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DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND TURKEY: AN ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL INTERACTIONS

Diplomatic relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey have played a significant role in shaping the political, cultural, and economic landscape of the Balkans. The evolution of these relations can be traced through various historical phases, including the Ottoman period, the Austro-Hungarian occupation, and contemporary geopolitical and economic challenges. This study analyzes the impact of historical events and social transformations on the political, economic, and cultural cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey. The focus is on identifying the primary factors shaping bilateral relations, emphasizing their importance in the context of regional stability and global political dynamics. The methodological approach of the research is based on a qualitative analysis of secondary sources, including historiographical works, scientific articles, and analytical reports. The data were processed using a thematic analytical approach, applying a theoretical framework for identifying key motifs and patterns in historical narratives and their critical interpretation in the context of cultural, political, and social factors. In addition, a comparative analysis of the development of these narratives in different political, cultural, and economic contexts was conducted, exploring their effects on bilateral relations during certain historical periods. The criteria for selecting narratives and the time frames were defined according to their relevance to global political dynamics and their ability to illustrate key changes in bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

The results show that diplomatic relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey are characterized by intensive political interactions, multicultural cooperation, and long-term economic relations that reflect their complexity and multidimen-

sionality. However, these relations are not static but have developed through different phases of historical development, in line with changing geopolitical and global dynamics. Such an evolutionary transformation reflects a high level of strategic flexibility of both states, allowing them to adapt to the complex challenges of contemporary international relations, including redefining foreign policy objectives and seizing opportunities arising from bilateral and multilateral initiatives. In parallel, the development of these relations at key historical moments confirms their important role in stabilizing political structures, strengthening intercultural dialogue, and facilitating models of sustainable economic development in a broader regional context.

Keywords: Diplomatic Relations, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey, Cultural and Economic Cooperation, Geopolitical Changes

INTRODUCTION

Diplomatic relations between Bosnia and Turkey represent an important segment of Balkan history, reflecting the complex interaction between two distinct but interconnected cultures and political spheres. From the arrival of the Ottoman Empire in Bosnia in the mid-15th century to the modern relations of independent Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Republic of Turkey, diplomatic relations have developed through various historical, political, and cultural phases. These interactions have not only shaped the internal political and cultural landscapes of these countries but have also influenced the wider regional dynamics and relations between the peoples of the Balkans. According to Malcolm (1996), the Ottoman presence had a significant impact on the cultural and religious identity of the region, leaving its mark on architecture, language, and education.

Although Ottoman rule left a deep mark on the social and cultural fabric of Bosnia, the development of relations between Bosnia and Turkey did not stop with the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The transition to a new political era, including the Austro-Hungarian rule and the Yugoslav period, led to an adjustment of relations and the continuation of cultural and economic cooperation, despite difficult political circumstances.

During the Ottoman rule, Bosnia became an important administrative and military entity, which led to intense cultural exchange, including the introduction of Islamic architecture, language, and educational institutions (Sugar, 1983). This period saw profound changes, which had long-term consequences for the identity and structure of Bosnian society. After the fall of the Ottoman

Empire, diplomatic relations adapted to new political circumstances, including the Austro-Hungarian rule and the later Yugoslav period, during which Turkey maintained cultural and economic ties with Bosnia, even despite difficult political relations.

As the history of Bosnia-Turkey relations has evolved through different political and cultural periods, it is crucial to understand how these relations were transformed and adapted to the new challenges and opportunities that emerged in the post-Yugoslav period.

After the breakup of Yugoslavia, changes in the political landscape of the Balkans further affected the relations between Bosnia and Turkey. In this context, Turkey played an important role in the global advocacy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which led to the activation of bilateral cooperation and cultural initiatives. To promote its regional interests and strengthen its position as a key player in the Balkans, Turkey encourages bilateral cooperation and cultural initiatives, especially in the fields of education, culture, and economy. This coordinated approach not only strengthened bilateral relations but also had a significant impact on shaping the regional dynamics of the Balkans, making Turkey an important contributor to the stabilization and progress of the region.

Given the complex development of Bosnia-Turkey relations over different historical periods, it is crucial to understand how these relations were formed and adapted to changing political and social circumstances. This article aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the history of diplomacy between the two countries, focusing on political alliances, cultural exchanges, and economic ties. How historical events shaped bilateral relations and their impact on the regional dynamics of the Balkans will be analyzed. By identifying key moments and factors that shaped the development of these relations, the work will allow for a detailed understanding of their causes, development, and long-term consequences.

Ultimately, this article aims to contribute to understanding the influence of historical context on the formation of contemporary political, economic, and cultural ties between Bosnia and Turkey, and to examine how these ties continue to develop in the context of globalization and contemporary international relations. The expected results will provide insight into the main factors shaping these relations, as well as possibilities for further cooperation, with an emphasis on their contribution to regional stability and broader international cooperation.

