

Monografija multimedijalne izložbe “Pod nebom vedre vjere – Islam i Evropa u iskustvu Bosne”,
Sarajevo, Collegium Artisticum, 11. 10. 2023. – 18. 11. 2023.

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Monograph of the Multimedia Exhibition

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“Pod nebom vedre vjere –
Islam i Evropa u iskustvu Bosne”

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Sarajevo, 2023.

Sa muslimanima Bosne i Hercegovine kultura islama živi na evropskom tlu više od pet stoljeća. Susrela se Evropa s islamom, naravno, i mnogo ranije, kada je “historijski susret s arapskom kulturom trajno obilježio zapadnu kulturu”, kroz njihovu zajedničku “mediteransku povijest u kojoj su se međusobno susretale i poticale, ili izazivale” (H. Belting). Ali u riznicama evropskih katedrala, kao ni u odjeljenjima islamske umjetnosti velikih evropskih muzeja, nema tragova o bosanskim svjetovima islama.

Slaveni u srcu Evrope prihvatili su islam u vrijeme kada se zidaju *predziđa kršćanstva* i kada su protjerivani Sefardi sa evropskog juga, od kojih su neki novu domovinu pronašli u Bosni i u nju donijeli svoju *Haggadu* – jedan od najljepše oslikanih rukopisa ove vrste u svijetu, koji će bosanski muslimani pažljivo čuvati i nekoli-ko puta spasiti.

U univerzalne vrijednosti i temeljne istine islama, koje dijele sa svim muslimanima širom svijeta, muslimani Bosne će ugraditi i iskustvo jedne slojevite historije *dugog trajanja* i jedinstvene kulturne geografije u čijem su tkanju bili živi tragovi Ilira, slavenske mitologije, Crkve bosanske – u kojoj su se ispreplitali razni kalendari, pisma, jezici i običaji.

Evropa o bosanskim svjetovima islama intenzivnije saznaje tek s dolaskom Austro-Ugarske. U tom brdovitom i šumovitom i vodom bogatom srcu svog kontinenta, Evropljani otkrivaju jedan složeni svijet i način života koji ne mogu jednostrano opisati. Početkom 20. stoljeća jedan muslimanski plemić iz Bosne, Safvet-beg Bašagić, završava svoju doktorsku disertaciju u Beču, koristeći se kako njemačkim tako i orijentalnim jezicima, posjećuje prvu izložbu buntovnih umjetnika *Secesije*, o kojoj piše pjesmu, lomeći se i sam pred izazovima “novog vremena”, i ni po čemu se naoko, na ulici, ne razlikuje od stanovnika Beča.

Orijentalni šarm Bosne, svojom vitalnošću, osjećajem za lijepo i za radost života, privlačio je Evropu – ali ona taj muslimanski svijet nije mogla lahko razumjeti. Ni austrijski car i kralj nije mogao pročitati pismo koje je stiglo iz dalekog Počitelja na njegovu kancelariju 1902. godine od jedne ponosne i odvažne žene, Begzade Gavrankapetanović, rođene Bašagić, koja je njime ustala u zaštitu svog imanja koje joj stoljećima pripada, a zahvaljujući kojem je školovala sinove na evropskim visokim školama. Ni Caru i Kralju, a ni njegovoj administraciji, nije bilo poznato pismo bosančica, ili, preciznije, *begovica*, kojom su pisale bosanske muslimanke sve do sredine 20. stoljeća, pa je pismo vraćeno.

U rukopisima brojnih biblioteka širom Bosne bosančica se smjenjivala sa glagoljicom, latinicom, ćirilicom, arebicom, a pisalo se i na orijentalnim i na evropskim jezicima. Biblioteke su u Bosni, pred navalom paleži i smrti, stoljećima spašavane kao i goli životi – o čemu su i u ovoj izložbi predstavljena brojna svjedočanstva. Biblioteke su oduvijek bile dio života bosanskih muslimana. Samo u Sarajevu je u protokolima sarajevskog

With Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the culture of Islam has been living on the European soil for over five centuries. Of course, Europe encountered Islam far earlier, when the “historic encounter with Arabic culture permanently marked the Western culture”, through their common “Mediterranean history where they encountered and spurred or challenged each other” (H. Belting). However, in treasures of European cathedrals, or in departments of Islamic arts of big European museums, there are no traces of Bosnian worlds of Islam.

