ottoman fountains in Istanbul and those erected in Cairo, it is concluded that Kurto was right with the thesis that Wittek was inspired by the fountain near the tomb of Mimar Sinan. Unlike the Istanbul's model, built of stone, the Sarajevo copy has an accentuated wooden construction, and it could be assumed that Wittek wanted to imitate the Bosnian traditional urban architecture.

<sup>38</sup> The renovation of the Sarajevo Old Town (Baščaršija) between 1911 and 1913 was the reason for moving the *sebil* to the north. The cause for the renewal was the fire that happened on October 15, 1908. See: Alija Bejtić, *Ulice i trgovi Sarajeva: topografija, geneza, toponimija*, Sarajevo, Muzej Sarajeva, 1973, p. 95.

<sup>39</sup> Nedžad Kurto, *Arhitektura Bosne i Hercegovine: Razvoj bosanskog sloga*, Sarajevo, Sarajevo Publishing – Međunarodni centar za mir, 1998, p. 307.

<sup>40</sup> There is no consensus on the name of the style, some authors call it pseudo-Moorish, others neo-Moorish, while recently the term Orientalizing style is increasingly used. See: Ibrahim Krzović, *Arhitektura Bosne i Hercegovine 1878-1918 – katalog izložbe*, Sarajevo, Umjetnička galerija BiH, 1987; Donia, *Sarajevo: Biografija grada*, p. 94; Maximilian Hartmuth, "K.(u.)k. colonial? Contextualizing Architecture and Urbanism in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1878-1918.", *Wechsel Wirkungen: Austria-Hungary, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Western Balkans, 1878-1918*, ed. Clemens Ruthner et al., New York, Peter Lang, 2015, p. 162.

<sup>41</sup> Kurto, *Arhitektura Bosne i Hercegovine*, p. 306–307.

Today, *sebil* is seen as one of the symbols of Sarajevo and is an unavoidable tourist attraction. In addition, there are numerous replicas of *sebil* in the sister cities of Sarajevo such as Belgrade, Novi Pazar, Sjenica, Rožaje, St. Louis, Bursa, Konya, Ankara, Karamürsel and İzmir.

If – after a superficial acceptance of *sebil* as a symbol of Sarajevo – one steps deeper and tries to understand what *sebil* represents, one comes to the unequivocal conclusion that *sebil* represents nothing else but itself. Applying the iconological method of Erwin Panofsky, we will understand that except for the first two steps in the analysis (pre-iconographic description and iconographic analysis) it is impossible to look for any deeper meaning.

One of the few who saw the inconsistency of taking *sebil* as a symbol of Sarajevo is Valerijan Žujo, Bosnian writer and journalist, who says: “Sarajevo *sebil* is a cheap copy of marble *sebil* next to the türbe of the great Mimar Sinan in Constantinople”, and continues, “One is, therefore, the Constantinople original, and the other is this pretentious Austro-Hungarian wooden kiosk”.<sup>42</sup> The key statement made by Žujo is his comparison of *sebil* with metal objects made in Sarajevo after instructions from Vienna – for Valerijan Žujo Sarajevo *sebil* “behaves the same as the original Sarajevo ewer to ewers made by students of the Arts and Crafts School in Sarajevo, after sketches of Viennese professors”. It is here that Žujo reminds us of Diane Reynolds Cordileone’s essay *Swords Into Souvenirs* in which the Cordileone explains in detail how the Austro-Hungarian administration made a turnaround in the arts and crafts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the way that professors and artists from Vienna designed eclectic art objects, and gradually distracted local artisans from the existing traditional objects.<sup>43</sup> *Sebil* is nothing but self-orientalisation in which the local population participates, what Desmond Maurer wrote about. The domestic insistence on the peculiarities of *sebil* is neo-Orientalism elaborated by Mirza Hasan Ćeman.

<sup>42</sup> “Sarajevski sebilj jeftina je kopija mramornog sebilja uz turbe velikog Mimara Sinana u Carigradu, [...]. Jedno je, dakle, carigradski original, a drugo ovaj pretenciozni austrougarski drveni kiosk”, see: Valerijan Žujo, *Žujo: Životopisi ljudi i gradova*, April 24, 2021 (accessed Sept 1, 2021, <https://nomad.ba/zujo-zivotopisi-ljudi-i-gradova>).

<sup>43</sup> Diane Reynolds Cordileone, “Swords Into Souvenirs: Bosnian Arts and Crafts Under Habsburg Administration”, *Doing Anthropology in Wartime and War Zones. World War I and the Cultural Sciences in Europe*, ed. Reinhard Johler et al., Bielefeld, Transcript, 2010, p. 169–190.

