

THE *HAFIZ* WHO WALKED IN BEAUTY: EPIC FIGURES AND GENEALOGICAL MEMORY AMONG TURKISH-SPEAKING ALBANIANS IN MACEDONIA

Burcu Akan Ellis, American University

The Çarşi Mosque used to be in the same spot where the cultural center stands today in downtown Tetovo, Republic of Macedonia.¹ There is a photograph from 1932 that shows a gathering of seventy-one prominent townsmen in front of that Mosque. In the front row sit several famous *Hafiz* (Muslim clergyman) of the town, the *müftü* of Sarajevo placed honorably right in the middle. They are known to the local community through their epic stories as the Old *Hafiz*, the Dissident *Hafiz*, the Smart *Hafiz* and the "*Hafiz* who Walked in Beauty," the one for whom women used to compose songs to describe the way the long skirts of his religious attire would flow in the wind. Behind them stand a row of important men of the town, the *beys* and landowners, identified by their thick coats, black felt hats, and well-known tragedies. Then come groups of unidentifiable faces, mostly artisans and other town-dwellers, gathered under the dome and pillars of a mosque that no longer exists except in memory.

Today, 70 years later, the children of the townsmen live scattered across the small houses lining the old curving streets of Tetovo. To the right of the cultural center stands a small electrical-tools store with a brown wooden door that leads to the house of the grandchildren of the Old *Hafiz*. At four o'clock, the grandson of the Dissident *Hafiz* will open up his shoe store in the row of diagonal artisan stores, which seem to stand in the middle of nowhere, next to the modern cultural center building. To the left, runs a main street spotted with bookstores, shoemakers, mechanics, watch repairmen, photocopiers, jewelers and pharmacies where the descendants of the townsmen work. The Beautiful *Hafiz*'s grandson has already left early in the morning to tend to his Islamic organization.

"You can escape a lot of things, but you cannot escape the fate of your lineage, your genealogy," said a young Albanian man as he folded up a lengthy chart of his family genealogy. "If you ask me," said another, "the single most distinguishing characteristics of ours is instinct.

We have been burned once too many times. We have learned to work with instinct, with caution, because we have inherited the experience of our families through the generations."² "The important thing about the epic is a hero," writes Borges. He is "a man who is a pattern for all men" (Borges, 2000:65). This pattern becomes integrated into collective experience as stories are passed from generation to generation where storytellers "take what they tell from experience...and in turn make it the experience of those listening to [the] tale" (Benjamin, 1968:87).

This article explores the impact of generational memory among the Turkish-speaking old families of Tetovo, Macedonia.³ In a community that witnessed profound socio-political change over the years, a set of grandfathers' stories have become part of collective memory among Turkish-speaking Albanians.⁴ These stories have assumed epic proportions; their fates have come to be perceived as destiny and treated as an inevitable pattern informing contemporary reality. Based on narratives of approximately 90 Turkish-speakers in Tetovo, in addition to primary and secondary data that I collected in Macedonia during 1998, this article first discusses the emergence of a particular set of clergymen as heroes in this traditional urban Muslim community. Then I discuss the possibilities and the limits of the revitalization of the memory of grandfathers as a metaphor for action in the present day.

The Emergence of Epic Patriarchs

Family histories in Tetovo often discuss the establishment of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as the beginning of the end. The Ottoman administration, which had ruled Macedonia for the last 500 years had retreated from Macedonia by 1912. This process left many Muslims as minorities in the area.⁵ World War I was followed by periods of Serbian and Bulgarian rule which led to the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the "old

Yugoslavia." Serbian central administration embarked on the Agrarian Reform in Macedonia (which was now called 'Southern Serbia') and Kosovo in this period, allocating land from the Muslim population and the few non-Muslim landowners, and redistributing it to villagers in order to change the feudal relations of production in the area. This initiative increasingly turned into a policy of colonization by the Serbs in Kosovo and Macedonia, which often left villagers with hardly any land for self-sustenance (Banac, 1984).

