REMEMBERING THE FORGOTTEN EXPULSIONS OF MUSLIMS FROM SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE BETWEEN THE 1680S AND 1860S: THE CURRENT STATE OF THE HISTORIOGRAPHY

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Abstract: This paper explores the largely neglected history of the expulsions, massacres, and coerced migrations of Muslims from Southeastern Europe between the late 17th and mid-19th centuries. While significant scholarly focus has been given to the 1877–78 Russo-Ottoman War and the 1992–1995 Bosnian genocide, the earlier waves of Muslim displacement following the Ottoman military defeats—particularly in Hungary, the Danube region, Greece, and Serbia—remain under-researched and scarcely acknowledged in both local and international historiography.

The paper outlines how the perception of Muslims as foreign occupiers in emerging Balkan nation-states laid the ideological groundwork for their removal, often through violent means. These acts were not solely military outcomes but rooted in nationalist agendas and the reinterpretation of Muslims as obstacles to national homogeneity. Early examples include the ethnic cleansing in Hungary after 1683, and the forced migration and massacre of Muslims during the Greek War of Independence and the Serbian uprisings. Historiography long ignored these events due to a Eurocentric bias and a reluctance to equate the sufferings of Muslims with other recognized instances of ethnic cleansing. A turning point came in the 1990s with works by Western scholars like Justin McCarthy and Noel Malcolm, and later by Bosniak and Turkish researchers. Still, research remains sparse, especially concerning the pre-1860 period.

The paper also discusses how the memory of these expulsions has been culturally suppressed. Memorial practices in Hungary, Serbia, and Greece often exclude Muslim narratives, even in museums, textbooks, and urban toponymy. While some architectural studies acknowledge Ottoman heritage, broader public memory remains silent. This research calls for comprehensive historiographical and memorial work to address this persistent gap and reassess the historical narrative surrounding Muslim populations in the Balkans.

Keywords: Muslim displacement, Balkan nationalism, ethnic cleansing, historiographical bias

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Introduction

The mass killings and expulsion of Muslims and the destruction of Muslim cultural heritage—architectural monuments, geographical names, and the like—from Southeastern Europe[1] began with the Ottoman defeats and territorial losses after the unsuccessful siege of Vienna in 1683. The Holy League (an anti-Ottoman alliance established in 1684 consisting of the Pope, "who wanted to expel all Muslims from Europe" (Matschke, 2004: 374), the Holy Roman Empire led by the Habsburg monarchy, Poland–Lithuania, Venice, and Russia) started a crusade against the Ottomans and, according to the 1699 treaty of Karlowitz, Hungary (Ottoman-Hungary / Central Hungary) and parts of Serbian and Croatian territories were taken over by the Habsburgs. The Habsburg rule in Hungary, which lasted from the 1680s until the First World War, orchestrated the elimination of Muslim existence in the region. Ethnic cleansing[2] against the Muslims and Jews began during the war between the Holy League and the Ottoman Empire (1685-99): After the fall of the fortified city of Buda, the centre of the vilayet, and an almost three months long siege, most of the Muslims and Jews—according to contemporary sources around 3000 people—were killed and almost all signs of Islamic and Jewish existence destroyed by the conquerors (Frojimovics et al., 1999: 38–40). Hungary was divided among the commanders of the Holy League and these new rulers carried out an ethnic cleansing to rid Hungary of any remaining Muslim or Turkish traces. The Ottomans lost Banat (a territory of Danube river basin divided between today's Hungary, Romania, and Serbia) and additional territories in the war of 1717-18. In those areas, too, Muslims were forcibly expelled. According to the calculations by Géza Dávid there were about 900,000 inhabitants in Hungary under the Ottoman rule and about 50,000 of them were Muslim soldiers and civilians (Dávid, 1995 and 2007).[3] We can assume that during the war of 1683-99 the number of Muslims that were killed, expelled and forcibly converted to Catholicism in Hungary was at least 50,000.[4]

1 I use the term "Southeastern Europe" and "Balkans" in the sense of "Ottoman Europe" including also Hungary, Croatia and Aegean islands.

2 I use in this paper the term "ethnic cleansing" in the same meaning as it has been used for the expulsion of Muslim populations and the destruction of Muslim traces in Bosnia during the war between 1992 and 1995. The term „ethnic cleansing" was first used during the armed conflicts in Bosnia 1992-1995. Therefore I prefer to use it for Hungary, Greece and Serbia for the periods under discussion.

3 I am grateful to Prof. Géza Dávid for his valuable guidance on Hungarian historiography regarding the fate of Muslims in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I also thank my former student Fatih Ekim, who agreed to write his master's thesis in Budapest on Hungarian memorial culture concerning the Ottoman past and the expulsion of Muslims from Hungary.

4 On the conversion of Muslims to Catholicism in Eger, including a list of converts after 1687, see

The next areas of the Muslim expulsions were the Danube, Dniester and Dnieper region, the Crimea, and North Caucasus— border regions to Czarist Russia. In the second half of the 18th century, Russia defeated the Ottoman Empire in two big wars in 1768-1774 and 1788-1792 and large numbers of Muslims in the region were forced to leave. In addition to expelling the Muslims, Russia also followed a policy of attracting or transferring parts of the Ottoman Empire's Orthodox Christian population to the newly conquered regions. Consequently, tens of thousands of Orthodox Christians from the Eastern and Western Black Sea regions migrated to Russia and were settled in the Northeastern and Northwestern Black Sea territories (Gülsoy, 1993; Beydilli, 1988: 365-434).

Expulsion of Muslims intensified with the rise of nationalist movements and the establishment of principalities and states in the Balkans in the 19th century. Supported by the Orthodox church and Great Powers (particularly Russia, but also Great Britain and France), the Balkan nationalists and the leaders of revolts tended to see the Muslims as representatives of the Ottoman rule and therefore regarded them as an enemy and an obstacle to national autonomy. That was one reason for the expulsions and exterminations. Another was to occupy the lands and goods left behind by the Muslim population. That happened in Serbia and Greece in the first half of the 19th century.

Before the beginning of Greek revolt in 1821 the total population in Greece is estimated as 943,000. By the time Greece became independent in 1830, the population had decreased to 712,000. One-fourth of the population was lost during the revolt. In the same period, the population of Morea, the main area of revolution, decreased from 450,000 to 336,000 (Kotsonis, 2025: 304). Muslims and Jews made up the bulk of the decrease, as they were either killed or driven out.

