The Rebellious Kapudan of Bosnia: Hüseyin Kapudan (1802-1834)

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Bosna'nın Asi Kapudanı: Hüseyin Kapudan (1802-1834)

Öz ■ Bu makalede yerel bir Bosna beyi olan Hüseyin Kapudan'a odaklanmakta ve ona, merkezi otoriteye karşı duracak gücü veren 19. yüzyıl Bosna'sının dinamikleri analiz edilmektedir. İlk olarak Hüseyin Kapudan'ın aile geçmişini incelemekte ve Bosna'nın küçük bir kazası olan Gradacac'dan gelip de gücünü bu kadar pekiştirmesini sağlayacak uygun ortamı nasıl bulduğu ele alınmaktadır. İkinci olarak Hüseyin Kapudan'ın kapudanlık yaptığı yıllar olan 1821-1832 arasına yoğunlaşmakta ve Hüseyin Kapudan'ın nasıl inkişaf edip zamanla artan bir zenginliğe sahip olduğu ortaya konmaktadır. Üçüncü olarak Hüseyin Kapudan'ın *de facto* valilik yaptığı, Eylül 1831'den Haziran 1832'ye kadar olan dönem incelenmektedir. Bu kapsamda Hüseyin Kapudan'ın Bosna'da yerel halkın desteğiyle nasıl valilik iddiasında bulunduğunu sorgulamakta ve Bosnalıların merkezin kendilerine gönderdiği valilerin haklarını koruyamayacağı yönündeki bir yargıya nasıl sahip oldukları tartışılmaktadır. Konuyla ilgili olarak şu soruların cevaplarını aramaya çalıştım: Yerel Bosna halkını Babıali'ye arzuhallerle başvurmaya ve Hüseyin Kapudan'ın Bosna Veziri olmasını istemeye yönelten saikler nelerdi? Ve bu isteklere karşı merkezi otoritelerin tavrı ne oldu? Odaklandığım son konu ise Hüseyin Kapudan'ın ve onun başlattığı hareketin kaderinin ne olduğudur. Bu kapsamda Hüseyin Kapudan'ı Haziran 1832'de merkezi güçlerle karşı karşıya getiren ve yenilgisiyle sona eren savaşı inceledim. Akabinde hareketinin bastırılmasından sonra Avusturya'ya kaçışının, Avusturya makamlarınca İstanbul'a teslim edilişinin ve İstanbul'a gönderildikten sonra zenginliğine ve yakınlarına ne olduğunun üzerinde durdum ve Hüseyin Kapudan'ın şüpheli ölümü hakkındaki iddialara değindim.

Anahtar kelimeler: Hüseyin Kapudan, Bosna, isyan, merkezileşme, II. Mahmud

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During the period between 1820s and 1830s, Bosnia witnessed two great rebellions, which affected the whole region and could only be suppressed through large scale interventions from the center. Inhabitants of Bosnia first revolted after the abolition of the Janissary Corps in 1826[1] and then, rebelled against the new orders of the Porte, including the changes in land tenure and military system, the changes in military uniform, as well as the changes in the status of some districts of Bosnia, after 1828.[2] The leader of the second rebellion was Hüseyin Kapudan. Being Bosnian and having famous *kapudan* ancestors after the eighteenth century, Hüseyin Kapudan became a very crucial figure in terms of motivating the local residents into action, and of consolidating them under the shelter of a regional power base.

The beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed many changes in the Ottoman state apparatus in terms of reconstructing political and administrative structures in a centralized manner and, related to this, the creation of a new bureaucracy. After Mahmud II had destroyed the Janissary Corps in 1826, he began the process by dividing the functions of the central government into departments and institutions.[3] The most visible outcome of his reform and centralization policies was a more influential state in every aspect of life, which caused great dissatisfaction among the Bosnians in this period. Bosnia became one of the main battlegrounds for the clashes between central forces and local *ayan*[s] and between centralization and retaining local autonomy. A more modernized and centralized government meant the reduction of the influence of local elites and created a paradoxical situation, since one of the essential characteristics of the Ottoman Empire was its dependency on the local elites in terms of collecting taxes and exercising control over the population. The conscious divergence from the traditional system of the state engendered a huge rebellion among local inhabitants, who, from then on, turned into defenders of the old order. The rebellion was intended to preserve the privileges of the Bosnian notables in opposition to the aims of centralization.

1 In both rebellions, although the leading figures of the rebellion had changed, the general participation and demands of the rebels as well as the reasons for the rebellion followed a very similar pattern, indicating, in essence, a certain continuity which can be formulated as "reactions against the centralization policies of the empire." For more information about the rebellion and the leadership after the abolition of the Janissary army see, Fatma Sel Turhan "*Rebelling for the Old Order: Ottoman Bosnia, 1826-1836*" (PhD Diss., Boğaziçi University, 2009), 122-191.

2 See for example, BOA HAT 429/21886 H, 11Zilhicce 1243/24 June 1828.

3 Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 36–40.

For the Bosnians, centralization meant a new army, a new land system, a new administration, and a change in status for non-Muslims. The Ottoman Sultan was much more interested in maintaining his authority over his subjects, regardless of their faith, and in a more interventionist state in terms of local issues. With the new army, there was the possibility that the position of *kapudan*s and *yerlikulu* Janissaries of Bosnia would change, while the new land system would break the power and influence of local notables. With the new administration, Saray, the principal city of Bosnia, became the administrative center of the province, after which it would eventually lose its autonomous character. Another source of unease among the Bosnians was the rights given to the Serbs. For instance, some districts were handed over to them to the disadvantage of the Bosnians. All these changes seem to have profoundly debilitated the traditional, semi-independent socio-administrative order of Bosnia.