1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is based on a qualitative analysis of secondary sources with the aim of deepening the understanding of Bosnian-Turkish relations through historiographical narratives. The main objective is to explore the complexity and dynamics of these relations by analyzing historical monographs, scientific articles, and analytical reports.

To achieve a comprehensive insight into the development of relations between Bosnia and Turkey, the research uses an integrated methodological approach that combines several complementary analytical techniques, each of which contributes to a specific aspect of these relations. The thematic analysis allows for the identification of key themes and patterns in the texts, thereby laying the foundation for understanding the political, cultural, and economic ties between the two countries. This methodology enables the next step – discourse analysis, which explores how historical narratives shape political ideas and social changes, providing insight into the evolution of attitudes towards bilateral relations.

Contextual analysis extends this understanding, as it takes into account specific historical and cultural circumstances, which allows for a broader perspective on individual events and their long-term impact on relations between Bosnia and Turkey. At the same time, content analysis explores in detail the dominant motifs in the sources, contributing to a better understanding of how public discourses and perceptions of these relations are shaped.

The comparative analysis complements the approach by comparing different sources, historical periods, and geographical settings, thus revealing similarities and differences in narratives and their implications for bilateral relations. In this process, genealogical analysis provides insight into the development of ideas and concepts over time, while narrative analysis explores the way historical events have been represented in social discourses, revealing how they have shaped public perceptions of relations between the two countries.

This integrated approach enables a deep understanding of the influence of historical and cultural factors on the development of Bosnian-Turkish relations, as each method contributes new insights and broadens our understanding of these complex interrelationships. By combining these methods, the research provides a solid basis for new interpretations of historiographic narratives and opens up space for further research.

2. OTTOMAN PERIOD

2.1. Developing and Adjusting Diplomatic Relations

Diplomatic relations between Bosnia and the Ottoman Empire began to develop in the late 14th century. After the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, the Ottoman Empire began to exert its influence over the Balkans, including Bosnia. By the early 15th century, the Bosnian nobility recognized the growing power of the Ottomans, which led to various diplomatic interactions, including treaties and alliances.

The most significant diplomatic engagement occurred during the reign of the Bosnian King Tvrtko I, who initially sought to maintain independence while navigating the complex political landscape dominated by the Ottomans. Over time, as Ottoman power grew stronger, Bosnia gradually came under its control, culminating in its formal incorporation into the Ottoman Empire in the mid-15th century.

This was followed by a period during which relations between Bosnia and the Ottoman Empire developed through a series of diplomatic and political activities. The Ottoman sultans sought to consolidate their power in the Balkan region, and Bosnia, given its strategic geographical position, became a key point in their regional politics. Stjepan II Kotromanić, as well as his successors, sought to maintain a balance between local interests and Ottoman demands, thereby contributing to the formation of a complex network of political relations that included all aspects of rule, from military presence to cultural cooperation. These early diplomatic contacts laid the foundation for the further development of relations between Bosnia and the Ottoman Empire and enabled the formation of specific political and cultural ties that had long-term consequences for Bosnian history and its position within the Ottoman Empire.

Centralization of power and local autonomy were key features of the Ottoman Empire's administrative policy, and their implementation in Bosnia was adapted to the specific characteristics of Bosnian society and culture. However, while the Ottoman system of governance was complex and aimed at maintaining stability and efficiency, it also allowed for a certain degree of local autonomy, which was essential for the successful governance of a diverse region such as Bosnia.

The balance between centralized power and local autonomy was an important factor in the stability and integrity of the Ottoman Empire (Inalcık, 2000). In practice, this meant that local leaders, such as beys and feudal lords, had a certain degree of autonomy in the management of their territories, which allowed them to maintain local traditions and customs. This autonomy

not only helped to preserve cultural identity but also allowed local leaders to adapt administrative and legal aspects to Ottoman norms and needs. For example, beys had the authority to regulate local affairs and administer justice in their territories and were required to provide military and political support to the central government in Istanbul. This approach allowed local leaders to achieve specific diplomatic goals and maintain relations with the central government (Adanır & Faroghi, 2002), further strengthening the importance of Bosnia in regional politics. Also, through this model of government, the Ottoman Empire was able to integrate Bosnia into its political and administrative structures, allowing it to maintain its local characteristics and independence.

2.2. The Role of Local Elites And Administrators

Local elites and administrators played a crucial role in maintaining the stability of the Ottoman Empire in Bosnia. Their function was essential for governing the region and maintaining relations between the central government and local communities. These leaders, including beys such as Gazi Husrev-bey and Ferhat-pasha Sokolović, were distinguished by their efficient management of the administration, organization of military forces, and maintenance of social and political stability. As high-ranking local feudal lords, beys managed local affairs, collected taxes, judged, and organized military forces in their regions.

