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A NEW STUDY IN BOSNIAN ONOMASTICS

Review of the book: Turbić-Hadžagić A., Musić E., Haverić Đ., Muratović A. *Bosanskohercegovačka prezimena* (Vols. 1–3). Zagreb: Bošnjačka nacionalna zajednica za Grad Zagreb i Zagrebačku županiju, 2018–2023.

This paper provides a review of a comprehensive study of Bosnian-Herzegovinian surnames. It is a multidisciplinary research project that lasted from 2018 to 2023, involving several authors and publishers, resulting in three volumes. The results of the study under review are based on Bosnian-Herzegovinian and foreign archival material, birth registers, medieval and early modern inscriptions, charters, and contemporary population censuses. The reviewed volumes employ an adequate methodology which allows for systematic presentation of the results. Some shortcomings of the technical arrangement of the first volume were successfully eliminated in the following parts of the edition. Due to the abundance of material and insight into the chronological development of surnames as a category of anthroponyms, these books are of an immense importance for Bosnian linguistics. Additionally, beyond their onomastic value, these three volumes provide insight into the broader historical, religious, and cultural contexts, shedding new light on the complex ethnolinguistic contacts in that part of the Balkans, both in the past and today.

Keywords: Balkans; Bosnian language; Bosnian surnames; historical anthroponymy; etymology; structure of surnames; language contacts

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НОВОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ ПО БОСНИЙСКОЙ ОНОМАСТИКЕ

Рец. на кн.: Turbić-Hadžagić A., Musić E., Haverić Đ., Muratović A. Bosanskohercegovačka prezimena. T. 1–3. Zagreb : Bošnjačka nacionalna zajednica za Grad Zagreb i Zagrebačku županiju, 2018–2023.

Данная рецензия посвящена комплексному исследованию боснийско-герцеговинских фамилий — междисциплинарному проекту, осуществленному силами нескольких авторов и издательств. Его результаты изложены в трех томах, вышедших с 2018 по 2023 г. Рецензируемое исследование основано на изучении боснийско-герцеговинских и иностранных архивных материалов, записей актов гражданского состояния, надписей, относящихся к Средневековью и раннему Новому времени, старинных хартий и данных современных переписей населения. Авторы опираются на адекватную методологию, делающую возможным систематическое представление результатов исследования. При этом если в первом томе встречаются некоторые технические недостатки, то в последующих томах издания они успешно устранены. Благодаря обилию материала и детальному описанию стадий формирования фамилий как антропонимической категории данная работа имеет огромное значение для боснийской лингвистики. Помимо своей очевидной ценности для ономастики, эти три тома позволяют взглянуть на развитие системы антропонимов в более широком историческом, религиозном и культурном контекстах, проливая новый свет на сложные этноязыковые контакты в южной части Балкан как в прошлом, так и в настоящем.

Ключевые слова: Балканский полуостров; боснийский язык; боснийские фамилии; историческая антропонимия; этимология; структура фамилий; языковые контакты

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The three volumes under the common title *Bosnian-Herzegovinian Surnames* were published as follows: the first one subtitled *Surnames derived from the Names of the Heralds of the Word of God* was published in 2018 by Amira Turbić-Hadžagić and Elvir Musić; the second volume consisting of two parts published in 2020 and 2022 with the common subtitle *Surnames derived from Personal Names Originating from the Islamic Orient* was prepared by Amira Turbić-Hadžagić (parts 1 and 2), Elvir Musić (part 1), Đenita Haverić (part 2), and Admir Muratović (part 2); finally, the third volume *Surnames Derived from Titles*, which came out in 2023, is signed by Amira Turbić-Hadžagić and Đenita Haverić.

The publisher of the books is the Bosniak National Community of the City of Zagreb and the Zagreb County, while the Institute for Bosnian Linguistic Studies in Tuzla joined as a co-publisher when the third book was published.

The importance of this work is evident both in the context of southern Slavic studies and Slavic studies as a whole, as it focuses on the socio-onomastics and cultural specificity of Bosnia and Herzegovina — and far beyond Slavic studies.

The project aims, as emphasized by the authors, to contribute to the comprehensive understanding of the anthroponymic landscape of Bosnia and Herzegovina, both past and present. Despite being a relatively small country, Bosnia and Herzegovina has an ethnically diverse population. According to the 2013 census, the country has 3,531,159 inhabitants: 50.11% Bosniaks, 30.78% Serbs, and 15.43% Croats. This multiethnic nature significantly influences the specificity of local surnames, reflecting complex historical, social, and cultural processes.

The authors used numerous sources, ranging from ancient inscriptions, charters, gift certificates, and letters, to more recent records such as registers and censuses.

In the forewords of each volume, the authors provide essential information regarding their methodology, the technical arrangement of the text and the order in which the information is presented, sources used, the literature, and challenges faced during their work, etc.