In that sense the Treaty of Edirne (1829), in which the Ottoman authorities agreed to cede some territory to the Serbian side, became a turning point for the Bosnians. The territory was to include the six districts from Vidin, Alacahisar and Bosnia, which Serbia claimed, but did not administer.[4] News of the new arrangement shocked the local inhabitants, who claimed that the lands concerned had belonged to the Bosnians and Albanians since their conquest.[5] A number of letters were sent to the Porte underlining that if these lands were given to the Serbians it would cause great anger among the local inhabitants, and demanding the abandonment of the idea.[6]

According to a report of the Vali of Bosnia Ali Namık Paşa, on 4 February 1831, the notables of Bosavine region gathered in Hüseyin Kapudan's house and decided to fight back against the attempts of the Serbians to capture these six districts.[7] They organized a *meşveret* (consultation) in Tuzla-i Zîr where most of the notables of the region either came personally or sent authorized representatives so as to constitute

4 BOA HAT 442/22200, 02 Ramazan 1246/14 February 1831.

5 BOA HAT 1109/44685, 03 Zilkade 1245/26 April 1830, BOA HAT 1109/44685 E, 23 Şevval 1245/17 April 1830, BOA HAT 1109/44685 H, 04 Şevval 1245/29 March 1830, BOA HAT 1109/44685 İ, 09 Şevval 1245/03 April 1830, BOA HAT 44685 V, 17 Şevval 1245/11 April 1830, BOA HAT 45032 A, 29 Zilhicce 1245/21 June 1830.

6 See for example BOA HAT 1109/44685 B, 15 Şevval 1245/09 April 1830, BOA HAT 1109/44685 Ç, 09 Şevval 1245/03 April 1830, BOA HAT 1109/44685 E, 23 Şevval 1245/17 April 1830, BOA HAT 1109/44685 H, 04 Şevval 1245/29 March 1830, BOA HAT 1109/44685 İ, 09 Şevval 1245/03 April 1830.

7 BOA HAT 438/22091, 21 Şaban 1246/04 February 1831. See also BOA HAT 1127/45030, 17 Şaban 1246/31 January 1831.

a general alliance (*ittifak-ı umum*).[8] On 28 March 1831, the rebels in Tuzla moved through Travnik, where they besieged the *vali* himself and most of his supporters who sought refuge in the city. The *vali* had to yield and was dressed up in clothes which were forbidden after the abolition of the Janissary army.[9] After Ali Namık Paşa had stayed in Travnik for 20 days, the rebels sent him to Busovac, a district of Saray where his position of house-arrest continued for the following 24 days. Only 200–300 of his supporters accompanied him.[10] During the Muslim Festival of Sacrifice in June 1831, he escaped, together with his men, through the Hersek region.[11]

Because of the worsening situation in both Albania and Bosnia, Grand Vizier Reşid Mehmed Paşa, who had been serving in the Balkan lands for a long time[12] was ordered to suppress the rebellion.[13] Reşid Mehmed Paşa's army managed to defeat İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa, who was besieged in İşkodra.[14] On the other hand, the rebels of Bosnia sent letters to all the notables of the region under the signature of Hüseyin Kapudan, calling on them to send soldiers to Yenipazar.[15] According to a report dated 8 June 1831, they were able to gather a large army in Yenipazar which was to be sent to the Kosovo region.[16] When the rebels of Bosnia reached İpek and joined the soldiers from İşkodra under the command of Arslan Paşa, they

8 A copy of this letter can be seen in BOA HAT 438/22095 G, 29 Şaban 1246/12 February 1831.

9 BOA HAT 438/22095 F, 17 Zilhicce 1246/29 May 1831.

10 BOA HAT 438/22095 D, 21 Zilhicce 1246/02 June 1831, BOA HAT 438/22095 F, 17 Zilhicce 1246/29 May 1831.

11 BOA HAT 419/21667, 23 Zilhicce 1246/04 June 1831, BOA HAT 431/21919, 05 Muharrem 1247/16 June 1831, BOA HAT 438/22095 A, 09 Muharrem 1247/20 June 1831, BOA HAT 438/22095 D, 21 Zilhicce 1246/02 June 1831, BOA HAT 438/22095 F, 17 Zilhicce 1246/29 May 1831.

12 Hakan Erdem, "Perfidious Albanians" and "Zealous Governors": Ottomans, Albanians, and Turks in the Greek War of Independence,' in *Ottoman Rule and the Balkans, 1760–1850: Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation*, eds. Antonis Anastasopoulos and Elias Kolovos (Rethymno: University of Crete, Department of History and Archaeology, 2007), 227, 237.

13 BOA HAT 433/21989, 19 Zilhicce 1246/31 May 1831, BOA HAT 440/22148, 24 Rebiyülahir 1247/02 October 1831. For more information about Reşid Mehmed Paşa see Erdem, "Perfidious Albanians" and "Zealous Governors",' 237.

14 BOA HAT 442/22201, 11 Rebiyülahir 1247/19 September 1831, BOA HAT 442/22218, 27 Muharrem 1247/08 July 1831.

15 A copy of these letters can be seen in BOA HAT 431/21919 D, 19 Zilhicce 1246/31 May 1831.

16 BOA HAT 413/21919 C, 27 Zilhicce 1246/08 June 1831.

attacked İpek, Pirişţine and Vulçetrin, where they succeeded in repulsing the army of the Grand Vizier.[17] Reşid Mehmed Paşa was forced to return to Üsküb where he impaled three captured rebels,[18] most probably in revenge for his defeat as well as a show of strength.