The Sarajevo beglerbeg Gazi Husrev-beg, known for his ability to govern a large area, successfully balanced the interests of the central government with the needs of the local community. According to Bišćević (2006), Gazi Husrev-bey had a similar importance for Sarajevo as for the entire Ottoman Empire had Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (Bišćević, 2006, p. 87). This ability was crucial for maintaining regional stability and long-term peace. In a similar context, the Banja Luka Ali-pasha was responsible for organizing and supervising military campaigns in the region, which enabled the successful implementation of central military policy at the local level.

In addition to their administrative and military functions, local leaders played an important role in preserving and promoting local traditions and customs. For example, Husein Gradaščević, known as the *"Dragon of Bosnia"*, sought to preserve Bosnia's autonomy while also working to preserve local cultural and religious customs. These activities further strengthened Bosnian identity within the Ottoman Empire and helped maintain regional stability.

These local leaders' functions not only ensured stability in the Ottoman Empire but also enabled Bosnia to maintain an important role in the Empire's regional diplomatic and trade network. Their ability to balance the demands

of the central government with local needs was crucial to preserving Bosnia's integrity and autonomy, thus contributing to the long-term stability and success of the Ottoman Empire in the region.

2.3. Cultural Exchange and the Influence of the Ottoman Empire on Bosnian Culture

During the Ottoman period, Bosnia was the epicenter of significant cultural exchange that profoundly shaped its identity. This interaction included architectural innovations, artistic influences, and literary connections that had lasting effects on Bosnian culture.

Ottoman rulers had a significant influence on the architecture of Bosnia. The Gazi Husrev-beg Mosque in Sarajevo, built in 1531, represents the pinnacle of Ottoman architecture in Bosnia. With its imposing minaret and intricate decorative elements, the building symbolizes the connection with the Ottoman Empire and the influence of Islamic art on local architecture. Gazi Husrev-beg also shaped the city's heritage and cultural landscape through his contribution to the urban development of Sarajevo.

There are several theories about the identity of the architect of the Gazi Husrev-bey Mosque, and experts do not fully agree on his origins and education. Some believe that the architect was Persian, while others suggest that he came from the school of Mimar Hajruddin, a famous student of Mimar Sinan. However, it is widely accepted that the architect was one of the most famous in the Ottoman Empire and that he came from Istanbul, and is also believed to have designed other important buildings, such as a madrasa, a library, and a hanka (Mehmedović, 2005, p. 41).

During this period, calligraphy and miniature painting, influenced by Turkish and Persian styles, enriched Bosnian visual culture. Artists adapted these styles to local cultural colors and trends, creating new art forms that reflected Bosnian cultural heritage.

In the literary sphere, Turkish poets such as Fuzuli, who wrote in Turkish and Persian, significantly influenced the local literary scene. Their works enriched the literary horizons in Bosnia and contributed to the cultural and intellectual development of the region. By adapting Turkish and Persian literary forms to local specificities, Bosnian literature developed unique characteristics that reflect the cultural context of the Ottoman Empire.

Bebler (2016) states that the long-term Ottoman rule in the territory of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina left a rich Islamic and Ottoman legacy, but also gave rise to ethnic and religious discord that often contributed to political instability. The culture of the local population absorbed oriental aspects

of Turkish culture, which are recognizable in architecture, language, music, food, names and surnames, and toponyms (Bebler, 2016, pp. 160-163).

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Although the Ottoman Empire brought rich cultural and intellectual exchange, it also laid the foundation for ethnic and religious differences that would later strongly influence political dynamics in the Balkans.

2.4. Cultural and Intellectual Transformation

The Ottoman period in Bosnia was one of significant cultural and intellectual achievements. The introduction of the Ottoman education system contributed to the development of Cultural and Intellectual institutions. Madrasahs, Islamic educational institutions, formed the basis of new generations of intellectuals and civil servants. The Madrasah in Travnik, for example, became famous for its role in education and the preservation of cultural values. However, in addition to religious education, madrasahs also provided secular education, including the study of law and philosophy.

The Gazi Husrev-Beg Library in Sarajevo was important for learning and preserving intellectual works. The library contained works on philosophy, theology, and law and contributed significantly to intellectual life in Bosnia. Its work contributed to important scientific and philosophical works and the development of intellectual and cultural trends in the region.

Today, Gazi Husrev-beg's library bears witness to a rich cultural and scientific heritage, including centuries-old manuscripts, printed books, periodicals, and extensive archival materials in three Eastern languages and several European languages. With more than 100 thousand publications, the library occupies an important place in the preservation and promotion of knowledge. Eastern manuscripts from southwestern Europe stand out, representing a significant contribution to the development of science and culture, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina but also on a regional and international level (Sarajevo Times, 2015).

Architectural structures such as mosques and hammams (public baths), symbols of Ottoman power, significantly shaped everyday life and cultural norms. These buildings served as Centers of social and cultural life, encouraging interaction and cultural exchange between different social classes. In

this way, their presence in the urban landscape of Bosnia contributed to the formation of cultural norms and shared values.