Slavs at the heart of Europe accepted Islam at the time when *bulwarks of Christianity* were built and when Sephardi were persecuted from the South of Europe, some of whom found Bosnia and brought there their *Haggadah*, one of the most beautifully illustrated manuscripts of the kind in the world, which Bosnian Muslims would carefully keep and save several times.

Muslims of Bosnia would incorporate, in the universal values and fundamental truths of Islam which they share with all Muslims across the world, an experience of a multilayered history of *long duration* and a unique cultural geography the texture of which encompassed living traces of Illyrians, Slavic mythology, Church of Bosnia – where different calendars, scripts, languages and customs are interwoven.

Europe learned more intensively about Bosnian worlds of Islam only upon the arrival of Austro-Hungary. At this hilly, wooded and water-rich heart of its continent, Europeans discovered a complex world and the way of life which they cannot describe one-sidedly. In the early 20th century, a Muslim aristocrat from Bosnia, Safvet-beg Bašagić, completed his doctoral dissertation in Vienna using both German and Oriental languages, and visited the first exhibition of rebellious artists of *Secession*. He wrote a poem about it, ambivalent himself before challenges of the “new time”; in the street, he was apparently no different from inhabitants of Vienna. With its vitality, sense for beautiful and joys of life, the Oriental charm of Bosnia attracted Europe – although it could not easily understand the Muslim world. Neither could Austrian Emperor and King read a letter which arrived from distant Počitelj in his office, in 1902, from a proud and courageous woman, Begzada Gavrankapetanović, née Bašagić. With this letter, she stood up to protect her estate which had belonged to her for centuries, and thanks to which she educated her sons at European universities. Neither Emperor and King nor his administration could read the Bosančica or, more accurately, *Begovica* script which Bosnian Muslim women used until the mid-20th century, and the letter was therefore returned.

In manuscripts in the many libraries across Bosnia Bosančica script alternated with Glagolitic, Latin, Cyrillic, Arebica, and people wrote both in Oriental and in European languages. Before onslaughts of arson and death, libraries in Bosnia were rescued for centuries, same as lives – and this exhibition presents numerous

šerijatskog suda u 18. i 19. stoljeću evidentirano preko 200 privatnih biblioteka, a vrijedna biblioteka mogla se naći čak i u planinskom selu podno Bjelašnice: tu se čuvao *Kanun* Ibn Sināa, jedno od najvažnijih djela u historiji medicinskih nauka.

Koliko je Evropa bila u prilici znati da su bosanski muslimani darovali jednom od najvećih carstava u historiji čovječanstva četvericu velikih vezira, koji su, kao dobrotvori, umjesto visokih zidova, podizali škole, biblioteke, javna kupatila, konačišta, javne kuhinje, bolnice i mostove? Koliko je, uopće, izvan najužih krugova, poznato da su bosanski muslimani tom carstvu dali velike majstore kaligrafije i minijature, tumače klasičnih djela na orijentalnim jezicima, a koja se danas nalaze i u evropskim zbirkama, kao rukopis Hasana Kafije Pruščaka o uređenju države, a koji je preveden na brojne evropske jezike?

U kulturi gradova i gradskog načina života, koja je s islamom došla u Bosnu, u stoljećima evropske renesanse razvilo se nešto jedinstveno na evropskom tlu: udruženja obrtnika (*esnafi*) koja su, za razliku od zapadnoevropskih cehova, bila otvorena pripadnicima svih religija.