The *de facto* Governor: Hüseyin Kapudan

Because of the flight of Ali Namık Paşa, the post of governorship (*valilik*) was vacant in Bosnia. At the end of June 1831, the Porte decided to give this position to the Guardian (*Muhafız*) of Vidin, İbrahim Paşa.[19] When İbrahim Paşa was preparing to depart from Üsküb for Yenipazar on 2 September 1831, news came to him that Hüseyin Kapudan had applied to the central authorities for permission of his governorship and was awaiting their decision.[20] In his petition to the Porte, Hüseyin Kapudan argued that all the inhabitants of Bosnia demanded his vizierate. He described how much he was obedient to the state, and if he was accepted for the governorship, he would serve with heart and soul.[21] At the same time Hüseyin Kapudan held a *meşveret* which was attended by a large number of delegates in Saray.[22] Based on the decision of that *meşveret*, the local inhabitants appointed Hüseyin Kapudan as vizier on 24 September 1831 and celebrated the appointment with gun salutes.[23] When a state official came to remind them of the state's orders, the people of the region replied: 'We have appointed our vizier and we are requesting the state to confer his horsetails. However, if they are not sent, we will gather 200,000 armed men and we will fight until all of us perish. We will not accept any other vizier apart from Hüseyin Kapudan.'[24]

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17 BOA HAT 442/22201, 11 Rebiyülahir 1247/19 September 1831, Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 69, 73, 03 Rebiyülevvel 1247/12 August 1831.

18 BOA HAT 442/22201, 11 Rebiyülahir 1247/19 September 1831.

19 BOA HAT 431/21919, 05 Muharrem 1247/16 June 1831, BOA HAT 440/22147, 11 Muharrem 1247/22 June 1831. For the same issue see also, BOA HAT 432/21963, 13 Rebiyülevvel 1247/22 August 1831, BOA HAT 441/22183, 14 Rebiyülahir 1247/22 September 1831.

20 BOA HAT 442/22205, 01 Rebiyülahir 1247/09 September 1831.

21 BOA HAT 440/22154 D, undated.

22 BOA HAT 442/22205, 01 Rebiyülahir 1247/09 September 1831, BOA HAT 437/22077 D, 09 Rebiyülahir 1247/17 September 1831, BOA HAT 440/22148 C, 09 Rebiyülahir 1247/17 September 1831.

23 BOA HAT 440/22148 B, 09 Rebiyülahir 1247/17 September 1831.

24 BOA HAT 440/22148 B, 09 Rebiyülahir 1247/17 September 1831.

Meanwhile, the notables of every district signed the letters of appeal and sent these to the central authorities, requesting the acceptance of Hüseyin Kapudan's governorship.[25] We see that, a short time after those events, in the letters sent from Bosnia to the Porte, the title of Hüseyin Kapudan was raised to Kapudan Hüseyin Paşa as a sign of his position as vizierate.[26] He was also mentioned as '*Devletlû Hüseyin Paşa*, *Vali-i Bosna*, or *Vali-i Eyalet-i Bosna*' many times in the local court records (*sicils*).[27] More importantly, in a *buyuruldu* (decree) of the Grand Vizier, he was mentioned as '*Eyalet-i Bosna Valisi Vezir-i mükerrem saadetlü, refetlü Hüseyin Paşa*' and it was said that he (Hüseyin Kapudan) begged pardon for his part in rebellion and requested the vizierate post, implying his desire to serve the state.[28]

In that period, the Grand Vizier's forces managed to defeat İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa[29] who was very troubled because he had been dismissed from

25 For example, BOA HAT 443/22221 İ, 21 Rebiyülahir 1247/29 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 J, 28 Rebiyülahir 1247/06 October 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 K, 09 Rebiyülahir 1247/17 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 L, 17 Rebiyülahir 1247/25 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 M, 09 Rebiyülahir 1247/17 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 N, 11 Rebiyülahir 1247/19 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 O, 11 Rebiyülahir 1247/19 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 Ö, 11 Rebiyülahir 1247/19 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 P, 05 Cemaziyülevvel 1247/12 October 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 R, 19 Rebiyülahir 1247/27 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 S, 11 Rebiyülahir 1247/19 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 T, 19 Rebiyülahir 1247/27 September 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 U, 02 Cemaziyülevvel 1247/09 October 1831.

26 For example, BOA HAT 435/22039 A, 18 Rebiyülahir 1247/26 September 1831, BOA HAT 437/22077 C, 09 Ramazan 1247/11 February 1832, BOA HAT 443/22221 F, 07 Cemaziyülevvel 1247/14 October 1831.

27 Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 69, p. 83, 07 Cemaziyülevvel 1247/14 October 1831, Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 69, p. 89, 23 Cemaziyülahir 1247/29 November 1831, Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 70, p. 16, 17 Zilkade 1247/18 April 1832, Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 70, p. 25, 13 Şevval 1247/16 March 1832, Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 70, p. 34, 17 Şevval 1247/20 March 1832.

28 Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 70, p. 16, 07 Ramazan 1247/09 February 1832.