Leaving aside the anecdotes and the patina on the Sarajevo *sebil*, we will see that this is a colonial project of the Austro-Hungarian administration in the old part of Sarajevo. Architecture of *sebil* is neither particularly complex nor aestheticized, it is a modest fountain. From the moment it was erected, it became the oriental fountain that the Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy wanted to see. Truth be told, a fountain of this type never existed in Bosnia before. During the aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990's, *sebil* grew from a colonial heritage shrouded in a pseudo-Islamic cloak into a national heritage.<sup>44</sup>

## Conclusion

The cultural policy of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Bosnia and Herzegovina left a deep mark. One of those who pursued such a policy was Benjamin von Kállay, Minister of Finance of Austria-Hungary and Governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Considering that the Bosnian Islamic heritage needs to be improved, Kállay introduces changes in the field of culture and art, where he somewhat neglects the local tradition and introduces a new one. Such cannot be separated from the Said's theory of Orientalism. The changes did not go in the direction of the absolute annulment of the "oriental" character of Bosnia, but in the direction of creating an "Orient" tailored by Austro-Hungary. The most notable interventions are in the architecture and urbanism of Bosnian cities, which were orientalised by the introduction of the Neo-Moorish style. One in a series of examples of the Orientalist narrative of the Austro-Hungarian period is the Sarajevo *sebil*. This fountain, which is located in the heart of the Sarajevo Old Town, is today mistaken for a symbol of the city. After *sebil* is placed under the microscope of postcolonial critique and the studies of Orientalism, it is concluded that *sebil* is *corpus alienum*. If Orientalism is defined as a presumed and imposed vision of the Orient, then *sebil* is a product of Orientalism. But when this presumed and imposed vision is accepted by the Orient and the

<sup>44</sup> Maximilian Hartmuth tries to deconstruct the established "myths" about the emphasized orientalism of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and also tries to point out the wrong one-dimensional approach to the architecture of the Austro-Hungarian period. That is why it is necessary to continue the postcolonial discussion, and critically deconstruct, contextualize and revalue the Austro-Hungarian heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to get a broader picture, see: Hartmuth, "K.(u.)k. colonial?", p. 174.

Orientalism, that is, when the Orientals accept Orientalist imaginations about themselves– then it is self-Orientalism. Sarajevo *sebil* is just a fountain, an imposed identity and an example of self-Orientalism.

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## Od orijentalizma do samoorijentalizma u bosanskom kontekstu

### Sažetak

Kulturalna politika Austro-Ugarske monarhije u Bosni i Hercegovini ostavila je dubok trag. Jedan od onih koji je sprovodio takvu politiku bio je Benjamin von Kállay, austrougarski ministar finansija i upravitelj Bosne i Hercegovine. Smatrajući da je bosansko islamsko naslijeđe nužno unaprijediti, Kállay uvodi promjene na polju kulture i umjetnosti, gdje zatečenu tradiciju donekle zanemaruje, a uvodi novu. Ovakvo djelovanje ne može se odvojiti od Saidovske teorije orijentalizma. Promjene nisu išle u smjeru apsolutnog poništavanja “orijentalnog” karaktera Bosne, već u smjeru kreiranja “Orijenta” po mjeri Austro-Ugarske. Najprimjetnije intervencije su na arhitekturi i urbanizmu bosanskih gradova, koji su uvođenjem neomaurskog stila orijentalizirani. Jedan u nizu primjera orijentalističkog narativa austrougarskog perioda je sarajevski sebilj. Danas se ova česma, koja se nalazi u srcu sarajevske čaršije, greškom uzima za simbol grada. Nakon što se sebilj stavi pod mikroskop postkolonijalne kritike i studija orijentalizma, zaključuje se da je sebilj *corpusalienum*. Ukoliko se orijentalizam definiše, između ostalog, kao pretpostavljena i nametnuta vizija Orijenta, onda je sebilj proizvod orijentalizma. Ali, kada ta pretpostavljena i nametnuta vizija bude prihvaćena od strane Orijenta i Orijentalca, odnosno kada Orijentalac prihvata orijentalističke imaginacije o samom sebi – tada je riječ o samo-orijentalizmu. Sarajevski sebilj je samo česma, nametnuti identitet i primjer samo-orijentalizma.

**Gljučne riječi:** orijentalizam, samo-orijentalizam, sebilj, Sarajevo, kulturalna politika, Austro-Ugarska monarhija, Bosna i Hercegovina, Baščaršija, Benjamin von Kállay.