The town of Tetovo houses a mixed population of Albanians, Macedonians and Turks whose memory of this period is associated with loss of lands, houses, and property. The population of town-dwellers recount the agrarian reform as a calamity that touched everyone, irrespective of class, ethnic or religious differences. The administration's policy, which in principle would distribute wealth throughout the community, in effect, it seemed to villager or city-dweller, artisan or landowner, made all poorer. Such disempowerment, compounded with the efforts of central authorities to promote the migration of Muslims to Turkey created a sense that all Muslims, whether they were villagers or city-dwellers, might be forced to leave as "people from Asia who should go back 'home' with the rest of the Ottoman Empire."⁶

The local Muslim religious clergy in Tetovo played a crucial part in forming the responses of the Tetovo families to their rapidly changing conditions. Some of the Albanian and Turkish families, who had access to resources, had sent their children to Istanbul for religious education. The religious clergy in Tetovo, especially the young men who studied in Istanbul at the Fatih *Medrese*, were regarded in high esteem. These students rarely came back to Tetovo: most of them would seek to settle in Istanbul. However, the disintegration of the Empire and the beginning of Atatürk's revolutions placed some members of the clergy in opposition to the evolving modern secular regime in Turkey. As they were in the cadre of clergy loyal to the Sultanate, they had become disfavored among those fighting for Turkish independence. For example, one particular story relates to a *Hafiz* who was placed under house arrest and was smuggled out of Istanbul to Tetovo, hiding inside a wooden coffin.

Whatever the merit of stories relating to the return of the *Hafiz*, they retain an evident mystique in the local culture. On the one hand, the return of these *Hafiz* who had been educated in Turkey delivered a sense of vitality and coherence to an otherwise fractured group of families who were stricken with anxiety and grief over their losses. After his return, for example, the Old *Hafiz* established a *medrese* at the Çarşı mosque that would provide Islamic training in Tetovo for the next two generations of religious clergy in the area. Considering that the only other possible venues of Islamic education were either in the Serbian *Kral Medresesi* (the King *Medrese*) and a couple of elementary schools, the *medrese* in Tetovo became a significant center.

An immediate effect of the nascent cadre of religious clergymen in Tetovo was the prevention of migration of old families to Turkey. The primary reasons for migration had been twofold: fear of losing religious dignity and family property, both connected to the idea that families would be better off living in Turkey, a Muslim country. The religious elite of Tetovo, who were quite conservative, preached against migration, arguing that life was not necessarily better in Turkey. Suspicious of the impact of Atatürk's secular reforms, they argued that "real" Muslims needed to stay in Macedonia to defend their faith. Although this interpretation was neither accurate nor fully effective, their presence provided a sense of relief that slowed down the migration. Furthermore, a number of families who migrated in the 1930s were unable to find a living in Turkey, and eventually migrated back to Tetovo, which reinforced a common view that if more families stayed in Tetovo, it would make it easier to retain the community's values and property.

The Old *Hafiz* also persuaded a few key townsmen with some religious training not to go to Istanbul but instead to continue their careers in Tetovo. This second generation of *Hafiz*, almost all of them from local Turkish-speaking families, became an influential cadre surrounded by popular myths of their own. Primary among them was the Beautiful *Hafiz*, about whom women still sing songs, describing the way he once walked down the streets of Tetovo. He was known as a soft-spoken person, someone with gentle authority and wisdom, in contrast to some of the other religious figures in the area who had

forceful personalities. He was famous for his good looks, and especially the way he would gracefully walk around the town in religious attire and with a cane that very much became him. He was a fluent Turkish-speaker, very fond of Ottoman poetry, literature and aesthetics. The local narratives suggest that the Beautiful *Hafiz* was also involved in politics and had networks among Albanian clergymen throughout Kosovo. However, according to the local town-dwellers, it was not his politics that distinguished him, but the way he held himself like a symbol of dignity for a handful of marginalized families. He was wise and graceful—those qualities described him sufficiently in local memory. As Borges explains, epic characters are those “who come to us—who live and die—in a few sentences. We do not know thousands of circumstances about them, but we know them intimately” (Borges, 2000: 64).