Serbia became autonomous after two revolts: the first revolt between 1804 and 1812, and the second revolt between 1815 and 1817. Serbian authorities estimated the number of Muslims who remained in Serbia after the two revolts occupied around 5000 houses (Vuletić & Delić, 2018: 336) (between 20,000 and 30,000 individuals). After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire by Russia in the war of 1828-29, Serbia gained new territories and its autonomy rights were extended. The Muslim population was forced to leave Serbia between 1829 and 1834 and the settlement of Muslims in the Serbian Principality was forbidden (Hacısalihoğlu, 2018: 47). Only in six fortified cities (Belgrade, Kladovo/Fethülislam, Šabac/

István Sugár, A Mahomedán Vallásról Katolikusra Tért Volt Török Alattvalók Egerben [On Turkish Subjects in Eger Who Converted from the Mohammedan Religion to Catholicism], In B. Ferenc (ed.), *Annales Musei Agriensi. Az Egri Múzeum Évkönyve* XVI-XVII (Eger 1980), pp. 183-207.

Böğürdelen, Smederevo, Sokol, and Užice) were Muslims allowed to live. Even after the Serbian autonomy, in Belgrade and Užice Muslims outnumbered the Serbs. The first census in Serbia took place in 1834 and the Muslims in the six city centres were not counted because they were not regarded as subjects of the Serbian Principality, but rather as subjects of the Ottoman Sultan (Vuletić & Delić, 2018: 333). In 1834, the population of Serbia was 678,192. Within the next decades the number of Serbs increased while the number of Muslims decreased because the Serbian authorities followed a policy of expelling Muslims and ending Ottoman rule in Serbia. Finally, the provocations and pressures resulted in conflicts between Serbs and Muslims in the cities with Muslim populations. An international Conference in Kanlıca/Istanbul in 1862 decided to displace all Muslims from Serbia (Ristić, 2018: 407-422).

The persecution of Muslims and Jews in Greece and Serbia during their revolutions against the Ottoman rule were the first ethnic cleansings in the Balkans since the ethnic cleansing of Muslims and Jews from Hungary at the end of the 17th and early 18th century.[5] For various reasons, those ethnic cleansings in Hungary, Greece, and Serbia have been largely ignored in the existing historiography. There are no reliable statistics about how many Muslims and Jews were killed or what proportions of the total populations they represented. On the basis of the existing literature, however, we can assume that the numbers of expelled or killed Muslims and Jews combined was several hundred thousand and at least 10% of the total population of Hungary, Serbia, and Greece. At the same time, the traces of Islamic culture were erased.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Kosovo, the Sandžak-Region (divided between today's Serbia and Montenegro), parts of Serbia and Montenegro, central and Northern Greece, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Dobrogea/Dobrudža (divided between Romania and Bulgaria) were until the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78 and the First Balkan War of 1912-13 parts of the Ottoman Empire. After the loss of these territories in those wars, a big part of the Muslim population there was killed or expelled, but— contrary to Hungary, Greece, and Serbia before 1870—in these territories, the decimation of the Muslims was not complete. Because of the rivalry among the Great Powers, the attitudes of Great Powers toward the Muslim population in Southeastern Europe had important differences. Russia continued to follow a policy of total displacement of Muslims from the Balkans and supported the establishment of the Orthodox Slav states Serbia and Bulgaria.

5 The characteristics used for the definition of "etchnic cleansing" can be found also in the conflicts in Greece and Serbia.

By defeating the Ottoman Empire in 1877-78, Russia wanted to bring the Balkans under its political influence and created a Bulgarian Principality ("Greater Bulgaria") reaching the Aegean Sea. Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, however, feared a strong dominance of Russia in Southeastern Europe in case of a total expulsion of Muslims, and followed a different policy toward Muslims in the region. Austria-Hungary occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878 and Great Britain forced Russia to accept a revision of the Treaty of St. Stefano signed between the Russian and Ottoman governments on 3 March 1878. The new peace treaty was signed on 13 July 1878 in Berlin by Great Britain, Germany, Russia, the Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary, France, and Italy, thereby securing Ottoman rule in some parts of the Balkans and the existence of the Muslims within the Balkan nation-states. That a significant part of the Muslim population could remain in Southeastern Europe after the end of the Ottoman rule can be regarded as a result of these political differences among the Great Powers.

As indicated in this paper, the fate of Muslims in Hungary, Greece, and Serbia before 1870 had been different. They had been completely massacred or expelled, their cultural heritage had been destroyed. In my paper, I first try to explain the emergence and development of the historiography on the expulsion and sufferings of Balkan Muslims (and Jews) in general. Then I deal with the specific historiography on the expulsion of Muslims from Hungary, parts of Serbia, Croatia, and Greece, namely the territories that had been lost for the Ottoman Empire by the 1860s. I touch also on the arguments in the historiography about the reasons for the Muslim expulsion and genocide in Southeastern Europe. And I explain the attitude of the Balkan national historiography toward Muslim refugees. Finally, I give some examples from Hungary and Greece to explain the debates about forgetting and remembering the fate of the Muslims in these countries.

Emergence and Development of the Historiography on the Expulsion of Muslims

The Ottoman conquest and settlement of Yörüks (Turkish semi-nomadic peasants) in the Balkans (Petkova, 2021) and the crusades against the Ottoman Empire aiming at "expulsion of the Turks" from Europe continued side by side, and anti-Muslim sentiments persist in the region today. Although the rule of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans ended in the early 20th century, attempts to expel the Muslims from the Christian world persisted, including during the national movements among the Balkan nationalists. During the Balkan Wars of 1912–13, revenge for the defeats of the Middle Ages and calls for the expulsion of Turks

from Europe were among the slogans of the warring parties. The Muslims (usually referred to as Turks) in the Balkans were seen as occupation forces in the Christian lands; killing them was regarded as legitimate. The statement of Ratko Mladić, commander of Bosnian Serbs, in Srebrenica is a recent example. On July 11, 1995, he declared before the camera: "After the fight against the *dahija,* finally the time has come to take revenge against the Turks of this region." He was referring to the Boshniaks as the Turks of Srebrenica. Of course, he knew that they are not ethnic Turks, but calling them Turks served to legitimize the extermination of this population group.