2.5. Linguistic Changes and Cultural Coexistence in the Ottoman Period

The Ottoman period in Bosnia was marked by significant linguistic changes and cultural coexistence, affecting daily life, administration, and the preservation of local traditions. The introduction of Turkish into the administrative and legal spheres transformed the linguistic landscape of the region, while Slavic languages continued to dominate everyday communication. Turkish became essential for official documents and legal affairs, reflecting the expansion of Ottoman administrative power and the standardization of the legal framework in Bosnia. The use of Turkish in official documents enabled centralized control and harmonization of administrative processes, while Slavic languages remained in everyday speech among the local population.

The book "*Tercüme-i Manzume*" (Translation of Poems), first published in 1859, illustrates the process of cultural and linguistic synthesis, in which Turkish linguistic structures were integrated with local Slavic languages, creating a unique linguistic landscape reflecting cultural coexistence.

Ottoman rule in Bosnia showed a pragmatic approach to local customs and traditions. Despite the imposition of Ottoman laws and norms, local communities retained autonomy in managing religious and cultural activities, provided that they adhered to the legal framework and ensured social order. This approach to preserving local traditions within the Ottoman system demonstrates the Empire's ability to integrate diverse cultural elements without suppressing local identities. Bebler (2016) points out that the spread of religion was one of the key motives for Ottoman conquests in the Balkans, which was not only a spiritual or cultural factor but also a geostrategic goal. As he points out, the Ottomans deliberately promoted their state religion to ensure long-term control over the territory, integrating religious and political aspects into their strategy for expanding power (Bebler, 2016, p. 170). However, although the author's analysis provides significant insight into the religious motives of Ottoman expansion in the Balkans, it should be emphasized that in addition to religious factors, Ottoman expansion was influenced by a wide range of political, economic, and military interests. Administrative goals, such as stabilizing and integrating new territories, as well as ensuring the balance of power within the Empire itself, were indispensable factors. Therefore, it is necessary to approach a broader analysis of this phenomenon, which includes the synergistic action of religious, political, cultural, and economic factors,

which shaped the Ottoman strategy of expanding and consolidating power in the Balkans.

The adaptation of local traditions to the Ottoman administrative system was achieved through the integration of local representatives, such as beys and chieftains, into the structures of the Ottoman government. These representatives played a role in linking local customs with Ottoman legal norms, contributing to the stability and cohesion of the administrative system. Traditional judicial customs were often integrated into Ottoman legal processes, thus allowing the preservation of traditional methods of dispute resolution while ensuring respect for Ottoman law.

The Ottoman period in Bosnia was characterized by linguistic adaptation, cultural coexistence, and administrative integration. The fusion of Turkic and Slavic linguistic elements, along with the integration of local customs into the Ottoman system, reflects the strategic management of the empire to maintain control and promote social cohesion. As a result, this interaction significantly shaped the historical and cultural development of the Balkan region.

According to Džogović, the Turks brought to the Balkans and Europe in general a specific form of Renaissance that includes Oriental Renaissance and Humanism, specific legislation, as well as various forms of Oriental Romanticism and Romantic ideas. This includes Arabic, Persian, and Turko-Mongol lyrical and epic forms, musical instruments, an Oriental type of calligraphy, and numerous types of artistic crafts. The author also emphasizes that Islamic learning represented a specific spiritual and practical Renaissance that particularly contributed to the naturalness and pragmatic nature of ideas. Many literary forms and cultural expressions in Western literature, including the works of Goethe, Heine, Hugo, Byron, and others, were shaped under the influence of Oriental literature and Islamic learning. This cultural influence included significant ethnic, racial, linguistic, and religious tolerance in Ottoman society, which was affirmed in practice and in political and legal documents, which enabled the preservation of Turkey's cultural ties and influence in the Balkans and throughout Europe (Džogović, 2007, p. 595). This cultural and linguistic interpenetration, as Džogović pointed out, reflects the profound influence of Ottoman rule on the Balkans, not only through the integration of different cultural traditions but also through the development of a unique intellectual and artistic environment. The presence of Islamic learning, together with its influence on art and social values, contributed to the creation of a cosmopolitan and pluralistic society. Also, the legal and political structures of the Ottoman Empire helped establish a framework for interethnic and interreligious cooperation, which lasted long after its fall. This cultural influence also shapes the cultural, social, and historical identity of the region today.

2.6. Educational Institutions and Intellectual Development

During the Ottoman period, educational institutions played a role in shaping intellectual and cultural life in Bosnia. Established madrasas, such as those in Sarajevo, became important in education and the development of intellectual thought. In these institutions, theological, philosophical, and legal texts were studied, allowing not only for the acquisition of knowledge but also for the formation of local intellectual traditions that had a lasting impact on society.

In addition to formal educational institutions, urban coffeehouses served as informal spaces for intellectual discussion and cultural exchange. These social institutions brought together educated individuals to discuss philosophical questions, literary works, and current social issues. Such spaces facilitated the dissemination of ideas and fostered intellectual dynamism within the community.