U bosanskim muslimanima stoljećima su se sastajali svjetovi: pariška Sorbonna i Čaršijska džamija u Koraju pored Brčkog; bosanski sevdah u Mostaru i operne arije u Bernu i Zürichu; Memorijalni centar u Potočarima i najutjecajnija škola evropske avangarde – *Bauhaus*. I kada je u 17. stoljeću odvažna Safa-kada iz dalekog Glamoča kod tadašnjeg sultana Mehmeda IV izborila razmjenu svoga supruga, kliškog alajbega, za zarobljenika iz utjecajne mletačke obitelji, to je bila jedinstvena priča na marginama velikih ratova.

Zato ne čudi tekst koji je prije gotovo pola stoljeća u *Takvimu*, godišnjaku Islamske zajednice, objavio Muhamed Hadžijahić i u kojem je otvoreno, argumentirano i emotivno progovorio o “jednom vrlo bolnom pitanju koje je izraz našeg neznanja, primitivizma, aljkavosti i nedostatka svijesti za opću stvar”, a koje se, riječima autora, tiče našeg odnosa “prema kulturnom blagu koje se kao tekovina islamske civilizacije našlo u našoj sredini”. Neposredan povod za taj tekst bio je izostanak eksponata islamske kulture iz Bosne i Hercegovine na velikom Festivalu islama (*World of Islam*) u Londonu 1976. godine, iako je za to Islamska zajednica dobila poziv. Ogorčeno se ovaj veliki erudita osvrnuo i na način kako je islamska kultura u tadašnjoj Jugoslaviji bila predstavljena na još jednom važnom i nešto ranijem događaju – na izložbi *Umjetnost na tlu Jugoslavije od praistorije do danas*, u Parizu 1971. godine. Prema mišljenju određenog broja stručnjaka, i uz sve ambiciozne najave, londonski Festival islama, kao i svi kasniji postavi umjetnosti islama u evropskim muzejskim zbirkama, samo su osnažili podjelu između (tradicionalnog) svijeta islama i (modernog) Zapada. Kako je na jednom mjestu primijećeno, britanski muslimani tada nisu bili pitani kako bi oni sami voljeli opisati svoju duhovnost i svakodnevne prakse, oni su samo bili “uokvireni”. (K. Grinell, 2018)

testimonies to it. Libraries have always been part of the life of Bosnian Muslims. In the 18th and 19th century, only in Sarajevo, registers of the sharia court of Sarajevo recorded over 200 private libraries. A valuable library could be found even in a mountain village at the foot of the Bjelašnica, where *Kanun* by Ibn Sinā, one of the most important works in the history of medical sciences, was kept.

How could Europe know that Bosnian Muslims gave, to one of the greatest empires in the history of mankind, four grand viziers who, as benefactors, did not commission high walls but rather schools, libraries, public baths, inns, public kitchens, hospitals and bridges? How well-known was it, except in the innermost circles, that Bosnian Muslims gave to the empire great masters of calligraphy and miniature, and interpreters of classical works in Oriental languages which are still held in European collections, such as the manuscript by Hasan Kafi Pruščak about organization of state, which has been translated into numerous European languages?

In the centuries of European Renaissance, in the culture of cities and urban way of life which arrived in Bosnia with Islam, something unique developed on European soil: associations of craftsmen (*esnafs*) which, unlike Western European guilds, were open to members of all religions.