Being Muslim in the Balkan nation-states was, for a long time, akin to being a target of unlawful treatment and killings. Due to the prevailing perceptions in the Balkans of Muslims as enemies, historiography has largely neglected the expulsion and extermination of Muslim communities. Massacres and mistreatment of Muslims were systematically ignored or deliberately concealed in the historiography of the Balkan nation-states.

The massacres in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995, culminating in the Srebrenica genocide on July 11, 1995, marked a turning point in the historiography. The reports and images of mass killings on TV and the destruction of Islamic monuments in Bosnia drew the attention of some Western historians to the broader history of suffering of Muslims in the Balkans. Among the most prominent were the American and British historians Justin McCarthy and Noel Malcolm.

Justin McCarthy's 1995 book, *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821–1922* (McCarthy, 1995),[6] stands out as a milestone in the historiographical treatment of this topic. And **Noel Malcolm**'s 1994 book, *Bosnia: A Short History* (Malcolm, 1994)[7], despite its neutral-sounding title, directly challenged the national narratives of Balkan states that sought to minimize or deny the historical presence and suffering of Muslims in the region.

The German historian **Wolfgang Höpken** has a different view regarding the use of the terminology. In his 1996 (Höpken, 1996) article, "Flucht vor dem Kreuz? Muslimische Emigration aus Südosteuropa nach dem Ende der osmanischen Herrschaft (19./20. Jahrhundert)" ("Flight from the Cross? Muslim Emigration from Southeastern Europe after the End of Ottoman Rule (19th/20th Century)"), he discusses the use of different terminologies and criticizes the use of "morally charged terms" such as "expulsion" (which according to him "are particularly

6 See, also the Turkish translation: *Ölüm ve Sürgün: Osmanlı Müslümanlarının Etnik Kıyımı*, 1821-1922, Çev. Bilge Umar, İstanbul: İnkılap Kitabevi, 1995.

7 He published later also on Kosovo: ibid., *Kosovo: A Short History*, New York University Press, 1998.

favored in Turkish historiography"). At the same time, he opposes rationalizing expressions like "population exchange," "repatriation," or "emigration." "Not everything that constituted Muslim emigration from Southeastern Europe over the past 150 years was expulsion, but hardly any of it was voluntary." (Höpken, 1996: 4) He uses the words "Emigration" and "Abwanderung," which both translate as "emigration", and sound more voluntary than expulsion. In this way, his attitude differs from that of Justin McCarthy, although—as we will see in the following chapters—in Höpken's explanations of "Abwanderung" processes he gives a very similar image to that of McCarthy. He even uses the term "Reconquista," which is used for the expulsion of Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula.

Most of the surviving Muslims from the Balkans found refuge in Turkey. Consequently, a large part of the Turkish population originates from the Muslim groups from the Balkans and Caucasus, and there has therefore been a strong interest among Turkish historians in the migration history of the Muslims from Southeastern Europe. In Turkey, publications in recent decades about the fate of Muslims, contemporary with the aforementioned books by McCarthy and Malcolm, have tended to have neutral titles. "Turkish migration from the Balkans" (**Nedim İpek, Bilal N. Şimşir**) (Şimşir, 1989; İpek, 1994), "Turkish migration from the Balkans during the Balkan Wars" (**Ahmet Halaçoğlu**) (Halaçoğlu, 1995), and "Crimean and Caucasian Migrations" (**Abdullah Saydam**) (Saydam, 1997) are examples. Using words like "expulsion", "massacre", even "suffering" was regarded as a sign of a nonscientific (i.e. **Kadir Mısıroğlu** (Mısıroğlu, 1970; Mısıroğlu, 1977; Mısıroğlu, 2015)) and nationalistic (**İlker Alp** (Alp, 1988; Alp, 1990)) attitude, and most historians in Turkey did not want to be associated with such an image; similar assumptions continue even in the present day. Turkish historians' reservations about using terms like expulsion, massacre, ethnic cleansing, or genocide in the titles of their books on the sufferings of Muslims in the Balkans and Caucasus continued even after 1995 (Ağanoğlu, 2001; İpek, 2006).[8]

Even as the suffering of Muslims was largely ignored, the suffering of Christians in Turkey gained increasing prominence. Using such terms as massacre, expulsion, and genocide to refer to the sufferings of the Christian populations in Anatolia was widespread and legitimate, not only in Western countries but also among the leftist/critical historians in Turkey (despite the resistance of the Turkish national historiography).

8 . Discussion of the multiple reasons for their attitude is beyond the scope of this article. I discuss this issue in a short paper: Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, "'89 Göçü' mü 'Etnik Temizlik' mi? Türk Göç Tarihi Literatüründe Kavram Sorunu", *BALKAR Bülten*, 4 (2020), 5-13.

It is interesting to note that the dissenting voices came from Western historians but not from Turkish ones. Malcolm, McCarthy, and other historians even risked their academic reputations: The study of the sufferings of Balkan Muslims was not welcome in the mainstream Western historiography community. Malcolm and McCarthy faced accusations of being "pro-Turkish", "unscientific", or even of having been influenced or funded by the Turkish government. McCarthy's book has been interpreted as a counter-narrative to the prevailing scholarly discourse on the sufferings of Christians in Turkey. This also provoked political reactions of Armenian diaspora communities in the USA. McCarthy was also attacked by some Armenian activists with the accusation that he denied or attempted to downplay the "Armenian Genocide". Historians working on the sufferings of Muslims had—and still today have—to struggle for academic legitimacy.[9]

Since 2008, I have sought to contribute to the accurate portrayal in the Turkish historiography of Muslim suffering in the Balkans.[10] **Neriman Ersoy Hacısalihoğlu** and I have initiated and edited several volumes addressing the issue of expulsion of Muslims from the Balkans and Caucasus.[11] The pinnacle of these efforts was the publication in 2023 of an extensive edited volume titled "Anniversaries of the Sufferings of Turks and Related Communities: Exiles, Massacres, Ethnic Cleansing Policies, and Genocides from the 19th Century to the Present" (in Turkish) (Hacısalihoğlu, 2023). This volume brings together scholarly contributions on a range of overlooked or marginalized episodes, including "The Turks of Morea and the Massacre of Tripolitsa" (Levent Kayapınar, 2023), "The

9 Justin McCarthy continued to publish on the expulsion of Muslims from the Balkans and Caucasus using the term etchnic cleansing: Justin McCarthy, "The Demography of Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans", *Uluslararası Balkan Tarihi ve Kültürü Sempozyumu, 6-8 Ekim 2016, Çanakkale. Bildiriler,* Cilt 1, Ed. A. Koyuncu, Çanakkale: Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, 2017, 1-16.