29 İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa was a member of the Buşhati family in İşkodra. The ancestors of İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa, the Buşhatlıs, came to power in the region of İşkodra in 1756 and, apart from a very short breaks, ruled the region until 1831. İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa obtained the post in 1811 and succeeded in imposing his control over a large area and cooperating with the mountain tribes. Although he displayed ebbs and flows in his attitudes towards the central authorities, they kept Tepedelenli Ali Paşa as their main concern and interestingly preferred to use İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa against Tepedelenli Ali Paşa rather than move against him. However, after the destruction of Tepedelenli Ali

the control of Elbasan and Ohri *sancak*s. According to the claims, the dismissal of Mustafa Paşa from those posts was related to his refusal of the Porte's orders to pacify Bosnians and recruit *Asakir-i Mansure* soldiers from them. In fact, after sending his agents to Bosnia, İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa decided to unite with Hüseyin Kapudan against the efforts of the Serbians to capture the six districts.[30] Because of the threat of a possible alliance with Hüseyin Kapudan, the Grand Vizier's forces suppressed İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa's rebellion first, and in November 1831 he was sent to Istanbul.[31] Thereafter, special emphasis was placed on fortifying Albanian castles, as well as acquiring the allegiance of the local Gheg Paşas in order to suppress the Bosnian rebellion.[32] The Porte proved to be uneasy about the fact that İbrahim Paşa, the center's appointee, was unable to go to Bosnia.[33] Thus, the change of Bosnian governor came into question once again. It was decided at the beginning of 1832 to appoint Mahmud Hamdi Paşa to this post.[34]

The letter of appointment sent to Hamdi Paşa on 13 February, 1832 shows that he was expected to clear the province of the rebels and restore order,[35] by dispatching a large army there under his command.[36] At the end of April 1832, Mahmud Hamdi Paşa was able to go to Yenipazar with some 25,000 soldiers.[37] The advance of the central forces continued when the battles Seniçe, Pirebol, Hisarcık and Vişegrad ended in victory for Mahmud Hamdi Paşa's forces.[38] The army continued

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Paşa, the cooperation between the central authorities and İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa came to an end. For detailed information about İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa see; Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 361-362.

30 BOA HAT 437/22080, 25 Ramazan 1246/09 March 1831, BOA HAT 406/21191, 07 Şevval 1246/21 March 1831.

31 BOA HAT 443/22221 A, 11 Cemaziyülahir 1247/17 November 1831.

32 BOA HAT 441/22189, 16 Receb 1247/21 December 1831, BOA HAT 443/22221 A, 11 Cemaziyülahir 1247/17 November 1831.

33 BOA HAT 423/21775, 29 Zilhicce 1247/30 May 1832.

34 BOA HAT 423/21775, 29 Zilhicce 1247/30 May 1832.

35 BOA HAT 716/34202, 11 Ramazan 1247/13 February 1832, BOA HAT 716/34202 A, 11 Ramazan 1247/13 February 1832.

36 BOA HAT 439/22130, 22 Şevval 1247/25 March 1832.

37 BOA HAT 439/22132, 03 Zilhicce 1247/04 May 1832, BOA HAT 443/22224, 03 Zilhicce 1247/04 May 1832.

38 BOA HAT 442/22217, 28 Zilhicce 1247/29 May 1832, BOA HAT 909/39784, 05 Muharrem 1248/04 June 1832.

the march against the rebels in Pirace and Alacahan and defeated them.[39] From Baneska and Yenipazar to Alacahan news arrived that all the regions had been 'conquered' and cleared of the rebels.[40] The final battle took place in Saray on 4 June 1832.[41] The first move came from the rebels' side, since the aim of Hüseyin Kapudan was to attack the central army first and to gain the initiative. The rebel cavalry and infantry attacked from five or six sides. It was reported that the battle lasted for seven hours.[42] In the end, the rebels, many of whom perished during the battle, were defeated. About 100–200 rebels were captured, while others escaped.[43]

The seizure of the Saray district was greeted with great pleasure by the Porte, where prayers were offered that the ongoing rebellion of Mehmed Ali Paşa (or Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa), who rose against Istanbul from Egypt, would be defeated in a similar manner. Albanian support for quelling the revolt was commended and Ottoman officials reported that fact in *Takvim-i Vekâyi* publicly thanking the Albanians. Letters of thanks and encouragement were prepared and sent to the Paşas of Albania, as well as the *vali* of Bosnia.[44]

Rising to Power: from Hüseyin Kapudan to "Devletlû Hüseyin Paşa"

Hüseyin Kapudan's rise to power gives clues to understanding the dynamics of the internal and external politics of Bosnia in the late eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century. Hüseyin Kapudan was most probably born in 1802 in Gradacac, a small and picturesque city in the western part of the Bosavine region. In fact, Gradacac or Grad was well known from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries onwards when the ancestors of Hüseyin Kapudan became the holders of its *kapudanlık*.[45] The father of Hüseyin Kapudan, Osman, had four sons, namely Murad, Hüseyin, Osman Paşa and Hacı Bekirbey. After the *vali* of Bosnia, Ali Celaleddin Paşa, executed Murad Kapudan in 1821 Hüseyin Kapudan took the position

39 BOA HAT 442/22217, 28 Zilhicce 1247/29 May 1832.

40 BOA HAT 437/22081 D, 13 Muharrem 1248/12 June 1832.

41 Hamdija Kreševljaković. *Izabrana Djela IV*, *Prilozi za Političku Istoriju Bosne I Hercegovine u XVIII i XIX Stoljeću.* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1991), 43.

42 BOA HAT 437/22081 D, 13 Muharrem 1248/12 June 1832.

43 BOA HAT 437/22081 D, 13 Muharrem 1248/12 June 1832.

44 BOA HAT 422/21745, 29 Zilhicce 1247/30 May 1832.

45 Hamdija Kreševljaković, *Izabrana Djela IV*, pp. 29–30. It is understood that the second name of Hüseyin Kapudan is Bahtiyar, since in some documents he was referred to as Hüseyin Bahtiyar Bey. See for example BOA HAT 294/17478, 11 Cemaziyülevvel 1242/11 December 1826, BOA HAT 426/21851, 27 Rebiyülevvel 1242/29 October 1826, BOA HAT 942/40659, 17 Cemaziyülevvel 1242/16 January 1827.

and became the *kapudan* of Gradacac at an early age.[46] He held the *kapudanlık* for 11 years between 1821 and 1832, during which he developed strong relationships with not only the Muslim inhabitants of Bosnia but also the non-Muslims, especially the Catholics, for whom he had built a huge monastery housing 1,500 persons in Tolisa without permission from the Sultan, which may help to explain how he was subsequently able to take refuge in Austrian territories.