The influence of educational institutions on Bosnia's cultural development is particularly evident in the literary works of the period. Learning and writing in Turkish, which dominated intellectual circles, allowed for the creation of works that integrated Ottoman and local cultural elements, thus enriching the cultural heritage of the region. Divan literature of the period often included poetry in Persian, Arabic, and Ottoman Turkish, strongly influenced by Islamic mysticism and classical Persian literary forms. In this context, Sarajevo became the center of this rich literary tradition, home to important poets and intellectuals who contributed to its development. Works such as the *Divan* of Kaimi, a prominent Sufi poet, represent a fusion of mysticism and cultural exchange. However, these literary works were not only artistic expressions but also served as vehicles for political coexistence and intellectual interaction, reflecting the specific social and cultural dynamics that shaped everyday life in Sarajevo during this period.

Also, manuscript collections, such as "El-Hikmet", which are kept in madrasa libraries, represent significant sources for the study of intellectual and cultural trends in Bosnia during the Ottoman period. These collections contain works that bear witness to the educational and philosophical currents of the time, including the influences of Islamic mysticism and Ottoman administrative and cultural policies. Their preservation through generations indicates the stability of educational institutions and the continuity of intellectual life, which shaped the cultural dynamics in Bosnia. Therefore, they are not only material monuments of past times but also key indicators of intellectual productivity and cultural continuity in the Ottoman framework.

The numerous manuscript collections kept in madrasah libraries, such as the Gazi Husrev-beg Library in Sarajevo, represent an invaluable source for the study of intellectual and cultural trends in Bosnia during the Ottoman period. These collections contain works covering various fields, including Islamic sciences, philosophy, mysticism, and law, as well as natural and social sciences. Of particular interest is the oldest manuscript in this library – the fourth volume of the theological-mystical work *Ihya ulum ad-din* Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali, which was copied in 1106, during the author's lifetime. This manuscript represents important material for understanding Islamic thought and mysticism and testifies to the rich tradition of intellectual life in Bosnia (preporod.info, 2024). Their preservation across generations indicates the stability of educational institutions and the continuity of intellectual life, which shaped the cultural dynamics in Bosnia. Therefore, they are not only material monuments of past times but also key indicators of intellectual productivity and cultural continuity within the Ottoman framework.

3. DIPLOMACY DURING THE AUSTRO-HUNGARY OCCUPATION

With the arrival of Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia at the end of the 19th century, there were significant changes in diplomatic relations between Bosnia and Turkey. This change of power not only marked the end of Ottoman political dominance in the region but also brought a new dynamic to international relations in the Balkans. In this new context, Turkey sought to maintain its cultural and economic influence in Bosnia, even though it lost territorial control. Accordingly, diplomatic relations between Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire regarding Bosnia were characterized by mutual caution and strategic alliances, reflecting the complex interplay of imperial interests in the region. (Pinson, 1996)

The Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia in 1878 established a new political environment in which, although the Ottoman Empire formally retained sovereignty over Bosnia until 1908, *de facto* control was in the hands of Austria-Hungary. This change led to a redefinition of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Bosnia, now under Austro-Hungarian rule.

The Habsburg administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina was deeply involved in diplomatic negotiations with the Ottoman Empire, balancing its imperial ambitions with the need to maintain a stable relationship with the Porte (Okey, 2007). Faced with the loss of territory, Turkey had to find new ways to maintain its influence. These political changes also influenced the shaping of the social identity of Bosnian Muslims, especially in the context of

redefining their role in the new political system. Babuna (2020) points out that international treaties such as the Treaty of Berlin (1878), the Istanbul Convention (1879), the Protocol of 1909, and the Treaty on Minorities (1919) played a key role in shaping the national identity of Bosnian Muslims. Although these agreements often caused dissatisfaction due to their political consequences, they laid the foundations for the development of Muslim identity as a distinct community. This transformation of Bosnian Muslim identity, prompted by international treaties, played an important role in their political and social organization during the following decades. The agreements, although often controversially perceived, enabled the creation of institutional and cultural frameworks within which Bosnian Muslims articulated their national identity, adapting to changing historical circumstances.

Turkey has managed to maintain its cultural influence in Bosnia despite the loss of territorial control, through its consistent support for Islamic educational institutions such as madrasas and other religious schools. In addition, Turkey has contributed to the preservation of the Arab-Turkic linguistic heritage and cultural customs, including Islamic holidays, which have further strengthened cultural ties between Bosnia and Turkey. This has provided resources for the preservation and strengthening of the cultural identity of Bosnian Muslims through the support of cultural organizations and centers.