The Albanian Soul: The Inter-war Period and the Albanian Renaissance

The Germans occupied Tetovo with two soldiers on a motorcycle, one of them holding up a German flag. That was it, I was peeking behind the door, I saw it all. Then the Italians were around for a while, and then Albania came. That's when we all got the Albanian soul.⁷

The Axis occupation of the Yugoslav Kingdom began in April 1941 and the territories were divided among the German allies as of May. The eastern districts of Macedonia and southeastern Serbia were allocated to Bulgaria, while most of Kosovo and western Macedonia, including Tetovo, Gostivar, Debar, and Struga came under Italian rule, which soon transferred the civil administration of the region to Albania.⁸ The Albanian administration (backed by Italy), portrayed itself as the liberator of Albanians in western Macedonia and Kosovo and the creator of a unified Albania. As Noel Malcolm indicates, the promotion of Albanian nationalism by the Italians was paradoxical: the policies that sought Albanian independence and self-government conflicted with the simultaneous need to govern the Albanians as de facto colonial subjects (Malcolm, 1998: 296). However, compared to their experience under the Serbian regime in the Yugoslav Kingdom, this was perceived, in a relative sense, as freedom among the Albanians. As Ivo Banac argues, “it is a comment on Yugoslavia's policies that they

[Albanians] experienced the Italian occupation of 1941, which came under the guise of ‘Greater Albania,’ as genuine national liberation (Banac, 1995: 306).

The Albanian occupation came as a relief to the families in Tetovo, who, for the first time since the retreat of the Ottomans, found themselves under “friendly” rule. No matter how short-lived or colonial, the Albanian administration in western Macedonia created a renaissance from the perspective of local Albanians. All the inhabitants of the area were declared Albanian citizens and the Albanian language and flag were brought into use for local governance and at schools. Germans had agreed that local Albanians would become responsible for governance of cities. Thus, the Germans who entered Tetovo were quick to dispense administrative capacities to local community leaders. The Beautiful *Hafiz* became one of the main figures to help set up an Albanian administration in town. The *medrese* where he taught became a frequently visited spot for the occupying forces.

Within the next few years, 173 new Albanian elementary schools were opened up in Kosovo and western Macedonia. Along with the schools, many Albanian teachers, textbooks, and much Albanian literature flowed to the area. The people of Tetovo, accustomed to a bifurcated world between city-dwellers and villagers, encountered a new way of articulating themselves under the Albanian administration: they could all be Albanians. Many local families had some ethnic Albanian background, but had not relished this heritage—being an Albanian was popularly equated with being a villager, a quality one would endeavor to shed after adopting a more desirable life in the city. Albanian language itself was perceived by local city-dwellers to be the language and the culture of the villages surrounding Tetovo. But now, there was a new way of “being” Albanian which did not lend itself only to village life.

My great-grandfather is Albanian, but I did not know a single word in Albanian until the Albanian period. All of our previous education had been in Serbian schools and all the religious education in mosques had been in Turkish. You would only see Turks here and only the villagers were Albanian. We became Albanian afterwards.⁹

While nationalism is often depicted as the "awakening" of a pre-existing consciousness, this period was perceived as a "coming of the Albanian Soul," which entered bodies and transformed people into Albanians. The Albanian Soul was accompanied and delivered by German and Albanian administrations which strengthened the position of these families. Many of their members were invited to serve in city councils and local administration.

It was so beautiful . . . the time of the Albanians. This whole town became Albanian. Suddenly there was life, people became ambitious and wanted to become educated . . . the Albanian soul got to us.¹⁰

All the teachers arrived . . . then we started educating our own teachers too. We worked to get books in Albanian, and the local teachers struggled real hard to extend education in Albanian. There were so few of us who were *mektepli* (educated) at the time. We established the Celaattin Zekiri Cultural organization. We would sing Albanian songs, put on performances. Girls would participate in our organizations, too.¹¹

Although Albania itself was in increasing turmoil, the idea of "being" Albanian was a strong message as it was extended to Albanian-inhabited lands. The lyricism associated with the Albanian Soul and its immediate real effects in the form of cultural organizations and schools signaled to many that socio-economic improvement and prosperity would shortly follow. Few of those who embodied the Albanian Soul were aware of the realities of the dependency between Germany, Italy and Albania (Fischer, 1999). On the contrary, having virtually no loyalty to the previous Yugoslav regime, Albanians had regarded World War II as an opportunity to reverse the colonizing and Slavicizing policies of the 1920s and 30s (Vickers, 1998; Malcolm, 1998).