The evidence indicates that Hüseyin Kapudan thrived and became increasingly prosperous as time went on. According to Saffetbeg Bațagić, Hüseyin Kapudan had gained his wealth mainly by counterfeiting money. He claims that an Austrian, who had escaped from his homeland and taken refuge with Hüseyin Kapudan came with a machine for producing counterfeit coins. While the Austrian minted the coins, Hüseyin Kapudan put the money into circulation and exchanged it for gold. After this illegal activity had brought Hüseyin Kapudan great riches, he killed the Austrian.[47] On the other hand, historian Kreţevljaković counters these arguments by claiming that "the story was created long after the death of Hüseyin Kapudan. The oldest people who told the story of Hüseyin Kapudan orally did not mention anything about the 'counterfeiting machine.'"[48] Unfortunately, we can't check the authenticity of these claims, but even if we accept that the stories were fabricated, they still suggest that Hüseyin Kapudan accumulated great wealth, thus making him a subject of folktales.

On 26 September, 1831, Kapıcıbaşı Hüseyin Ağa, who had been sent to Bosnia with a special mission to explain the orders of the Porte and convince people to accept the newly appointed governor, reported that after Hüseyin Kapudan usurped the governorship in Bosnia he spent money lavishly, several times that of previous governors of Bosnia, on the provincial affairs. When Kapucubaşı Hüseyin Ağa interrogated an *ehl-i vukûf*, a local expert, on this, he said that he had certain information that Mehmed Ali Paşa in Egypt and Miloţ Obrenović in Serbia were supporting Hüseyin Kapudan with money. Hüseyin Ağa added that those claims seemed reliable to him since it was not possible to meet those expenses from the revenues of a district alone.[49]

Other documents corroborate the financial support of Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa to Bosnian and Albanian rebels. For example, in a letter sent on 25 May, 1831,

46 Hamdija Kreţevljaković, *Izabrana Djela IV*, 29–30.

47 Saffetbeg Bațagić, *Kratka Uputa u Proţlost Bosne i Hercegovine*, 143, quoted in Hamdija Kreţevljaković, *Izabrana Djela IV*, 31.

48 Hamdija Kreţevljaković, *Izabrana Djela IV*, 32.

49 BOA HAT 435/22039 A, 18 Rebiyülahir 1247/26 September 1831.

by İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa, to Silahdar İlyas Bey and other notables of the Tosks of Albania, İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa noted that he was waiting for the promised financial support of Mehmed Ali Paşa and his Bosnian soldiers' support to proceed.[50] In August, 1831, İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa sent his uncle, Ohrili Celaleddin Bey, and his treasury scribe, Mustafa Bey, to Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa in order to get the promised money. They returned to Fitor harbor on a Greek ship and delivered the money to the Bosnian and Albanian rebels.[51] According to the central authorities, the aim of Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa in giving this financial support was to divert the state troops to the Bosnian and the Gheg regions, in order to prevent any march against him. According to the Porte, the money that Mehmed Ali supplied to the Albanian rebels brought their loyalty.[52]

The second claim, that of Miloṭ Obrenović's support of the Bosnian and Albanian rebels, is a more complicated issue that requires further explanation of the network of associations that emerged in this period, between Miloṭ Obrenović and İşkodralı Ali Paşa, between Miloṭ Obrenović and Hüseyin Kapudan, as well as between Miloṭ Obrenović and the Porte. We learn from the report of the Grand Vizier for 16 June, 1831 that Miloṭ Obrenović had sent 500 *kese akçe*s to İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa for the support of his movement. Later, the Grand Vizier confiscated the money and Reşid Mehmed Paşa allocated it to be spent on the expenses of the army in the region.[53] It is interesting to see that during the same period Miloṭ Obrenović was in full communication with the Porte with which he shared all his information about Bosnian and Albanian issues.[54] It is likely that after that relationship between Miloṭ and İşkodralı Mustafa Paşa came into the open, the Porte refused Miloṭ's offers to help the Porte with money and soldiers.[55] Unfortunately, we do not have any documents which demonstrate such a relationship between Hüseyin Kapudan and Miloṭ Obrenović. On the contrary, the documents show us that Hüseyin Kapudan was very uncomfortable with Miloṭ Obrenović's rival claims to some Bosnian lands.

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50 BOA HAT 431/21919 H, 13 Zilhicce 1246/25 May 1831.

51 BOA HAT 416/21529, 08 Rebiyülevvel 1247/17 August 1831.

52 BOA HAT 347/19732, 29 Zilhicce 1248/19 May 1833.

53 BOA HAT 431/21924, 05 Muharrem 1247/16 June 1831.

54 See for example, BOA HAT 436/22063, 05 Muharrem 1247/16 June 1831, BOA HAT 436/22063 G, 05 Muharrem 1247/16 June 1831, BOA HAT 436/22063 H, 05 Muharrem 1247/16 June 1831.

55 This refusal of help of Miloṭ by the central authorities can be seen in BOA HAT 1117/44858, 29 Zilhicce 1247/30 May 1832, BOA HAT 1117/44858 A, 24 Zilhicce 1247/25 May 1832.