The restoration and maintenance of Ottoman architectural monuments such as mosques and madrasas, as well as the continuation of artistic expressions such as calligraphy and miniature painting, demonstrate a deep historical connection. This lasting cultural influence, despite political changes, underscores the role of *cultural diplomacy* and institutional assistance in maintaining the Bosnian Muslim identity, emphasizing the importance of cultural affinity in the field of international relations. According to Bidžan-Gekić and Gekić (2019), Ottoman architecture, including elements such as towers and domes, has had a significant impact on the construction of the city of Sarajevo. These architectural elements not only contribute to the aesthetic and historical value of the city but also play a key role in enhancing Sarajevo's cultural heritage and tourism potential (Bidžan-Gekić & Gekić, 2019, 78).

During the Austro-Hungarian rule, *economic relations* between Bosnia and Turkey underwent a significant transformation. Despite Austria-Hungary taking control of the key trade and industrial resources of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey sought to maintain its economic role and influence in the region. After the territorial loss, Turkey concentrated on preserving trade relations with Bosnia through intermediaries and strengthening cultural ties with the Bosniak population. Despite the decline in trade, the economic connection between Bosnia and Turkey maintained its key status. Turkey sought to secure

access to markets and resources through various economic and trade agreements, regardless of the new economic policy implemented by Austria-Hungary. However, this policy, which sought to integrate Bosnia into the economic framework of Austro-Hungarian domination, often resulted in a reduction in trade obligations with Turkey and a transformation of the configuration of economic relations.

To mitigate the negative consequences of the loss of territorial control, Turkey directed investments in infrastructure projects and supported trade initiatives to preserve its influence on the regional economy. This strategy included assisting Bosnian traders and entrepreneurs, strengthening cultural and educational ties, and continuing economic cooperation with Bosnia. Thus, despite the challenges posed by Austro-Hungarian administrative policy, Turkey successfully maintained its economic influence and ties with Bosnia, adapting to changes in the new geopolitical environment.

During the period of Austro-Hungarian rule, diplomatic relations between Turkey and Bosnia went through a complex phase to preserve *cultural ties* and *protect the Muslim community*. In this context, Turkey engaged diplomatic channels to secure the rights of the Muslim community in Bosnia through formal and informal negotiations with the Austro-Hungarian administration. These efforts were particularly directed at preserving religious and educational institutions that supported the Ottoman cultural heritage. Turkey also sought to ensure that Muslim customs and laws in Bosnia were respected within the new political framework established by Austro-Hungary. Through diplomatic negotiations and international treaties, it took steps to mitigate the negative consequences of Austro-Hungarian policies that threatened the religious and cultural autonomy of the Muslim population.

Although Turkey lost territorial control, it implemented a comprehensive strategy to sustain its cultural and political influence in Bosnia. This included providing financial support for religious institutions and educational projects, as well as promoting cultural events that emphasized Ottoman heritage. These actions were crucial for preserving the Islamic education system and maintaining cultural continuity. Additionally, Turkey's diplomatic strategies reinforced ties with Muslim communities throughout the Balkans, which allowed it to sustain a long-term influence over the region's political and cultural dynamics.

4. CONTEMPORARY PERIOD

Contemporary diplomatic relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey are based on a long-standing tradition of cooperation that has gone through significant political, economic, and cultural stages. Following the international recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, Turkey was one of the first to support its sovereignty, which laid the foundation for further strengthening of political and diplomatic ties. In recent years, relations between the two countries have been characterized by strong political trust and cooperation at the regional and international levels, with an emphasis on stability in the Balkans and support for Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of Euro-Atlantic integration.

A significant aspect of the bilateral relations between Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina is their multilateral cooperation, especially within the framework of international organizations such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Both countries share common interests in promoting peace, security, human rights, and sustainable development, strengthening their diplomatic ties at the global level. In this context, Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina actively cooperate on multilateral platforms, contributing to regional stability and global efforts to address the current challenges of modern society.

Security cooperation between Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina plays an important role in the context of geopolitical challenges in Southeastern Europe. Both countries work together to strengthen regional security, with an emphasis on the fight against terrorism, and illegal migration, and the stabilization and strengthening of state institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this context, Turkey provides significant assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in the educational, military-technical, and security sectors.

Turkey also continuously supports Bosnia and Herzegovina on its path to membership in the European Union. As a country that is itself in the process of accession to the EU, it offers political, technical, and reform assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of adapting legislation, institutions, and administrative structures necessary for EU accession. This support, which includes concrete reforms in the areas of the rule of law, human rights, and economic development, ensures further efforts in the modernization of B&H and its integration into Euro-Atlantic structures.

4.1. Political Cooperation

The political cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey is characterized by long-standing support in international organizations, Turkey's active engagement in the Peace Implementation Council, and mutual support in the area of regional stability and security. This cooperation is based on shared strategic interests and a mutual understanding of the geopolitical dynamics shaping the Balkan region.

The particular importance of cooperation is reflected in the mutual support within international organizations such as the United Nations and NATO. Turkey has consistently supported Bosnia and Herzegovina in its efforts to join NATO, recognizing the key role that membership in this organization plays in ensuring regional stability. Furthermore, within the framework of the United Nations, Turkey has supported Bosnia and Herzegovina in initiatives aimed at promoting justice and reconciliation, particularly after the conflicts of the 1990s. Such support reflects not only political solidarity but also a strategic alignment in advancing mutual interests within the broader international framework.