10 As a product of a DFG-Project, I published a book on the place names and lost villages in Bulgaria: Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, *Doğu Rumeli'de Kayıp Köyler: İslimye Sancağı'nda 1878'den Günümüze Göçler, İsim Değişiklikleri ve Harabeler*, Istanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 2008.

11 *89 Göçü. Bulgaristan'da 1984-89 Azınlık Politikaları ve Türkiye'ye Zorunlu Göç* [Forced Migration of 1989: Minority Policies in Bulgaria between 1984 and 1989 and the Forced Migration to Turkey], Eds. Neriman Ersoy-Hacısalihoğlu, Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, Istanbul: Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi Balkan ve Karadeniz Araştırmaları Merkezi (BALKAR) & Balkanlar Medeniyet Merkezi (BALMED), 2012; *1864 Kafkas Tehciri: Kafkasya'da Rus Kolonizasyonu, Savaş ve Sürgün* [Caucasian Exodus of 1864: Russian Colonization of Caucasia, War and Exodus] İstanbul: Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi Balkan ve Karadeniz Araştırmaları Merkezi (BALKAR) & İslam Tarih, Sanat ve Kültür Araştırma Merkezi (IRCICA), 2014; *Sürgün ve Hafıza: 1989 Göçmenlerinin Anılarına Göre Bulgaristan'daki Zorla Asimilasyon Politikaları ve Türkiye'ye Zorunlu Göç* [Exile and Memory: Forced Assimilation Policies in Bulgaria and Forced Migration to Turkey According to the Memoirs of 1989 Immigrants], Eds. Neriman Ersoy Hacisalihoglu - Mehmet Hacisalihoglu, Ankara: YTB, 2023.

Massacre and Expulsion of Turks from Serbia" (Ayşe Kayapınar, 2023), "The Circassian Genocide" (Akbulat, 2023), "Expulsion, Massacre, and Genocide during the War of 1877–78" (İpek, 2023) [12] and "Genocide during the Balkan Wars" (Ağanoğlu, 2023). It was the first comprehensive publication to compile these cases within a common analytical framework, employing a terminology grounded in remembrance and memory studies. Notably, the book was published by the Atatürk Research Centre (Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi), a prominent public institution affiliated with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Turkey. This institutional affiliation is particularly significant as it challenges long-standing patterns of state-sponsored forgetting regarding the sufferings of Muslim communities in the Balkans and the Caucasus over the last two centuries.

Besides these developments in Turkish historiography, the last few years have witnessed a growing interest by Western, particularly American and British, scholarship in the suffering of Muslims during the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. One of the most important recent publications is **William H. Holt**'s 2019 book, *The Balkan Reconquista* (Holt, 2019).

The Specific Studies on the Expulsion of Muslims from Hungary, Greece, and Serbia before the 1860s

The expulsions of Muslims and Jews from the Balkans (Hungary, Greece, Serbia, Croatia, etc.) before the 1860s is still a very thinly studied topic. So far, I have not been able to find any detailed study on the fate of Muslims in Hungary.[13] A 1999 study titled *Jewish Budapest,* edited by **Kinga Frojimovics, Géza Komoróczy, Victória Pusztai and Andrea Strbik**, briefly mentions the expulsion of 1686, pointing out that the Muslims and Jews were both treated by the Austrians as "enemies". He also mentions the persecution of Muslims and Jews during the sieges of 1598, 1602, and 1984 (Frojimovics et al., 1999: 38) and describes the conquest of Buda by the army of the Holy League, consisting of the forces of the

12 The term "big genocide" for the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78 was already used by Neriman Ersoy Hacısalihoğlu in 2018: Neriman Ersoy-Hacısalihoğlu, "Balkanlarda Büyük Soykırım: 93 Harbi Döneminde Rus Ordusunun Bulgaristan'daki Türklere Yönelik Politikası", 1877-1878 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı (93 Harbi) Uluslararası Sempozyumu, 1-2 Kasım 2018 İstanbul, Bildiriler, İstanbul: Türk Ocakları, 2019, 200-212.

13 Due to my limited knowledge of Hungarian, I cannot state with certainty that there are no studies on the expulsion of Muslims in the Hungarian language. Well known historians, like Gabor Agoston, do not give any number of killed or expelled Muslims and Jews from Hungary during the "Great Turkish War" (1683-1699). Gabor Agoston, *The Last Muslim Conquest. The Ottoman Empire and Its Wars in Europe*, Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2021, 495-509.

Principality of Brandenburg, Bavaria, and other German principalities in 1686 as follows:

> "In the summer of 1686 the Jews took part, as far as the Turks allowed them, in the defence of Buda, carrying water, wood, stones and ammunition, except on the Sabbath, when they were exempt from this work. The Castle Hill could best be approached from the Vízíváros. The city walls had lain in ruins since the 1684 siege, and the Christian troops began their assault from this direction. They did not bother to distinguish between the `Ismaelites`(Turks) and the Jews of Buda–neither could expect mercy." (Frojimovics et al., 1999: 38)

Before the fall of Buda many Jews sought refuge in the synagogue. But the building was attacked and destroyed and most of the Jews who survived were killed on 2 September by the Brandenburg soldiers (Frojimovics et al., 1999: 39).

The Jewish community of Buda was completely destroyed in 1686, an event referred to as *hurban*-"destruction" (Yiddish term)—evoking the memory of the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Like the Muslim captives, the surviving Jews were subjected to heavy ransom demands that required them to pay large sums to the commanders of the victorious army.[14]

During the expulsion of Muslims and Jews, Islamic and Jewish monuments were destroyed or converted to churches. A new publication by **Mehmet Emin Yılmaz** deals with the Ottoman monuments converted to churches after the fall of the Ottoman rule in Hungary (Yilmaz, 2023).

Until recently, the expulsion and elimination of Muslims and Turks from Greece and Serbia between 1804 and 1821 and up to the 1860s remained an almost entirely neglected topic in the historiography. It was only in the early 21st century that two comprehensive studies by Turkish historians brought significant attention to this subject.