From Escape to Exile and Death

After the battle on 4 June, 1832, when the rebels were repulsed by Mahmud Hamdi Paşa's and İstolçeli Ali Paşa's troops, Hüseyin Kapudan escaped from Saray and first went to Gradacac where he prepared for his escape at his home. However, since Mahmud Hamdi Paşa sent Albanian soldiers against him, he could not stay very long in Gradacac. Through the agency of one of his closest friends, the priest Ilija Starčević, he communicated with Austrian authorities and appealed for refuge. The Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave the group of rebels permission to take refuge in Austria in exchange of their promise that they would not join any rebellion after that.[56] The group included Hüseyin Kapudan, his wife and his son, 50 rebels who were very close to Hüseyin Kapudan, 22 women, 26 children, and 40 servants.[57] Under the control of the Commander of Varadin, the group was sent to Brut, where Hüseyin Kapudan was given residence. But a few weeks later, a group of about 80 persons of those rebels returned to Bosnia, expecting that Mahmud Hamdi Paşa would pardon them.[58] However, although they presented their submission, Mahmud Hamdi Paşa chose to punish them.[59]

Although the rebellion was suppressed, the central authorities relentlessly pursued the fugitive group in order to arrest them. Mahmud II even personally ordered Mahmud Hamdi Paşa to capture Hüseyin Kapudan as soon as possible, since, to him, terminating the Bosnian issue would only be possible after Hüseyin Kapudan and his advocates had been caught.[60] At first, officials at the Porte did not know where the fugitives were; the only information about Hüseyin Kapudan was that, before he escaped, he had someone to gather some of his belongings

56 Belgradî Raşid. *Vak'a-i Hayretnüma*, 87.

57 Hamdija Kreševljaković, *Izabrana Djela IV*, p. 45. Kreševljković gives a list of important persons in this group as such: Fedayizade Ali Paşa, Yaldızcıoğlu Mustafa Ağa known as Muyağa Zlatarević or Hacı Mûyû, Mahmud Bey of Gradaçeviç, Mustafa Bey of Tuzla, Emin Bey of Maglay, Mahmud Bey of Derbend, Sinan Bey of Doboy, Mehmed Bey of Krupe and Tüfekçi Salih Ağa. Some of goods possessed by the group were 3,000 golden *duka*s, two sacks of silver money, two gilded daggers, four silver horse pistols, two jeweled swords, two gold cartridge belts, four gold watches, one silver watch, one gold tobacco box, two silver candlesticks, four suits embroidered with gilded thread, thirty eight double silver pistols, thirty eight gilded rifles, four daggers embroidered with jewels, two lances and two flags.

58 BOA HAT 440/22149, 03 Safer 1248/02 July 1832.

59 BOA HAT 421/21715 D, 29 Zilhicce 1248/19 May 1833.

60 BOA HAT 422/21746, 29 Zilhicce 1247/30 May 1832, BOA HAT 422/21755, 29 Zilhicce 1247/30 May 1832.

which he acquired while he was governor of Travnik.[61] Learning of his escape to Austria, the Porte sent, letters to the Governor of Dalmatia demanding that the fugitives should not be admitted to Austria and if they were, they should be repatriated to the Ottoman Empire. Again it was heavily stressed that, if those people were not caught, they would continue to conspire in Bosnia.[62] Moreover, Mahmud II ordered the authorities in Istanbul to remind the Austrian officials that, since the Austrian side occasionally suffered from the banditry of the Bosnian rebels, creating order in the region would be very beneficial to the Austrians as well.[63] Not only was the envoy of the Habsburg Empire informed of the risks posed by the refugees, but also letters relating to the issue were sent to Prince Metternich via the *chargé d'affaires* in Vienna.[64]

An extensive correspondence between the Ottoman and Austrian sides ensued. Prince Metternich wrote that those "bandits" had taken refuge in Austria a long time before the arrival of the letters from Istanbul informing of their offenses. According to him, the Austrian side, with considerable effort, had extracted apologies from the refugees, with their request to be pardoned.[65] Through the agency of the Habsburg emperor, letters of amnesty were prepared and sent to Istanbul via the *Muhafız* of Belgrade.[66] Also Metternich, via the envoy of Austria, asked the central authorities to approve of pardon for those refugees since they submitted their obedience.[67] In the end, the Porte gave guarantees to the Austrian side via the envoy in Istanbul that if the fugitives were handed over, they would be pardoned and their possessions restored to them.[68] Such decrees were prepared and sent to Hüseyin Kapudan, Yaldızcıoğlu Mustafa Ağa, Fedayizade Ali Paşa and Mehmed Kapudan, calling them to Istanbul and guaranteeing that should they agree to come to Istanbul, their possessions would be returned them.[69] The Austrians added a decree of assurance which was also sent to Hüseyin Kapudan. The assurance directed that the group first go to Belgrade where their opinion

61 BOA HAT 441/22185, 22 Muharrem 1248/21 June 1832.

62 BOA HAT 441/22185, 22 Muharrem 1248/21 June 1832.

63 BOA HAT 422/21746, 29 Zilhicce 1247/30 May 1832.

64 BOA HAT 423/21764, 29 Zilhicce 1247/30 May 1832.

65 BOA HAT 442/22213, undated.

66 BOA HAT 428/21874 A, 10 Rebiyülahir 1248/06 September 1832. A copy of the translation of those letters can be seen in BOA HAT 442/22215, undated.