The first volume, *Bosnian-Herzegovinian Surnames I*, contains a historical and theoretical introduction to the project and specifically focuses on surnames derived from the names of “the Heralds of God’s Word,” i.e. names of prophets mentioned in the Qur’an and the Bible (p. 7).

The first chapter (pp. 11–24) offers an overview of the historical development of anthroponymy in modern Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with a chronological review of significant medieval, early modern, and recent sources. The authors pay particular attention to the names attested in early medieval documents like the stone tablet known as *Humačka ploča* (*Humac tablet*), one of the oldest and most important early medieval Cyrillic monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina (10th–12th c.), which mentions the names: *Mihajlo*, *Krsmir*, who is called “sin

Bretov,” i.e. ‘the son of *Bret*,’ and *Pavitsa*. Among other earliest sources containing anthroponymic elements, of particular interest are the inscription of judge Gradiša in Podbrežje near Zenica (1180–1204), a tombstone that mentions *Gradiša*, *Varvara*, *Jurija*, *Draže Ohumčanin*, *Prokopije*, and the so called *Ploča Kulina bana* (*Tablet of Ban Kulin*) (1193), the inscription of which contains the following anthroponyms: *Vojislava*, *Krile*, *Desivoj*, *Radohna*, *Desin Ratničević*, *Stipan*, *Obrad*, *Milgost*. The authors note that in the sources of the 12th–15th c., personal names are usually used accompanied by appellatives, be it a nickname, a title, a function or any term that refers to the social status of a given person. While in the earliest documents, people were referred to solely by their first names, by the 15th c. a second element, a “proto-surname,” became an inherited element regularly accompanying the first name, which was “the first stage of the development of Bosnian surnames” (p. 15).

The patronymic forms built with the suffixes *-ić*, *-ević*, *-ović* that already have a considerable number of attestations in the sources of the 13th c. are interesting from the perspective of modern onomastic knowledge. The corpus collected by the authors also contains several attestations of the 14th c., in which female persons are identified by either their husbands and or their fathers.¹ Surnames first appeared in cities and were reserved to higher classes of the population. The Ottoman penetration had a very strong cultural, linguistic, and religious influence on all the levels of social organization, including the development of the onomastic formula. In the first chapter, the authors describe all the stages of the development of Bosnian surnames with references to sources and examples whenever necessary.

The third chapter *Classification of Surnames* (pp. 29–34) additionally explains the methodological framework of this book, especially when it comes to the motivational basis of surnames and their origin, pronunciation variants and recorded variants of a particular surname. With the aim of systematization, the author propose classifying Bosnian surnames into six groups: 1) surnames derived from personal names, 2) surnames derived from names of professions, 3) surnames derived from nicknames, 4) surnames derived from ethnonyms, 5) surnames motivated by nouns related to material and immaterial culture, 6. other surnames (p. 34).

There is also a heterogenous corpus of surnames that originate from personal names, the authors distinguish between no less than nine groups, however, the title of this book reduces the corpus to only surnames derived from the personal names of God’s prophets.

¹ Another notice is that in the first volume, the authors use the term *forename* referring to the examples for the medieval period and highlighting their patronymic character or any elements that differentiate them from surnames *strictu sensu*. However, the term is absent from the terminological register in the following volumes.

From the morphological perspective, the surnames derived from personal names are suffixed with: *-ac* (*Jakovac, Lutovac, Mahovac*); *-ač* (*Jankač, Lukač*); *-ać* (*Lukać*); *-aj* (*Ademaj, Isenaj, Mujaj, Mustafaj*); *-aja* (*Šolaja*); *-ja* (*Ivaja*); *-ak* (*Ahmetak, Ivanjak, Jozak*); *-an* (*Jukan, Mešan, Smajkan*); *-ar* (*Lutar*); *-ara* (*Jakara*); *-aš* (*Ahmetaš*); *-at* (*Kubat*); *-ec* (*Jakopec, Jakubec*); *-ef* (*Jonef*); *-ek* (*Ivanek, Janeček, Lukaček*); *-en* (*Juklen*); *-er* (*Lokmer*); *-es* (*Jones, Lukes*); *-eš* (*Ileš*); *-ev* (*Ilijev*); *-ica* (*Ibrica, Mehica, Mustafica*); *-ević* (*Jačević, Mehmedičević*); *-ović* (*Ižaković, Jakirović, Jusanović*); *-i* (*Ademi, Idrizi, Jakupi*); *-ov* (*Davidov, Ivanov, Jovov, Salihov*); *-ovski* (*Ismailovski, Ivanovski, Jakimovski, Jakubovski*), and some others (pp. 35–37). A large group of surnames consists of derivatives from a personal name accompanied with an appellative that originally designated social function, position, profession or title, and the suffix *-ić* or *-ović*, for which the authors, among others, cite these examples: *Ademagić, Adembegović, Dautbegović, Dautčehaić, Dautčehajić, Dautefendić, Eminefendić, Hadžieminić, Hadžijusufović, Ibrahimagić, Ibrahimbegović, Ibrahimkadić, Ibrahimpašić, Idrizagić, Idrizbegović* (p. 37). The authors also distinguish surnames, in which a personal name is accompanied with a kinship term and the suffix *-ović* or *-ić*, however, this word-formational pattern has a smaller number of attestations in the analyzed corpus: *Ibrahimberović, Salihamidžić* (p. 38).