In 2009, **Ali Fuat Örenç** published a book (in Turkish) on the massacres and forced migration of Turks in the Peloponnese/Morea. The title itself underscores

14 Many were unable to raise the required amounts, and years later, Jewish communities across Europe organized fundraising efforts to help redeem the captives and support the survivors. Komorócy et al, *Jewish Budapest*, 40. We know that many of the Muslim and Jewish captives were forced to convert to the Christianity (Türkentaufen). For a new study on this issue, see: Manja Quakatz, *Osmanische Kriegsgefangene im Römisch-deutschen Reich im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2023.

the theme of historical amnesia: *The First Tragedy in the Balkans: The Forgotten Turks of the Morea and Greece's Path from Province to Independence* (Örenç, 2009). It conveys the central message of the book—that the massacres in the Peloponnese constitute the first major tragedy for Muslims in the Balkans and that this tragedy has been forgotten.

Just two years later, in 2011, another Turkish historian, **Ayşe Özkan**, published a study on 19th-century Serbia, which also addresses the expulsion of Muslims (Özkan, 2011). She has continued to publish on the topic, including an article in 2011 titled *The Removal of the Muslim Population from Serbia*.[15] Related publications have also emerged in Bosnia. For example, **Safet Bandžović** wrote in 2012 on the Muslims in Serbia (in the province of Smederevo) and their expulsion in the 19th century (Bandžović, 2012).

One of the most recent studies on the massacre and expulsion of Muslims/Turks from Peloponnesus/Morea was published in 2021 by a Greek historian, **Stefanos Katsikas**, at the University of Chicago (Katsikas, 2021). Although his book's title, *Islam and Nationalism in Modern Greece, 1821–1940*, and its chapter headings do not explicitly reference the massacres or expulsions of Muslims, nearly all major massacres that occurred during the Greek War of Independence (1821–30) are clearly addressed within the chapters. In the opening sentence, Katsikas expresses his surprise at how little scholarly attention the subject has received and how profoundly it has been neglected in the historiography:

> "[…] the discussion rarely moves beyond the post-1923 Muslims of Western Thrace, the 'leftovers' of an erstwhile robust Muslim population of Greece that was nearly eliminated by wars, mass emigration and the 1923 forced Greco-Turkish population exchange." (Katsikas, 2021: ix)[16]

15 Her use of the notably neutral term "removal" in the title is significant. This lexical choice suggests an intent to frame the topic within historiographical discourse, rather than through a lens of memory politics or emotional appeal. However, the content of her work makes clear that it deals with the forced expulsion of the last remaining Muslim communities from Serbia. Ayşe Özkan, "Müslümanların Sırbistan'dan Çıkarılmasının İlk Adımı: 1862 Belgrad Olayları ve Belgrad'ın Bombalanması", *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 30 (50), 2011, 171-195.

16 He tries to explain possible reasons for this ignorance of Greek historians and criticizes their attitude:

"Some scholars may wish to avoid risking their popularity among a conservative Greek public, who often view the Muslims of Western Thrace as Turkey's Trojan Horse in Greece. This is not the case in other nations' modern histories. It would be unthinkable today to write of U.S. history without considering Native Americans or African Americans. Historians cannot write of British imperialism without any mention of the slaughter of Africans in the Congo or of Chinese in the Opium Wars. Without exploring the development of the relationship between modern Greece and its Muslims, scholars fail to capture the nuances of state attitudes, policies, and perception in Greece

The newest study touching on Muslim suffering in Greece between 1821 and 1833, titled *The Greek Revolution and the Violent Birth of Nationalism,* was published by **Yanni Kotsonis** in 2025. The Greek author describes the elimination of Muslim inhabitants in the greater context of large losses in life caused by pandemics and violence against the Greeks by the Ottoman and Egyptian forces. He describes the emergence of the Greek nation-state has having been accompanied by strong violence and sufferings on all sides. The inclusion of information about the fate of Muslims is remarkable. He does not ignore these historical events. He mentions the St. Petersburg Protocol of 1826, where the "complete separation" of Muslims and Greeks and the "transfer of Muslim properties to the Greeks" was decided. He writes that although the later treaties allowed Muslims to stay, only "tiny enclaves of Muslims" remained and then they also disappeared (Kotsonis, 2025: 293). In the epilogue, Kotsonis uses a subchapter titled „Trail of Bones" to describe how one-fourth of the population in Greece was lost during the Greek war of independence. According to him, "most of the people who suffered were not warriors". Referring to a photo from "Skulls from Massacre of Chios of 1822", he states that these skulls are the most notable example of memorializing the suffering of Greeks during the Greek war of independence (Kotsonis, 2025: 304-305). Although most of the victims were Muslims, memorials or signs do not exist for their execution.

Regarding the Muslim sufferings, Kotsonis mentions a survey of Greek territories that was prepared at the order of Capo d'Istria:

> "They counted the destroyed trees and homes, markets and shops, mills and wells, and with some care recalled which aga had ruled and owned in a given locality, now dead or gone. The lists are a haunting, a final testament to a civilization that later Greeks would work so hard to scrub out of the records, the geography, and the local memory. The mosques were rubble or made into churches and warehouses. Muslim cemeteries were ploughed under. Monuments were gone. The monument to the Philhellene Santarosa on the Bay of Navarino may be fitting for the Piedmontese revolutionary who gave his life for Greek independence, but it replaced a white marble tomb of an aga—who had been revered by Christians and Muslims alike—that was smashed and thrown into the sea to join the shipwrecks" (Kotsonis, 2025: 306).

Kotsonis also mentions the changing of place names and gives examples for such changes:

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with regard to its minority populations." Katsikas, *Islam and Nationalism,* IX.

> "Dervi Tselep near Gastouni became Amaliada after the new queen Amalia. Omer Tsaousi became Spathovouni. Remoustafa became Adriani. Argos had been made up of boroughs (machalas) such as Bekir Efendi, Karamoutza, Besikler, and Rum. Slavic names would also disappear over the next century as Greek territory extended northward and bumped against new Slav-dominated states. Vostitsa became Aigio, Chorvati (think Hrvatska) became Mycenae, Agoulinitsa became Epitalion, and Levetsova became Krokeës. Frankish names from the Middle Ages were Christian, an acceptable heritage, and were retained: Gastouni (Gaston), Andravida (André Ville), and Chlemoutsi (Clermont). Then again, the port of Glarentza (Clarence) emerged nearby as Kyllini" (Kotsonis, 2025: 306-307).