67 BOA HAT 428/21874, undated, BOA HAT 428/21874 A, 10 Rebiyülahir 1248/06 September 1832.

68 BOA HAT 495/24281, 03 Cemaziyülahir 1248/28 October 1832.

69 Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 72, p. 37, 23 Safer 1248/22 July 1832.

would be sought as to which city in Anatolia they would prefer to be exiled, after which the fugitives would be sent into exile.[70]

Before going to Belgrade, Hüseyin Kapudan and his associates were first brought to Zemun where an official of the *Muhafız* of Belgrade talked to Hüseyin Kapudan about their choice of exile. Hüseyin Kapudan complained that the Anatolian districts were very far away and requested permission to stay in Belgrade. Moreover, he added that his wife was still in Osijek in Austria and requested her return to Bosnia. The authorities refused the requests,[71] and after three days of discussion, the group accepted the demands of the Porte. A day later, Hüseyin Kapudan, Fedayizade Ali Paşa, Yaldızcıoğlu Mustafa and Mehmed Kapudan of Krupe went to Belgrade together with their 69 followers. Here again, Hüseyin Kapudan requested permission from the Belgrade *Muhafız* to stay there.[72] In spite of Hüseyin Kapudan's persistent demands, he was summoned to Istanbul.[73] The group moved to Belgrade at the beginning of October and stayed there more than two months. Hüseyin Kapudan fell ill during their stay which served to postpone their passage to Istanbul until he recovered.

On 26 December, 1832, the group departed from Belgrade, and the *Muhafız* of Belgrade reported to the Porte that, because of bad weather conditions, their arrival in Istanbul might be delayed as long as till the beginning of February.[74] Mahmud II personally wrote that Hüseyin Kapudan and his three companions should be escorted carefully on the road in order to prevent their flight. He also ordered that the issue of preventing their escape should be reported both to the *Muhafız* of Belgrade, Hüseyin Paşa, and the *Muhafız* of Vidin, İzzet Paşa, who should give their utmost attention to the issue.[75]

It is important to see that after Hüseyin Kapudan was sent to Istanbul and was under house arrest, he continued to communicate secretly with Bosnia. According to an official document dated 11 May, 1833, Mahmud Hamdi Paşa reported to the Porte that Hüseyin Kapudan sent one of his couriers and his treasurer to Bosnia.

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70 BOA HAT 495/24281, 03 Cemaziyülahir 1248/28 October 1832.

71 BOA HAT 495/24281, 03 Cemaziyülahir 1248/28 October 1832.

72 BOA HAT 495/24281, 03 Cemaziyülahir 1248/28 October 1832, Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 72, p. 37, 23 Safer 1248/22 July 1832.

73 BOA HAT 422/21749, 29 Zilhicce 1248/19 May 1833.

74 BOA HAT 441/22175, 03 Şaban 1248/26 December 1832.

75 BOA HAT 441/22175, 03 Şaban 1248/26 December 1832. The order that was sent to *Muhafız* of Vidin calling him to pay attention to the dispatch of those four persons can be seen in, BOA HAT 658/32140, 01 Ramazan 1248/22 January 1833.

After they had arrived in Bosnia, they circulated false rumors stirring up mischief among the people of the region. In order to prevent any intrigues, Hamdi Paşa warned that people associated with Hüseyin Kapudan should not be allowed to travel from Istanbul to Bosnia.[76] Those explanations given by Hamdi Paşa also give us clues about the exile of Hüseyin Kapudan. It can be said that Hüseyin Kapudan was kept under surveillance, but in a manner which enabled him to continue to interfere in Bosnian affairs.

The claims about Hüseyin Kapudan's interference frustrated the central authorities very much. Not very long after Hamdi Paşa made the claims, Hüseyin Kapudan died in Istanbul. According to one eyewitness, a female servant who described his death to Bekir Bey Gradacaczade, the oldest person of the Gradacaczade family, "Hüseyin Kapudan went out shopping in order to make preparations for the Feast of the Birth of the Prophet. In the evening, when he was performing the ablution, he became ill and he started to vomit. A short while later, he died."[77] After his death, allegations were made that he had been poisoned. According to another allegation, there was a cholera epidemic at that time, and it was possible that he had become infected.[78] After his death, likely on 17 August 1834, he was buried in Eyüb Cemetery in Istanbul.[79]

After the wife of Hüseyin Kapudan and Yaldızcıoğlu Mustafa Ağa stayed in Belgrade for a few months, they were also sent to Istanbul together with their children. After the death of Hüseyin Kapudan, his wife applied to the Porte, saying that she, together with her two little children, were vulnerable in Istanbul, having no kith or kin with them and they requested permission to return to Bosnia.[80] The central authorities agreed.[81] The wife and children of Yaldızcıoğlu Mustafa Ağa were also summoned to Istanbul but were all exiled to Trabzon.[82]

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76 BOA HAT 441/22176 A, 11 Muharrem 1249/31 May 1833.

77 Hamdija Kreševljaković. *Izabrana Djela IV*, 48.

78 *Ibid.*

79 *Kalender Narodna Uzdacina* (1353–1354/1935), Sarejevo, A. 73. In this calendar, there was the inscription of his grave: 'Eyalet-i Bosna'da Izvornik Sancağı'nda Gradaçaniçe kazasına bağlı Gradacac Kalesi'nden Gradacaczadelerden Osman Kapudanzade merhum esseyyid Hüseyin Bey'in ruhu için el-fatiha.' Quoted in Ahmet Cevat Eren, *Mahmud II. Zamanında Bosna-Hersek,* 146.