However, as World War II progressed, it became increasingly obvious that Tito's Partisans and the Albanian Communist Party were gaining the upper hand. Germany was losing the war and the Allies were signaling that "Greater Albania" would not be acceptable. Albanians had been reluctant to join the Partisan national liberation struggle unless they were promised greater autonomy in determining their

own fate. Captured between an intended future that was not acceptable to the Allies and one to be determined by the evolution of the political situation in Yugoslavia and Albania, the Albanians agreed to fight with the Partisans with a limited understanding that the Communist Party of Yugoslavia would recognize the principle of self-determination for the Albanians in Yugoslavia after the war.¹²

However, after Yugoslavia was finally established, misunderstandings and interpretive differences became clear. Due to their cooperation with the Axis forces, the Albanians, especially those who had helped the Albanian occupation, found themselves labeled as collaborators and treated as unreliable people. There was no self-determination for Albanians at the end of the war. Although the Albanians were not expelled from Yugoslavia as were the Germans, Hungarians and the Italians, the 1945 law on seizure of war profits and property from occupiers and their collaborators spelled severe punishment for many people.

Just as Tetovo did not see much fighting during the German occupation, the families in town did not witness the Partisan fighting first hand. As the Serbian and Macedonian Partisan armies gained the upper hand in the area, Albanians who had fought with the Partisans tried to make a deal with the Partisans to save the local families who had helped the Axis administration. However, they were not successful and the Partisans demanded that the collaborationists in Tetovo still be turned in.¹³ The arrival of the Partisans was followed by a large-scale detention of male family members of all ages inside the tobacco factory just outside of Tetovo. While only a few people were persecuted, the experience created mass hysteria.

The *medrese* at Çarşi Mosque was known to be a common spot visited by the Germans, and the Beautiful *Hafiz*, who had become the Mufti of Tetovo during Albanian administration, was known as a major collaborator. The religious clergy who had been closely affiliated with the Germans had no option but to leave Tetovo. The Beautiful *Hafiz* escaped to Prizren, and went into hiding in Sarajevo. He was arrested in a few years and he died shortly thereafter.

To this date, his family does not know where the Beautiful *Hafiz* is buried. Only his

long religious outfit, his books and his famous cane were returned to the town. The mysticism associated with the death of the Beautiful *Hafiz* is quite strong in local memory. In even the most tangentially related conversations, people recall how his belongings were returned to Tetovo, but not his body. The news of his death was confirmed with the arrival of these materials, but somehow, it did not have substance. No one had seen the handsome *Hafiz* suffering; he remained tall, gentle, kind and soft-spoken in their memory. Ironically, his politics, which had always mattered to them less, and his activities outside of the town, disappeared with his body. He had led them to the most beautiful time of their town's life; it did not matter if it had failed, or if had been a misunderstanding after all. In the return of his outfit—the cane, the skirts, those items that embodied his grace and outlook in the eyes of the local, the people of the town seemed to have found their cultural shape.

The Blueprint

With the loss of the *Hafiz*, the Turkish-speaking families began to embroider themselves in this blueprint while they slowly disengaged in politics. Some of the families were initially employed in the municipal administration (*opstina*) as they were readily able to mobilize a local workforce and resources for the construction of roads, factories and schools for the Yugoslav government. However, within a few years, they began to leave public jobs as their disagreement with the Partisans deepened. Meanwhile, the 1946 nationalization of private property and the formation of the collectives, no matter how short-lived, were perceived as a repetition of the trauma of the 1930s: families could not perceive much difference between the new Yugoslavia and the old one. Meanwhile, they started to retreat among themselves to avoid the trouble that seemed to follow them, becoming increasingly invisible over time.