Through centuries, Bosnian Muslims united the worlds: Paris Sorbonne and the Čaršijska Mosque at Koraj near Brčko, Bosnian *sevdah* in Mostar and operatic arias in Bern and Zurich, Memorial Center in Potočari and the most influential school of European avant-garde – *Bauhaus*. And when, in the 17th century, bold Safa-kada from distant Glamoč managed to negotiate, with sultan of the time Mehmed IV, exchange of her husband, an alaybey of Klis, for a captive from an influential Venetian family, it was a unique story in the margins of great wars. It is therefore not surprising to read a text published by Muhamed Hadžijahić in *Takvim*, almanac of the Islamic Community, almost half a century ago, where he openly, emotionally and in an informed way spoke about “a very painful issue which is an expression of our ignorance, primitivism, negligence and a lack of awareness of a general cause”, and which, in the words of the author, pertained to our attitude “toward the cultural wealth which is found in our environment as heritage of Islamic civilization”. The direct reason for the text was absence of exhibits of Islamic culture from Bosnia and Herzegovina at the great festival *World of Islam* in London in 1976, although the Islamic Community had been invited to it. This great scholar was also very embittered with the way in which Islamic culture in Yugoslavia of the time was represented at another important and somewhat earlier event – at the exhibition *Art on the Soil of Yugoslavia from Prehistoric Times to the Present* in Paris in 1971. In the opinion of some experts, despite all the ambitious announcements, London festival of Islam, like all the later exhibitions of the art of Islam in European museum collections, only deepened the division between the (traditional) world of Islam and the (modern) West. As once noted, British Muslims were

Izložba “Pod nebom vedre vjere – Islam i Evropa u iskustvu Bosne” u tom je smislu pionirsko nastojanje da se prvi put pruži vlastiti pogled na historiju i savremenost islama u Evropi, kakvo je iskustvo Bosna imala u susretu sa islamom, ali i kako je Evropa kroz stoljeća gradila svoj odnos prema islamu u Bosni.

Ova izložba, kroz višegodišnji rad brojnih domaćih i međunarodnih stručnjaka, ukazuje na manje poznate segmente i priče, u širokoj lepezi tema i sadržaja koji obuhvaćaju doprinose islama nauci, obrazovanju, izrazima u književnosti, umjetnosti i arhitekturi na evropskom tlu. Ona otvara pogled na svjetove intime i u prostore duhovnosti, na odnos prema prirodi; na život u bogatstvu različitosti i u milosrđu; budi svijest o ljepoti Allahovog stvaranja, ali i o prolaznosti – sažetu u karakterističnom motivu bijelih nišana razasutih po bosanskim avlijama. Ova izložba nastavlja tamo gdje su započeli veliki istraživači između dva svjetska rata, između ostalih: Hamdija Kreševljaković, Vejsil Ćurčić, Derviš M. Korkut, Mehmed Handžić, Muhamed Hadžijahić, a koji su već tada sanjali budući Muzej islamske kulture i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine, za koji, vjerujemo, ovaj veliki projekat, gotovo stoljeće kasnije, pruža nedvosmisleni potvrdu utemeljenja, kao dio kulturne historije Bosne i Hercegovine i Evrope.

Aida Abadžić Hodžić

not then asked how they would like to describe their spirituality and daily practices, they were only “placed in a frame”. (K. Grinell, 2018)

In this respect, exhibition *Under the Sky of Bright Faith – Islam and Europe in the Bosnian Experience* is a pioneer attempt to provide, for the first time, its own view of the history and contemporaneity of Islam in Europe, the experience of Bosnia in its encounter with Islam, and the way in which Europe has built its attitude toward Islam in Bosnia through centuries.

Thanks to years-long work by many local and international experts, the exhibition reveals less-known segments and stories, in a wide array of topics and contents which encompass contributions of Islam to science, education, expressions in literature, arts and architecture on the soil of Europe. It opens a view to the worlds of intimacy and into spaces of spirituality, to relationship with nature, to life in the wealth of differences and in charity, it raises awareness of the beauty of Allah’s creation, as well as of transience – summarized in a characteristic motif of white *nišan* tombstones scattered in Bosnian yards.

The exhibition continues what was initiated by great researchers between the two wars, among others, by: Hamdija Kreševljaković, Vejsil Ćurčić, Derviš M. Korkut, Mehmed Handžić, and Muhamed Hadžijahić, who even then dreamed about the future Museum of Islamic Culture and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that this great project, almost a century later, provides an unambiguous confirmation of its foundation as part of the cultural history of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of Europe.