He mentions also some names of Muslims listed in the survey who were dead or gone:

> "in these reports were Mehmed Tsipoglou, Souleiman Manousos, Kiamil bey, Old Man Osman aga, and Fat Hasan. "They were sweet" (iton glykis, meaning kind and polite), local elders wrote in the reports, in defiance of the later image of blanket cruelty and barbarity. In this there was some remorse for the carnage and perhaps some bitterness because some of the writers had never wanted the mass revolution in the first place, let alone the mass destruction. "They were not religious haters and they were devoted to the Christians." Here and there were reports of the few sons and daughters of agas who had returned or never left because they were baptized. Near Leontari in the village of Hasabasa (renamed Aristodemeio) the sons of Sali Petrou and Seyndi Moutzos, both dead, appeared with their Christian names to claim the family properties. As Muslims, they no longer existed" (Kotsonis, 2025: 307).

Kotsonis also deals with gendered violence pointing out that "rape was massive and came in successive waves". "The Christians had done this to the Muslims in 1821, and the Roumeliots had done it to the Moreans in 1824" (Kotsonis, 2025: 307-308).

The works of Katsikas and Kotsonis demonstrate that there are Greek historians who do not entirely overlook the suffering of Muslims during and after the Greek War of Independence. Despite the existence of such studies, we cannot yet speak of a comprehensive body of research on the elimination or expulsion of Muslims from Southeastern Europe. An internationally recognized and well-established historiographical tradition focusing on Muslim suffering in the Balkans up to the 1860s is still lacking. Nevertheless, these new contributions give us reason to hope that this situation will improve in the coming decades.

Historiography about the Causes of Expulsion and Genocide of Muslims

Almost all studies on the Muslim migrations from the Balkans and the Caucasus list several causes for those migrations (Şimşir, 1989; İpek, 1994; İpek, 2006; Halaçoğlu, 1995; Saydam, 1997; Ağanoğlu, 2001). For example, in his already mentioned article, "Flight from the Cross? Muslim Emigration from Southeastern Europe after the End of Ottoman Rule (19th/20th Century)", **Wolfgang Höpken** proposes several explanations for Muslim emigration from the Balkans. The first reason he gives is the *Emigration of Muslims as a Result of a Cultural Struggle* (Höpken, 1996: 1). Höpken explains the "emigration of Southeastern European Muslims" as being partly a result of the long-lasting military confrontations between "Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire," and partly a reflection of what he calls a "fundamental conflict—perceived as religious and cultural—between Occident and Orient." According to him, the so-called "Turkish Wars" were experienced as a "conflict between two irreconcilable worlds." He argues that "the long-term coexistence of Muslims and Christians in the successor states of the Ottoman Empire" became "highly unlikely" due to the emergence of Christian nation-states and the resulting loss of power and status for Muslims (Höpken, 1996: 1). He views the failed siege of Vienna in 1683 as a turning point in the history of Southeastern Europe and refers to it as the "Christian Reconquista"[17], a term which has been used for the Christian conquest of the Iberian Peninsula and the expulsion of Muslims from there. By doing so he emphasizes the religious character of the conflict in the Balkans. He associates the retreat of the Ottoman Empire with the "inevitable end" of the "presence of Islam in Southeastern Europe." He cites the Austrian geographer Johann Vincenz Goehlert (1865): "The more the peoples gain their independence [from the Ottoman Empire], the more the Muslims, and especially the Ottomans, will be displaced from their places of residence" (Höpken, 1996: 1). These explanations by Höpken clearly support the position of intentional elimination of Muslim existence in the Balkans, which is nothing other than a "Muslim genocide" in the terminology that first emerged in the middle of the 20th century. The second reason Höpken gives is *Emigration of Muslims Due to the Loss of Their Ruling Status*. He highlights another perspective by citing Friedrich Kanitz and Constantin Jireček from the second half of the 19th century: "The Turk, accustomed to rule, simply cannot come to terms with living as an equal alongside non-believers" (Kanitz), "and even benevolent treatment by

17 2018 William Holt used this term in his book title: William H. Holt, *The Balkan Reconquista and Turkey's Forgotten Refugee Crisis*.

the post-Ottoman nation-states would not be enough to prevent him from emigrating" (Jireček) (Höpken, 1996: 1-2) Höpken supports this conclusion:

> "Throughout Ottoman Southeastern Europe, military defeat and the loss of political control were followed not only by the withdrawal of Ottoman soldiers and officials, but also by the departure of large segments of the 'ordinary' Muslim population from these European territories of the Sublime Porte [Ottoman government]—which, after centuries of Ottoman presence, had long become their homeland" (Höpken, 1996: 2).

He also cites a statement from the mid-19th century predicting that the emigration of Muslims from Southeastern Europe would last another fifty years. He characterizes this as a "mistaken assumption", noting that emigration continued well into the 20th century.

Nearly all studies on the Muslim expulsions from the Balkans mention the animosity of Christian Europeans toward the Muslims as the main cause of Muslim sufferings not only in the premodern period but also in the 20th century. For example, **Norman Cigar**, in his 1995 paper on the genocide of Srebrenica, *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of Ethnic Cleansing* (Cigar, 1995), emphasizes the rise of Serbian nationalism among the Serbian Orientalists in the 1980s. He points out that this tendency was supported by the Serbian Orthodox Church. According to Cigar, Serbian orientalists like Darko Tanasković, Nada Todorov, and Miroljub Jevtić (scholars, historians, or political scientists writing on the Islamic world or Ottoman past) contributed to the genocide by depicting Muslims as the enemy. They spread in their writings stereotypes like "Muslims as Aliens", "Islam as a Remnant of the Past", "Islam and Violence", "Muslims as Traitors", Muslims as an "imminent and lethal threat", and "Muslim's conspiracy against Serbia and the West". "Isolating the Muslims" as a "delegitimized community" paved the way to the genocide in 1990s in Bosnia and Hercegovina (Cigar, 2000: 87–115).