These families were reluctantly involved in politics. They in fact never have liked politics, but they have repeatedly ended up in situations where they are involved in political activism since the earliest days. But that is almost accidental, coincidental, so its aftermath is always very scary. That's why there is hardly anybody involved in politics from the old families now. They are very intimidated, controlled, cautious.¹⁴

The initial establishment of Yugoslavia was soon followed by a set of policies aimed to revolutionize the country and change the social fabric of the society. The rules on religious education and the *ferace* (Muslim headscarf) in 1951 were aimed at decreasing the power of religious institutions. The aim was to modernize the Yugoslav society, more fully integrating women into the public realm. Compulsory education replaced the *medreses* and students were no longer allowed to undertake religious training from *Hafiz*. The religious instructors were treated with suspicion and most of them were initially under threat of persecution at the slightest incident.¹⁵

The local families sought to continue religious education despite the restrictions and became increasingly devout as a community. Great attention was paid to sending each child to the local clergymen, who secretly provided religious training in their homes. Turkish-speaking women and men in their fifties today all have memories of hiding their Qurans in snow or behind the trees as they returned from these courses.

Perhaps the most subtle impact of the strategies for survival offered by these *Hafiz* was the isolation of Turkish-speaking Albanians, depriving them of the vision that they would need to navigate their status as minorities in Macedonia. In order to maintain their moral and material life in the absence of a common order, the clergy sought to isolate the local community from others who lived in Tetovo. The *Hafiz* instilled a sense of fear that Muslims should not resemble the non-Muslim population of the town with regard to attire and outer appearance. The religious clergy argued that in order to preserve their moral life, Muslims needed to avoid looking or acting *like* the non-Muslims (in this case, Macedonians). Any similarity in lifestyle and everyday practice would be interpreted as assimilation. Over the next 20 years, any resemblance to non-Muslims—such as wearing hats or playing soccer, or sending girls to school—became an indication that Muslim identity was eroding. This had a deleterious effect, as many “innocent” daily life activities came to be perceived as major decisions between assimilation and preservation of one's moral integrity.

The occasional arrest and persecution of suspected anti-communists also honed their

instinct for avoiding trouble. While they valued religious education, many of the locals explicitly prohibited their children from pursuing a career as Muslim clergy. Instead religious knowledge retreated to homes. The local families became increasingly introverted. Some artisans kept their trade within family, marrying their daughters to each other's sons so that they would inherit the shops and skills of their fathers. This group placed very little emphasis on schooling their children despite the increased opportunities for education after the implementation of the 1974 Constitution. The second group fully embraced education, gravitating toward professions such as medicine, engineering, math and literature, where they could make a living without engaging in politics.

We had been burned more than once. Old Yugoslavia and new Yugoslavia looked all the same. But the old city-dwellers and the new city-dwellers were different. The families of Old Yugoslavia did not have the same anxiety and intimidation that we did. We became quiet, invisible. We enclosed ourselves. We learned to live with instinct for forty years.¹⁶

The personal and political grievances of the more conservative *Hafiz* became embedded in local memory as a blueprint for treating nationality issues. Nationality disputes were foreign to the Muslims of the early 1900s, who were still dealing with the collapse of an Empire. Many of the Istanbul educated *Hafiz* spoke little Albanian and did not identify themselves in national terms. To this date, the families in Tetovo hesitate to label many of the *Hafiz* with any national identification, saying "they did not hold themselves that way." This attitude continued to define how they would approach the nationality question as others began to define the agenda in new Yugoslavia.

