

Fikret Karčić

# THE OTHER EUROPEAN MUSLIMS

A Bosnian Experience



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*Two radically opposite developments have taken place in modern Muslim societies. The first was the spread of European/Western modernity from the beginning of the 19th century up to the middle of the 20th century which resulted in the confinement of the shari'ah to the personal matters of the Muslims. The second development consisted of the reversal of the process of modernization since the 1970s which found its expression in the return of the shari'ah to the public domain of the Muslim societies.*

*Ideas for reform of Islamic law, common in the modernizing Muslim countries during the first half of the 20th century, were echoed in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the inter-war period. Modernization of the Shari'a courts and Islamic law followed the model applied in Bosnia during the Habsburg era and the path followed by Muslim Middle Eastern countries. They were conducted by reformist-minded Shari'a judges, supported by the state authorities and met no resistance among the Muslim population. Changes in social ethics, especially external symbols of Islamic identity, however, were limited due to resistance from traditional circles and a large portion of the Muslim population.*



Fikret Karčić is a Professor of Comparative Legal History at the Faculty of Law, University of Sarajevo. He taught at the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Sarajevo, Marmara University in Istanbul, International Islamic University Malaysia, University of Oslo and Boise State University (USA).

Born in eastern Bosnian town of Višegrad in 1955, Fikret Karčić received his secondary education at the Gazi Husrev Beg Madrasa in Sarajevo. In 1978 he graduated from the Faculty of Law, University of Sarajevo. He obtained his M.A. and Ph.D. from the Faculty of Law, University of Belgrade, in 1985 and 1989 respectively.

His main academic interest is history of Islamic law and institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the post-Ottoman period, reformist movements in Islam, Balkan Muslims and comparative legal cultures.

His publications include *Šerijatski sudovi u Jugoslaviji 1918-1941* (Sarajevo: Islamski teološki fakultet, 1985), *Društveno-pravni aspekt islamskog reformizma* (Sarajevo: Islamski teološki fakultet, 1990), *The Bosniaks and the Challenges of Modernity: Late Ottoman and Hapsbury Times* (Sarajevo: El-Kalem, 1999), *Studije o šerijatskom pravu i institucijama* (Sarajevo: Centar za napredne studije and El-Kalem, 2011), and *Muslimani Balkana: "istočno pitanje" u XX vijeku* (Sarajevo: Centar za napredne studije, 2014).