Studies by the Bosnian scholar **Fikret Karčić** support Cigar's explanation for the expulsions of Muslims from the Balkans. He argues that the expulsion and massacre of Muslims was a product of the "Eastern Question"[18] mentality:

> "The persistence of the 'Eastern Question' mentality among Balkan Christian nationalist elites manifested, among other things, in the depiction

18 The term "Eastern Question" (called also Turkish Question) was used by the European politicians since the early 19th century for their policy toward the Ottoman Empire. For more details, see: M. S. Anderson, The *Eastern Question, 1774-1923 : a Study in International Relations*, London, New York: St Martin's Press, 1966.

> of Islam as a foreign religion on European soil and Muslims as 'outsiders' who must be 'expelled' from the territories over which claims are made. This expression of the 'Eastern Question' mentality is particularly well-documented in numerous studies addressing the origins and execution of the genocide against Bosniaks from 1992 to 1995" (Karčić, 2001: 21).

The editors of the book on Jewish Budapest **Frojimovics** et al. point to the religious hatred of Christians toward the Jews as the reason for their mistreatment in Hungary in the 1680s. To support his argument, he quotes the Ottoman traveller Evliya Çelebi, who wrote the following in middle of the 17th century: "the Hungarians, Germans and Czechs are apt to impale and roast the Jew from these lands, should he fall into their hands" (Frojimovics et al., 1999: 38). Religious animosity was indeed the most important motivation for the persecution of both Muslims and Jews in Hungary.

To fully understand the reasons for the extermination of Balkan Muslim communities, we need further research dealing with the conditions of the specific cases in different regions and periods.

National Narratives in the Balkan Historiographies about Muslim Refugees: Denial of Muslim Sufferings and Portrayal of Muslim Refugees as Perpetrators

In an article dealing with the Peace Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699 and the Ottoman Empire, **Mónika F. Molnár** mentions the expulsion of Turks in a footnote, stating that "The expulsion of the Turks and the expansion of the Danube Monarchy indeed led to an increase in prestige for the Habsburg Empire" (Molnár, 2013: 200, fn. 22). The emphasis is not on the sufferings of Muslims but on the increase of the Habsburgs' power. This short notice is the only mention in the book about the massacre and expulsion of Muslims.

While ignoring the expulsion of Muslims, the national historiography in the Balkans put a strong emphasis on the expulsion of non-Muslim people from other Balkan countries. **Miloš Jagodić**'s book *Settlement of the Kingdom of Serbia 1861-1880* is an interesting example of this type of report. The Serbian historian Jagodić deals with Serbian immigrants as „colonists", mainly from Montenegro, who have come for "economic reasons", and as "fugitives" from Turkey (i.e. the Ottoman Empire), who have come for "security and economic reasons". The author states that their numbers were not large. However, he does not mention hundreds of thousands of Muslim refugees from the territories occupied by

Serbia during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78 (Jagodić, 2004: 170–183). The book deals with the Serbian policy toward the Serbian immigrants and laws regarding their resettlement in 1861, 1865, and 1880. The author completely ignores both the expulsion and the negotiated emigration of Muslims from Serbia between the Serbian and Ottoman governments. Instead he attributes the flight of Serbs from *Turkey* (i.e. Ottoman Empire) solely to "zulum" (Turkish word zulm/zulüm for "atrocities") and "reprisals" (Jagodić, 2004: 25, 29). In addition, the author describes the settlement of Tatar migrants in the Balkan territories as a ploy by the Ottoman government to change the demographic makeup of the region, in particular the Sandžak of Vidin at the Serbian borders (Jagodić, 2004: 32, 36). The forced migration in 1862 of the last Muslims from Serbia (Belgrade, Kladovo, Šabac, Smederevo, Sokol and Užice), as directed by the Kanlıca conference, is mentioned, but only in the context of the Ottoman demographic policy: These *Muhacirs* (refugees) from Serbia were similarly settled in the Sandžak of Zvornik with the goal of changing the demographic structure (Jagodić, 2004: 36-37). Jagodić also mentions the Circassians that the Ottoman government settled in the Balkans in the 1860s. He describes the expulsion of Circassians in 1864 as "migration". The Ottoman government settled 60,000 of the total Circassian population of 83,000, or nearly three-quarters of them, to the border regions of Serbia (Jagodić, 2004: 38-42). Jagodić also discusses Muslim refugees during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78. Here he writes that the tendency to expel Muslims during the Serbian and Greek revolutions emerged again: "The liberation from the Turkish rule was understood also as liberation from Turks, i.e. Muslims". He explains the expulsions as following from the necessity of the young nation-states to be nationally and religiously homogeneous. Then he writes that the emigration of Muslims was not only a result of pressure by government and local institutions. Rather, he writes, they do not want to live in the state of "non-believers", and they did not want to serve in the army, which would eventually fight against the sultan. To support his argument, he cites studies by V. Čuprilović, A. Toumarkine, and B.N. Simsir (Jagodić, 2004: 43). He mentions also the Russo-Ottoman negotiations in St. Stefano (todays Yeşilköy in Istanbul) in 1878 and the proposal of the Ottoman delegation to make a population exchange between the northern and southern parts of the Balkan Mountains. According to Jagodić, the Ottoman government settled the Muhacirs to the borders of the Balkan states for strategic and economic reasons.

On the other hand, Jagodić explains that Christians migrated from the Ottoman territories out of fear and pressure from Muslim Muhacirs and the "Turkish" governments. This happened in "Old Serbia" (Kosovo) and Thrace:

> "Christians from the region, especially those in border areas that remained part of the Ottoman Empire, migrated to neighboring countries. There were several reasons for emigration: fear of retribution for participation in uprisings, pressure from incoming Muslim Muhacirs (refugees) and Turkish authorities, and disappointment that their villages had not been annexed to one of the Christian states. Old Serbia and Thrace are clear examples of this type of migration. Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece settled their compatriots on land left behind by the departing Muslims. The process of religious homogenization in the case of Turkey — and both religious and national homogenization in the case of the other Balkan states — was underway" (Jagodić, 2004: 44).

Here we see that the national Balkan historiographies ignore the persecution of Muslim refugees. On the contrary, the Muslim refugees have been depicted as an enemy who exerted violent pressure on the Christian population in the regions where they were settled, and as a threat to the sovereignty of the Balkan nation-states.