The dictionary entries describe the history of surnames derived from a particular personal name (in the first volume — personal names of prophets) that serves as the headword of the entry, e.g.: “*Abraham / Àbram / Àvraam / Ibrahim* < Hebr. *àbhrāhām* (אַבְרָהָם) the father is exalted, the father of multitudes → Ar. *Ibrāhīm* (ابراهيم) personal male name” (p. 52), the derivatives of which are treated in full five pages.

The volume includes appendices with texts from historical documents like the *Humac Tablet* (11th or 12th c.), *Kulin Ban Tablet* (1193), and the *Charter of Duke Stjepan Kosača to Dubrovnik* (11 April, 1454), as well as a bibliography and index.

The second volume consists of two parts, both subtitled as *Surnames derived from Personal Names Originating from the Islamic Orient*.

It should be emphasized that the experience of working on the previous volume helped prepare this book on a rigorous methodological basis. For the purposes of this research, the surnames were extracted mainly from birth registers (starting from 1891). One conclusion drawn is that Bosnian-Herzegovinian surnames derived from personal names originating in the Islamic Orient are borne by people from various ethnic groups (p. 8).

In all the chapters of the second volume, the clear methodology adopted by the authors allows a very clear and easy reading of the content, the data being presented as follows: the original personal name and derivative surnames; their

etymological interpretations; sociolinguistic and historical data on prominent figures from the history of Islam and, if necessary, from other cultural areas; and, finally, equivalents of the name in foreign languages. The second part of the second volume continues the methodological principles used in the first part. For each surname, the personal name from which it is derived is given, as well as all known variants of the surname and the areas where it was attested.

The value of the second volume, *Bosnian-Herzegovinian Surnames II*, is due to the fact that it contextualizes numerous surnames by citing extra-onomastic and extra-linguistic data, especially those from the history of Islam, other cultures and religions, which makes these two parts of the second volume a valuable source for historians and all those who have no professional linguistic background.

In 2023, Amira Turbić-Hadžagić and Đenita Haverić published *Bosnian-Herzegovinian Surnames III*, the monograph, which is as a logical sequel of the previous two volumes of this important project in Bosnian-Herzegovinian anthroponymy. It focuses on surnames derived from titles, including titles related to jobs or work functions. The analysis is based on the material from the 1850/51 population census in Bosnia and Herzegovina, birth registers (in Bosnia and Herzegovina these books have been kept since 1891), the last census from 2013, as well as other archival materials. It can be noticed from the material presented by the authors in this book that people of all ethnicities living in Bosnia and Herzegovina bear surnames of this type. However, the authors show that in the overall corpus of this type of surnames, the biggest part of the surnames derives from titles borrowed from oriental languages, which is understandable considering the socio-historical circumstances; surnames deriving from the job and honorary titles related to Christian culture are significantly fewer in number.

The third volume is definitely the most comprehensive in the *Bosnian-Herzegovinian Surnames* edition. It separately considers surnames that derive from one and two (or more) titles of oriental origin, from female titles, surnames in which title was only one the components. For the latter surnames, the authors separately analyze surnames that, besides a title component, contain various appellatives, names of ethnicities, phytonyms, zoonyms, etc.

The structure is based on the presentation of the etymology of the title which serves as a headword of the entry (sometimes more than one etymological interpretation is provided), an encyclopedic description of the title, and a list of surnames derived from it. In this book, the authors do not limit themselves to the single normative variant of a surname, they also list all its possible variants, including those that differ only in terms of pronunciation or accent, which reflects the way these surnames are used in the speech of their bearers. In my view,

the authors made a good choice when decided to follow real speech as a criterion in relation to these details.

Technically, some minor flaws are present in the first book of the project, such as the absence of a list of abbreviations in the first volume and the need to structure extensive chapters into smaller units for ease of use, which were addressed in the subsequent volumes.

Summing up, the three volumes of the *Bosnian-Herzegovinian Surnames* hold exceptional scholarly significance. The research is drawn from an analysis of a huge number of linguistic data, sources, and research literature, providing a good insight into materials originating from Arabic, Albanian, Greek, English, French, Latin, Hungarian, German, Old Slavic, Turkish, Persian, etc. The onomastic data and their description can be of interest not only for onomatologists, language historians or dialectologists, but also for all those who are interested in social, cultural and linguistic contacts on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The reviewed books are not only a source of pride for Bosnian studies, one can be sure that they will be actively used by scholars studying languages and history of the South Slavic area in a broader European context.

Abbreviations

Ar. Arabic
Hebr. Hebrew