80 BOA HAT 1426/58368, undated, BOA HAT 1426/58370, undated.

81 BOA HAT 756/35776, undated, BOA HAT 1426/58370, undated.

82 BOA HAT 438/22118, undated, BOA HAT 438/22118 A, undated, BOA HAT 438/22118 B, undated.

Conclusion

The *de facto* governorship of Hüseyin Kapudan started in September 1831, when local inhabitants, old and young, applied to the Porte with petitions and demanded that he be made the vizier.[83] The demands of the local people were directly related to their collective understanding that the *vali*s sent by the center did not protect their rights properly, and only a native *vali* could maintain and uphold the rights of the Bosnians. The centralization efforts of the Porte and increasing pressure from the Serbians were two matters in which the people felt these rights were not being upheld. It is clear that, for them, this demand had become a matter of life and death. Special officials who were sent to Bosnia to report on conditions, and even the Grand Vizier, believed that the only way of terminating this rebellion was for the central authorities to accept Hüseyin Kapudan's *valilik*.[84]

Several scholars like Aličić or Eren argue that the rebellion included a nationalist agenda.[85] Surviving evidence suggests otherwise. While requesting the post, Hüseyin Kapudan frequently repeated how obedient he was to the Ottoman state, saying that if he were granted the governorship, he would work heart and soul for the good of the state. This study concludes that even though the rebels' demands to choose their own governors, to resist those appointed by the central authority and to organize themselves against the Ottoman central forces under the leadership of a local power holder were all significant events, the movement of Hüseyin Kapudan was not secessionist; it did not aim to separate Bosnia from the Ottoman Empire. Rather, the demands intended to preserve the centuries-old rights and privileges granted by Istanbul.

The Bosnians probably believed that if they did not accept the appointed governor, the Porte would eventually approve Hüseyin Kapudan's governorship, a logic that had been borne out during the previous rebellions in the province. The rebellious history of Bosnia contained various examples in which the state preferred to step back rather than leave the province in tumult. As Brummett points out, the punishment for such rebellions was theoretically death. In practice,

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83 See for example BOA HAT 437/22077 D, 09 Rebiyülahir 1247/17 September 1831, BOA HAT 440/22148 C, 09 Rebiyülahir 1247/17 September 1831, BOA HAT 440/22154 D, undated.

84 For example, BOA HAT 435/22039 B, 18 Rebiyülahir 1247/26 September 1831, Saraybosna Sicilleri, vol. 70, p. 16, 17 Zilkade 1247/18 April 1832.

85 See for example Ahmed S. Aličić, *Pokret za Autonomiju Bosne od 1831 do 1832 Godine* (Sarajevo: Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu, 1996), p. 415; Ahmet Cevat Eren, *Mahmud II. Zamanında Bosna-Hersek* (İstanbul: Nurgök Matbaası, 1965), 72, 115.

however, even if the process of rebellions often began with a series of complaints and threats, they were concluded with negotiation and compromise rather than punishment.[86] Based on previous examples, the Bosnians probably believed that the rebellion would end with negotiations and the state would postpone the application of new reforms. In that sense, the most insistent and firm attitude in suppressing the rebellion came from Mahmud II, who followed events in Bosnia closely and did not hesitate to intervene in whenever problems arose.

Bosnian–Albanian cooperation in organizing the rebellion, Mehmed Ali Paşa's attack on Syria and his concurrent financial assistance to the Bosnian rebels; the complexity of all these events shows that the explanation of Hüseyin Kapudan's rebellion lies somewhere beyond the one-dimensional claims of Ottoman governmental needs or Bosnian expectations. Miloṭ Obrenović's relations with both the Bosnians and the central authorities, and the Porte's correspondence with Austria in order to get help for the suppression of the rebellion are all clear evidence that the rebellion should not be analyzed without taking into consideration of the interplay between the interregional and international participants. It is also significant that the Ottoman center and provincial agents of this era were all willing and active in engaging international diplomacy as well as conducting talks with each other throughout the events.

The Rebellious Kapudan of Bosnia: Hüseyin Kapudan (1802-1834)

Abstract ■ This paper examines a local elite from Bosnia, Hüseyin Kapudan, and analyzes the dynamics of Bosnia that gave him the power to resist the central authority at the beginning of the nineteenth century. I first study his family background and try to show how he, coming from a relatively small city of Bosnia, Gradacac, found a suitable environment for establishing his power and preserving it. In that part, by tracing back the biographical details of Hüseyin Kapudan, I aim to reflect the surrounding conditions in Bosnia which eased the path of Hüseyin Kapudan. Secondly, I concentrate on his *kapudanlık* years between 1821 and 1832, and explain how Hüseyin Kapudan had thrived and become increasingly prosperous. Thirdly, I analyze the *de facto* governorship of Hüseyin Kapudan which started in September 1831 and lasted till June 1832. I inquire how Hüseyin Kapudan claimed his governorship in Bosnia with the support of inhabitants and how the Bosnians held the general belief that the *vali*s whom the center sent did not protect their rights properly. I seek to answer the following questions: What were the reasons that directed local inhabitants to apply

86 Palmira Brummett, 'Classifying Ottoman Mutiny: The Act and Vision of the Rebellion,' in *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin,* 22 (1) (1998), 91–107.

to the Porte with petitions and the demand that Hüseyin Kapudan should be the vizier of Bosnia? And how did the central authorities react to those demands? I will then concentrate on the fate of Hüseyin Kapudan and his movement. I investigate his defeat by central forces in June 1832, his escape to Austria after the suppression of his movement, his capitulation and the circumstances concerning his wealth and his relatives after he was sent to Istanbul as an exile. Finally, I will account for his death, suggesting that he was likely poisoned by the hand of the state.

Keywords: Hüseyin Kapudan, Bosnia, rebellion, centralization, Mahmud II

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