Turkey has also played a key role in the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, providing significant assistance during crises, such as the political blockade in 2010. This role of Turkey within the PIC not only underlines its commitment to preserving the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina but also testifies to its commitment to political stability in the entire region. However, the stability that has emerged from these political relations has also enabled significant growth in economic cooperation between the two countries.

Looking ahead, there is significant potential for further enhancing political cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey, particularly through strengthening bilateral relations in the context of new security and political challenges in the region. Both countries could further intensify cooperation through joint initiatives within the European Union, and expand their role in regional security organizations. Such expanded cooperation would not only contribute to the stability of the Balkans but would also strengthen the positions of both countries as key actors in the broader Euro-Atlantic context.

4.2. Economic Cooperation

The economic cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey is based on key trade agreements, significant investments in various sectors, and cooperation in infrastructure projects and tourism development.

This cooperation has developed over the years, strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries on numerous fronts.

A particular progress in economic cooperation was recorded with the signing of the Free Trade Agreement in 2002. This agreement opened up new opportunities for increasing trade between the two countries, thus ensuring the strengthening of economic ties. For example, according to data from 2023, economic cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey is recording constant growth, and the volume of trade is reaching one billion dollars per year. Turkey has already become a key investor in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in the processing industry, and cooperation is expanding to agriculture, infrastructure, and other sectors (Slobodna Bosna, 2023). As pointed out, further strengthening of bilateral economic ties is planned, including increasing exports and investments (Slobodna Bosna, 2023).

Turkish investments in Bosnia and Herzegovina increased by more than 200 million euros last year. These investments cover key sectors such as manufacturing, infrastructure, tourism, and real estate projects. Since Turkey is among the leading investors in B&H, these capital flows significantly affect the country's competitiveness, especially in the manufacturing and transport sectors. Investments also contribute to the creation of new jobs, which further stimulates economic growth and development (Čalić, 2024).

According to BiznisInfo.ba, the Turkish company Şişecam has achieved an extremely successful business result in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a net profit exceeding 100 million KM. Their factory in Lukavac has become one of the key European production facilities, and sales revenues have reached 403 million KM (Stav, 2023). These investments have a significant impact on the country's economic dynamics, but also on strengthening its position on the international trade scene.

In the future, economic cooperation may further expand to areas such as renewable energy sources and the digital economy. For example, there is great potential for the development of joint projects in the solar energy sector, where Bosnia and Herzegovina could benefit from Turkish experience in technology. Also, strengthening cooperation in small and medium-sized enterprises could contribute to employment and overall economic growth, which would further strengthen bilateral relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey.

4.3. Cultural and Educational Cooperation

Cultural and educational cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey is a crucial facet of their bilateral relations, significantly influencing student exchanges, joint cultural initiatives, and the development of linguistic and cultural ties. This cooperation, grounded in a shared historical legacy and mutual interests, serves as a mechanism for fostering stronger diplomatic relations between the two countries. Through academic exchanges and promoting cultural projects, both countries have been able to deepen their connections, contributing to the broader geopolitical stability of the region. Furthermore, such collaboration not only strengthens bilateral ties but also serves as a strategic tool in advancing mutual diplomatic goals, particularly in promoting cultural diversity and shared values on the international stage.

In recent years, besides the increase in the number of Turkish colleges through the Balkan countries, we are simultaneously witnessing the opening of new high education institutions (like the International Balkan University in Skopje, the International University of Sarajevo, etc.), a fact that is witnessing the proactive and multidimensional politics of Turkish diplomacy in this strategically vital regions (Kir, 2008, 4-95; Ali, 2010, 155-156).

Over the past decade, Turkey has awarded more than 500 scholarships to students from Bosnia and Herzegovina, enabling them to access higher education at prestigious Turkish institutions such as Boğaziçi University and Sabancı University. In addition, academic cooperation in various fields of research has been strengthened. For example, the cooperation between the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo and Boğaziçi University has led to the organization of numerous joint seminars and workshops, enabling the exchange of ideas and research results.

Cultural events such as the Bosnian Culture Festival in Istanbul and the International Turkish-Bosnian Friendship Day in Sarajevo play an important role in the cultural relations of the two countries. These events, organized by cultural centers such as the Turkish Cultural Center in Sarajevo and the Cultural Center of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Istanbul, provide a platform for cultural exchange and promotion of common cultural heritage, enriching the cultural dialogue and cultural diplomacy.