Our upbringing, family education is such that we do not differentiate as Turks and Albanians. We were all Muslims. We do not go into the Albanian/Turkish divide, we do not even bring it up in our conversations among ourselves. We live by our Ottoman traditions.¹⁷

While often openly refusing to identify in national terms, families also continued to distinguish themselves as the ones who first

acquired the Albanian Soul, those whose grandfathers "taught" others the meaning of being politically active. This pride in the long run, made it difficult for some of this Turkish-speaking population to identify as Turkish rather than Albanian. Meanwhile, most of the clergy whose stories informed local attitudes were embedded in the Muslim/Ottoman culture, and despite their grievances with secularism in Turkey, displayed sentiments of loyalty toward Istanbul, which, for them, was the center of higher Muslim culture. They also continued their daily usage of Turkish in their homes and among the members of their community. While local Turkish identity became somewhat less desirable in Tetovo, the Turkish-language, the mother-tongue for most of these *Hafiz*, became a cherished and preferred means of cultural articulation and communication in everyday life, a tradition that distinguishes these families to the present day.

There is a sense of being loyal to the cause. Twenty years after the retreat of the Ottomans, my grandfather was still there. Muslims had survived the retreat of the Ottomans. You are this person's descendants, you have a responsibility. I am ethnic Albanian and yes, my mother-tongue is Turkish. We speak Turkish in our homes, the language of Islamic culture in these lands is Turkish.¹⁸

The story of the epic patriarchs has become a short-hand for the community's destiny. The stories are simple; the lessons few, yet memorable. Although it was lived briefly and under the unique circumstances of an occupation, Albanians in the area link their grievances to a longing for that state of beauty that they briefly encountered (often identified as some form of local self-rule). Then this attempt and its gains are shattered by circumstances that many locals can neither comprehend nor control. This pattern seems to be inevitable in their eyes: the dream, the struggle, the shattering and the quieting, engrained episodes in collective memory, repeated time and again whenever one discusses Albanian political activism in the area.

My great-grandfather was a religious clergyman who dealt with politics as early as the 1870s. He was sent to the League of Prizren to represent Tetovo. How can I escape it? Political activism comes in my blood. Your interest in politics begins in

your family. You keep hearing everyone speak about this, you hear the stories.¹⁹

With the increasing isolation that has accompanied each political episode, life activities and customs have gained increased reverence among the local families. Weddings are elaborate rituals that hold the community together; traditions have proliferated to guide and guard everyday living in homes where only the locals are invited. The Turkish-speakers of Tetovo are today an isolated minority-among-a-minority as internal migration has brought new populations, who did not share the collective memory of these families, to the city. The present day Tetovo is an urban town enmeshed in ethnic tensions and political conflict, debates over the relations between the younger and older generations, and contested ideas regarding the role the Albanian community should play in Macedonia. Their isolation and marginalization makes it difficult for the Turkish-speaking community to play an effective role in these discussions while they also struggle to maintain their distinguishing characteristics:

When I started school, all the children in class would make fun of me because I constantly made mistakes when I spoke Albanian. Albanian is not our mother tongue. They used to call us Turkish-speakers, meaning that we were not real Albanians. That used to hurt me so much. And, now I wonder, what will I do when I become a mother: if I speak Turkish to my children, they will never be accepted as Albanians, and if I do not then they will never know what it is to be one of us.²⁰

Conclusion

Nation-states flow from maps, symbols and censuses. Their arguments are made by historians, reproduced by schools, and defended by armies. Families come with photographs, stories, and genealogies—partial, particular remembrances. However, in a setting where the lifespan of state structures can be less than the longevity of families, where successive generations witness the fall of successive states, the family has the possibility to institutionalize itself as a source of identity.

The old Turkish-speaking families in Tetovo have a simple story that continues to retell itself. An initial loss profoundly alters the structure of their social life. It is briefly

transformed into a stable beauty with the advent of a liberalizing Soul. In their eyes, Greater Albania does not constitute a misunderstanding, a historical ambition or a colonial relation. Rather the Albanian Soul is lived as a moment of perfect understanding. Its shattering therefore takes on a compounded sense of loss, becoming a permanent, perpetually recurring event. For some, the persecution becomes a mark of superiority, evidence of the families' immense significance. For others, 'the shattering' becomes a curse that follows each family regardless of its precautions. "They enclose themselves in the memory of that persecution as in an ark, the notions of persecution, damnation and salvation enlaced like the complex filaments of a genetic code"(Storace, 1998: 67).