During the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78, Serbia acquired new territories and declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire. In the new territories, such as the counties of Niš, Leskovac, Vranje, Pirot, the districts of Prokuplje, Kuršumlja, Bela Palanka (today's South Serbia) most of the Muslims consisting of Turks and Albanians were expelled and a small number could remain.[19] There are also studies dealing with the presence of these Muslims in Serbia and the policy of the Serbian government toward them. **Jovana Šalić Ratković** discusses the existence of Muslims (numbering around 15,000) in Serbia between 1868 and 1912 and claims that the Serbian government's dealings with Muslim minorities "being poor and undereducated" served to develop a policy for the future periods. During the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 Serbia "liberated" "Old Serbia and Macedonia" with a population of 700,000 Muslims (Šalić Ratković, 2020: 173–176). Although Ratković's study deals with Muslim existence in Serbia (in Belgrade, Niš, Leskovats, Mali Zvornik, Sakar, and Šabac), its focus is not the expulsions of Muslims.[20]

19 According to Jagodić's calculation, before the war of 1877-78, approximately 215 117 Christians and 95 619 Muslims (together about, 310 736 people) lived in the regions attached to Serbia. At least 71,000 Muslims emigrated. Miloš Jagodić, "The Emigration of Muslims from the New Serbian Regions 1877/1878", *Balkanologie*, Vol. II, No. 2, 1998, https://journals.openedition.org/balkanologie/265

20 These studies are representing a Serbian nationalist narrative about the Muslims in the region. For more details about the Serbian historiography, see: Sevba Abdula, İktidar, Tarih ve Kimlik. Sırplarda Ötekinin İnşası, İstanbul: VakıfBank Kültür Yayınları, 2025.

Conclusion

In this paper, I analyse the memory of Muslim existence and heritage in Hungary, Greece, and Serbia before 1870. The attitude toward Muslims in Greece and Serbia between 1804 and 1862 was violent, just as was the case for the Habsburgs in Hungary and parts of today's Serbia and Croatia at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century. Mass killings, slavery, forced conversions, and the destruction of all Islamic symbols and heritage characterized the Habsburg attitude, which can be defined with the current terms "ethnic cleansing" and "genocide". We see the same patterns of mass killings, forced conversions, and destruction of all Muslim heritage about 150 years later in Greece and Serbia. We cannot conclude that the Greek and Serbian nationalists took examples from the Habsburg attitude. Most probably they did not know the details of Habsburg policy towards Muslims. Nevertheless, they followed a similar model of ethnic cleansing. The existing historiography explains this attitude with "fundamental conflict—perceived as religious and cultural—between Occident and Orient" or "conflict between two irreconcilable worlds", because of which "the long-term coexistence of Muslims and Christians in the successor states of the Ottoman Empire" became "highly unlikely" (Höpken, 1996: 1). Some historians use the term "Reconquista" and in this way make a connection with the fate of Muslims in Spain and Southeastern Europe. The conclusion of all these debates is that Christian states and Christian populations until the 1870s did not tolerate the existence of Muslims under their rule. That intolerance was the basis of the total destruction of Muslim populations and cultural heritage (religious architecture, geographical names, and other traces of Islamic culture). Additional factors, such as the occupation of Muslim lands and goods and nationalism in the 19th century, contributed to the strengthening of extermination policies. The consequence was that the Muslim population and Islamic heritage in the Balkan territories from before the 1870s were almost totally destroyed.

The focus of this paper is to analyse if and how the historiography and the public in Hungary, Serbia, and Greece remember the existence of Muslims, their expulsion or killings, and their cultural heritage in these territories.

In conclusion, we see that the existing historiography in Hungary, Greece, and Serbia has not totally ignored the existence and cultural heritage of Muslims. The research on the Muslim expulsion and massacres from before the 1860s, however, is underdeveloped. In Hungary, for example, the historiography largely overlooks the fate of Muslims, focusing instead on Christian religious history of Hungarians under Ottoman rule (Szakály, 1985; Csepregi, 2004). Although some evidence shows Muslim presence in 16th-17th-century Hungary (Koller, 2010;

Dobrovits & Őze, 2020), few studies address their demographic decline or expulsion after the Habsburg conquest (Quakatz, 2023). Exhibitions in the Gülbaba Tekkesi (a dervish convent in Budapest, which was restored and reopened in the 1990s) and in the national museum in Hungary depict almost a positive image of the Ottoman rule in Hungary but omit the violent history of Muslim displacement and the destruction of the Muslim heritage.

Similar expulsions of Muslims took place in Greece and Serbia until the late 19th century. The historiography in Serbia acknowledges the existence of Muslims and Muslim monuments in, for example, Belgrade (Đurić-Zamolo, 1977; Kolaj Ristanović, 2020 und 2022; Makulević, 2015), but they are not mentioned in museums or similar memorial spaces. From around 50 mosques in Belgrade in the beginning of the 19th century only one survived (Bayraklı Mosque); today it continues to be used as a mosque. In Budapest and Athens, the capitals of Hungary and Greece, no Ottoman mosque survived the destruction. They were either destroyed or converted to churches or exhibition houses.

Place names (and other geographical names) are another way that culture is memorialized. Almost all Ottoman place names in Hungary, Greece (Lienau, 2011: 361-362), and Serbia were changed; in this way the memory on the Ottoman-Muslim past was nearly eradicated (Hacısalihoğlu & Özcan, 2013: 1327-1354).

Regarding the Muslims in the 17th and 18th centuries in Hungary, Greece, and Serbia, historical record keeping varied with political developments and trends. In the late 19th-century, for example, the Hungarian nationalist movement embraced Turkic origins and created symbolic Orientalist displays, such as the short-lived "Constantinople in Budapest" (Perczel, 2019: 13), which romanticized Ottoman culture without acknowledging the actual Muslim communities. In the 1990s, diplomatic relations between Turkey and Hungary improved and as a consequence some historical sites were restored and reopened as memorial places. Turkey and Greece also negotiated to restore and reopen the 15th century Fethiye Mosque in Athens. But the negotiations were not successful, despite the Turkish government's offers to finance the restorations (through the institution of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency - TIKA). The Muslim heritage in these territories can be found only through archaeological research. Since 1990, Ottoman archaeological research has been better developed in Hungary than in Greece or Serbia.

Despite some recent attention, there are still too few studies on how the Muslim presence in the Balkans is remembered, and on the extermination, expulsion, and destruction of Muslim cultural heritage and communities in that region. This remains an important yet largely neglected field of research.

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