The Turkish International Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) financially and technically supports projects that contribute to education, cultural development, and the preservation of cultural heritage. For example, TIKA's financing of the renovation of the Gazi Husrev-beg Mosque in Sarajevo significantly contributes to the preservation of this important cultural monument, but also to the strengthening of diplomatic ties. In this con-

text, the Gazi Husrev-beg Madrasah stands out, founded in 1537, as one of the oldest educational institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with continuous operation for over 482 years. The Madrasah educated a generation of students who spread Islamic ethics and knowledge among Bosniaks. It was architecturally conceived as a representative building with a central *dershan* (classroom) and residential premises. Located in the heart of *Baščaršija*, it was designed by the prominent Persian Ottoman architect Adžem Esir Ali, according to the wishes of the founder (Bećirbegović, 1971). At the same time, TIKa organizes educational programs and training for employees in the field of culture and education, thus contributing to professional development and improvement of bilateral relations. On the other hand, the Yunus Emre Institute in Sarajevo also plays an important role by organizing various cultural events, Turkish language courses, and workshops for youth and students, which enables the dissemination of Turkish culture and language among young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

However, further cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey will mainly depend on political will, stability within the two countries, economic interests, and joint initiatives in the fields of education, culture, and security.

CONCLUSION

Diplomatic cooperation between Bosnia and Turkey is based on long-standing historical ties that have significantly shaped the political, cultural, and economic aspects of the Balkans. Political alliances, which have developed from the Ottoman period, through the Austro-Hungarian occupation to modern relations, reflect the constant aspiration of both countries to preserve and strengthen bilateral ties. Cultural exchange, which includes literature, art, and education, has also played a key role in shaping a common identity and in strengthening mutual trust. On the other hand, economic cooperation, especially through investments and joint projects, contributes to the stabilization and expansion of bilateral relations, confirming the importance of connectivity in maintaining long-term relations. In this context, the continued focus on these sectors emphasizes the central role that economic relations play in advancing diplomatic and political relations.

Future relations will be shaped by shared interests, with an emphasis on regional stability and challenges in contemporary international relations, particularly in the context of geopolitical, economic, and security issues.

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DIPLOMATSKI ODNOSI IZMEĐU BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE I TURSKJE: ANALIZA POLITIČKIH, EKONOMSKIH I KULTURNIH INTERAKCIJA

Diplomatski odnosi između Bosne i Hercegovine i Turske imali su značajan utjecaj u oblikovanju političkog, kulturnog i ekonomskog okruženja Balkana. Razvoj odnosa može se pratiti kroz različite historijske faze, od osmanskog razdoblja i austro-ugarske okupacije do savremenih geopolitičkih i ekonomskih izazova. Svrha studije je analizirati utjecaj historijskih događaja i društvenih promjena na političku, ekonomsku i kulturnu saradnju između dviju zemalja. Istraživanje je usmjereno na identificiranje glavnih motiva koji oblikuju bilateralne odnose, uz razmatranje njihovog značaja u kontekstu regionalne stabilnosti i globalnih političkih procesa. Metodološki pristup istraživanja temelji se na kvalitativnoj analizi sekundarnih izvora, uključujući historiografska djela, znanstvene članke i analitičke izvještaje. Podaci su obrađeni tematskim analitičkim pristupom, uz primjenu teorijskog okvira za identifikaciju ključnih motiva i obrazaca u historijskim narativima i njihovu kritičku interpretaciju u kontekstu kulturnih, političkih i društvenih faktora. Osim toga, provedena je komparativna analiza razvoja ovih narativa u različitim političkim, kulturnim i ekonomskim kontekstima, pri čemu su istraženi njihovi efekti na bilateralne odnose tokom određenih historijskih razdoblja. Kriteriji za odabir narativa i vremenski okviri definirani su prema njihovoj relevantnosti za globalnu političku dinamiku i njihovoj sposobnosti da ilustriraju ključne promjene u bilateralnoj saradnji između dviju zemalja. Rezultati pokazuju da diplomatske odnose Bosne i Hercegovine i Turske karakteriziraju intenzivne političke interakcije, multikulturalna saradnja, te dugoročni ekonomski odnosi koji odražavaju njihovu kompleksnost i višedimenzionalnost. Međutim, ovi odnosi nisu statični, već su se razvijali kroz različite faze historijskog razvoja, u skladu s promjenjivom geopolitičkom i globalnom dinamikom. Takva evolucijska transformacija odražava visoku razinu strateške fleksibilnosti obiju država, omogućujući im prilagodbu složenim izazovima savremenih međunarodnih odnosa, uključujući redefiniranje ciljeva vanjske politike i iskorištavanje prilika koje proizlaze iz bilateralnih i multilateralnih inicijativa. Paralelno, razvoj ovih odnosa u ključnim historijskim trenucima potvrđuje njihovu važnu ulogu u stabilizaciji političkih struktura, jačanju međukulturalnog dijaloga i facilitiranju modela održivog ekonomskog razvoja u širem regionalnom kontekstu.

Ključne riječi: *diplomatski odnosi, Bosna i Hercegovina, Turska, kulturna i ekonomska saradnja, geopolitičke promjene*