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Dissertation Summary

This dissertation presents findings on book ownership in Ottoman Sarajevo based on the examination of 59 inheritance inventories recorded in the city court registers (*sijills*) for the period from 1707 to 1828. The inventories are analysed in terms of the social background of the book owners, the books recorded in their estates and the findings from similar studies for Damascus, Salonica, Sofia and Trabzon. The dissertation includes a case study of book ownership, that of Şāliḥ ‘Izzat Ḥromozāde, a kadi from Sarajevo, and the book collection he endowed. His biography is reconstructed on the basis of archival documents, his endowment charter, marginal notes, seals and ownership statements found on his books. The findings enable us to measure his collection against claims about its size and importance in Bosnian history.

In order to place its findings regarding book ownership from the inheritance inventories in context, the dissertation also examines various questions related to Bosnian written culture of the period, including literacy, education, the role of libraries, informal channels for the transmission of knowledge, the use of different languages and scripts, the role of scribes and bookbinders in a largely manuscript culture, and the introduction of print. In the absence of systematic studies of many of these questions, the dissertation draws on the manuscript of the *Chronicle* of Mullā Muṣṭafā Basheskī (d. cca 1802), a minor scholar and professional scribe. His *Chronicle* serves as the major narrative source about the world of learning in Ottoman Sarajevo.

The study also gathers and presents the references to written culture in Bosnian oral poetry and various folk customs revolving around the use of books in order to illustrate one of the many interfaces between the written and spoken word and to demonstrate the range of functions books could play in a largely oral and illiterate society.

By showing the range of subjects, languages and values of the books to be found in the inheritance inventories and by identifying the presence of books in various sections of society, this dissertation fills a major lacuna in our knowledge of the cultural history of Ottoman Bosnia.