Some of the older families have sought to revitalize the memory of their grandfathers in writing. Indeed, a series of biographies of several grandfathers, entitled "Our Ulema (clerics) Who Have Left their Mark in History," was published between 1994 and 1997 in the Turkish language version of *Hilal*, the journal of the Islamic Union. The articles included oral histories of the lives and accomplishments of 15 *Hafiz* from Tetovo, based on interviews with their grandchildren. The articles appear to be written to convey the significance of these clerics in promoting and defending Islam under difficult conditions. They are portrayed as local heroes of the Islamic faith.

Such representation seeks to transgress the genre of the grandfathers' stories. The *Hafiz* do not carry the same weight as characters with detailed biographies. In the collective memory of the old families, these *Hafiz* belong to the epic tradition. They are heroes of *virtues*, not heroes of a faith or ideology. "Epic heroes are not submitted to an external logic, their acts are considered the individual decisions of people who are unique and extraordinary" (Couroucli, 1993). For all his piety and patriotism, the Beautiful *Hafiz* is meaningful as a symbol of graceful authority and wisdom. His name, his garments, and the songs composed for him come up in conversations about the Turkish-speaking community itself, not in discussions of Albanian nationalism or Islam. The grandfathers comprise "identity figures" that represent certain virtues that the residents of Tetovo associate with their own identity in their collective memory.

As the younger generations try to come to terms with their heritage, many Turkish-speakers have begun to tell their own stories besides the stories of their grandfathers. "It is memory, not knowledge," writes Bakhtin, "that serves as the source and power for the creative impulse." (Holquist, 1991: 15) The people who have the chance to resonate with grandfathers in collective memory today do not necessarily number among their biological descendants. The incorporation of a contemporary hero into a world of ancestors and founders no longer seems to follow ambitions or pre-destined patterns. Those who understand the present through the virtues of the past in Tetovo just describe their favorite Albanian politician in Macedonia as someone with "graceful authority and wisdom," the very words they use to describe the *Hafiz* who Walked in Beauty.

REFERENCES

- Banac, Ivo, 1984, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Benjamin, Walter, 1968, "The Storyteller," In: H. Arendt, ed., *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Borges, Jorge Luis, 2000, "The Telling of the Tale," *Atlantic Monthly* 286(3):62-65.
- Bozbora, Nuray, 1997, *Osmanlı Yönetiminde Arnavutluk ve Arnavut Ulusçuluğunun Gelişimi*. Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları.
- Connerton, Paul. 1989, *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Couroucli, Maria, 1993, "Heroes and Their Shadows: The Hungry, the Humble and the Powerful," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 3 (1): 99 - 116.
- Elsie, Robert, 1997, *Kosovo in the Heart of the Powder Keg*. Boulder, CO., East European Monographs.
- Fischer, Bernd, 1999, *Albania at War, 1939-1945*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press.
- Halbwachs, Maurice, 1992, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. by Lewis A. Coser. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Holquist, Michael, ed., 1981, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Kirişçi, Kemal, 1996, "Refugees of Turkish Origin: 'Coerced Immigrants' to Turkey since 1945" *International Migration* 34(3): 385-412.
- Lowenthal, David, 1985, *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Malcolm, Noel, 1998, *Kosovo: A Short History*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.
- Mentzel, Peter, 2000, "Introduction: Identity, Confessionalism, and Nationalism." *Nationalities Papers* 28 (1): 7-11.
- Norris, H.T., 1993, *Islam in the Balkans: Religion and Society between Europe and the Arab World*. Columbia, SC: Columbia University Press.
- Olick, Jeffrey K. and Joyce Robbins, 1998, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24: 105-40.
- Poulton, Hugh. and Suha Taji-Farouki, eds., 1997, *Muslim Identity and the Balkan State*. New York: New York University Press in association with the Islamic Council.
- Shoup, Peter, 1968, *Communism and the Yugoslav National Question*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Storace, Patricia, 1998, "The Scripture of Utopia." *The New York Review of Books*, 11 June 1998: 64-69.
- Sugar, Peter and Ivo Lederer, eds., 1969, *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Vickers, Miranda, 1995, *The Albanians: A Modern History*. New York: I.B. Tauris.
- _____, 1998, *Between Serbian and Albanian: A History of Kosovo*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Notes

¹ Tetovo (called Tetova in Albanian, Kalkandelen in Turkish, or simply referred as *Kasaba* (the town) among the Turkish-speaking locals) is one of the oldest towns in Western Macedonia. Tetovo lies 45 miles away from Skopje and 17 miles to the border with Kosovo and is strategically located on trade routes that link the town to Belgrade in the north and Thessalonica in the south. Today, with 80,000 inhabitants within its city borders alone, it is the second largest city in Macedonia after Skopje. As a town with an Albanian majority and a Macedonian minority, and home to a number of Albanian parties as well as the Albanian-language University of Tetovo, the town serves both as political hot spot and a cultural center for upwardly mobile Albanians in western Macedonia.

² Albanian artisan from Tetovo, interview by author, Tetovo, 10 July 1998.

³ This community is made up of "Old families" who have been residents of Tetovo for more than a century and distinguish themselves with their continued use of Turkish as their home language and mother-tongue. The families discussed in this article have ethnic Albanian origins with some who come from Turkish or Muslim Macedonian (Torbeş) backgrounds. There are approximately 150 old urban families with their extended members, left in Macedonia, including some ethnic Macedonian families. Old families are located in approximately six towns, and their ethnic mix tends to differ according to the demography of their area.

⁴ On memory studies see Lowenthal, 1985, Connerton 1989, Nora, 1992; Halbwachs, 1992; Olick and Robbins, 1998.

⁵ For a discussion on Muslim minorities in the Balkans, see Norris, 1993; Poulton, et.al., 1997 and Mentzel, 2000.

⁶ For a discussion on the relation between forced migration and colonization policies, see Banac, 1997; Vickers, 1995 and 1998; Malcolm, 1998; Elsie, 1997 and Kirişçi, 1996.

⁷ Old Albanian artisan, interview by author, Tetovo, 2 March 1998.

⁸ On the Albanian question during World War II, see Fischer, 1999. On Albanian nationalism see Bozbor, 1997; Elsie, 1997; Malcolm, 1998; Sugar and Lederer, 1969 and Vickers, 1998.

⁹ Young Albanian artisan from Tetovo, interview by author, Tetovo, 20 May 1998.

¹⁰ Old Albanian man from Tetovo, interview by author, Tetovo, 24 May 1998.

¹¹ Albanian teacher from Tetovo, interview by author, Tetovo, 8 July 1998.

¹² Partisans had endorsed the return of Kosovo to Albania twice, in their 1928 and 1940 Party Congresses, but Tito revised this plan for Kosovo during the war and indicated to Albanians his intent to retain the area in the new Yugoslavia where there would be no "national subjugation of the Albanian minority." At the 1943 Bujan conference the Albanian and Yugoslav communists invited Kosovo Albanians to join their struggle against fascism, with the idea that unification with Albania could come by incorporation of Albanian into Yugoslavia or possibly with a Balkan communist federation with Albania and Bulgaria. (Vickers, 1995 and 1998)

¹³ Albanian shopkeeper, interview by author, Tetovo, 7 May 1998.

¹⁴ Young Turkish clergy, interview by author, Tetovo, 8 July 1998.

¹⁵ For example, one clergyman was accused of signaling the approach of the police to a secretly-meeting group of Albanians by announcing the prayer time out loud (*ezan*) and was sentenced to prison for 20 years. Another *hafiz* and his wife were arrested for holding secret Quran courses for children. Interviews by author, Tetovo, 10 June 1998.

¹⁶ Albanian artisan, interview by author, Tetovo, 6 July 1998.

¹⁷ Albanian artisan, interview by author, Tetovo, 17 May 1998.

¹⁸ Albanian artisan from an old family in Tetovo, interview by author, Skopje, 14 July 1998.

¹⁹ Albanian politician, interview by author, Tetovo, 22 July 1998.

²⁰ Young Albanian woman from an old family,
interview by author, Tetovo, May 3 1998.