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## Ishak Imamovic, a Qadi and a Book Author in Australia

### Outlines of Islamic Doctrine

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## ISHAK IMAMOVIC, A QADI AND A BOOK AUTHOR IN AUSTRALIA: *OUTLINES OF ISLAMIC DOCTRINE*

Dzavid Haveric\*

**Abstract:** This is the little-known story about an Australian sheikh, Ishak Imamovic, a *qadi* (Sharia judge) of Bosnian Muslim ethnic origin (Bosniak), and his forgotten pioneering book, the *Outlines of Islamic Doctrine*, which was published in Australia. The article comprises three parts: Ishak settling in Australia, his community engagement and a review of his book. It links Ishak's ethnic background, adjustment to a new homeland and Muslim Australianness through his contributions to the Bosnian ethnic and multi-ethnic Muslim communities in Queensland, and his scholarly book. This article considers Ishak as a first *qadi* and Muslim book author, especially after the Second World War in Australia. However, his scholarly legacy is still unknown among Australian Muslim and non-Muslim scholars and students. The article is an "Ishak's call" for better understanding of Islamic ideals and social virtues in the context of his legal considerations. It is primarily based on my discovery of his book, remarks from his descendants, friends and scholars, and the available archival data I read during my field trips to Brisbane in 1997, 2017 and 2023. By doing so, this article recommends reading Ishak's 1971 *magnum opus* against scholarly ignorance and oblivion.

**Keywords:** *Muslim, author, qadi, Islamic doctrine, Australia*



**Figure 1: Ishak Imamovic under a minaret at Holland Park Mosque**

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## THE MAKING OF A EUROPEAN *QADI* (JUDGE IN SHARIA COURT)

When the Australian government entered an agreement with the new International Refugee Organisation in 1947 to settle refugees and displaced people with the assistance of the Red Cross, it brought thousands to Australia from camps in Europe, including Bosnian Muslims. Among them was a Bosnian Muslim, Ishak Imamovic, who arrived in Melbourne on the ship *SS Skaugum* on 30 July 1949 with a proposed destination in the North Queensland cane fields to work as a cane cutter.<sup>1</sup> This was according to a regulation that all “migrants had to work for two years wherever government directed.”<sup>2</sup>

Ishak left Bosnia when the voices of the call to prayer from minarets, bells of the churches and cathedral towers, and chanting in synagogues fell silent. It was a time when Bosnia and Herzegovina, as part of the crumbling of the Yugoslav Kingdom (1919–1941), was invaded by the Axis powers. Europe, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, went through the Second World War and post-war turmoil. The Bosnian people and their destroyed cities, villages and major infrastructures were on the verge of non-existence. Those Bosniaks who survived rebuilt the country and continued their long tradition of religious tolerance and multiculturalism, while those who took refuge, like Ishak, would continue such traditions within the Islamic community and cultural diversity of Australia.

Ishak was a peaceful man, a person of integrity and an educated European Muslim whose conscience and education could not provide any reason why people were fighting each other.<sup>3</sup> He left Europe and the totalitarian communistic reign in Bosnia where religion was suppressed, as he did not want to stray from his Islamic faith, which he always maintained is the religion of peace. As a free Muslim thinker, he disliked totalitarian systems, believing in democracy, equality, human rights and freedom of religion – the reasons he escaped from Yugoslavia. He believed all these human values are in accord with Islamic beliefs.

Like many Bosniaks, Ishak’s ethnic heritage was grounded in Bosnian Islamic tradition, especially from its period of the administrative district (*Sancak*) of the Ottoman Empire, then the Bosnian Pashadom (*Eyalet*). His heritage was also determined by the share of several religious traditions that constituted it, by making their joint testimony that the “God of any one community is the same as the God of all the others.”<sup>4</sup> An historical example of Islamic tolerance in Bosnia was in 1463, when Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror (1432–1481), after a productive interfaith discussion with Bosnian Franciscans, issued an honourable charter called *Ahdnama* (Bill of Oath) by declaring Islamic protection and respect towards Bosnian

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<sup>1</sup> National Archive of Australia: Migrant Reception and Training Centre, Bonegilla [Victoria], A2571, Name Index Cards, Migrants Registration [Bonegilla], 1947-1956, IMAMOVIC ISHAK, Imamovic, Ishak: Year of Birth - 1912: Nationality - YUGOSLAVIAN: Travelled per - SKAUGUM: Number - 112595, 1947-1956, 1 of 2.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Broome, *The Victorians Arriving* (NSW: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associate, 1984), 180.

<sup>3</sup> Sefkija Imamovic, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 23, 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Rasim Mahmutcehajic, 2005, *Learning from Bosnia: Approaching Tradition* (New York: Fordham University, 2005), 10.

Catholics.<sup>5</sup> Similar charters on religious freedom and tolerance were given to other Christian denominations and non-Christian faiths. Bosnian Jews were especially proud of their city of Sarajevo, where they lived in peace and tolerance, and called it *Jerushalayim chico* or “Little Jerusalem.”<sup>6</sup>

Ishak was a Sunni Muslim, whose Islamic experience, like the vast majority of Bosniaks, was based on the doctrine and practice of the Hanafi school of law (*madhab*). It was often regarded as free-willed and its followers were called “the people of independent thinking.”<sup>7</sup> This *madhab*, established in Bosnia for more than half a millennium, interpreted “Islam as the religion of reason containing the postulates which can be proved by generally accepted and scientifically acknowledged truths.”<sup>8</sup> Sharia is an Arabic word primarily meaning of “a path to water”<sup>9</sup> or “a path leading a watering place,” denoting Islamic law.<sup>10</sup> When it comes to Ishak’s view, it may be said that different *madhabs* (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi and Hanbali) were like equal “fountains that are connected to the same source – whichever fountain you drink from, you drink the same water.”<sup>11</sup>

This stance and his Bosnian Muslim experience in Europe assisted him to demonstrate a balanced view on different Muslim ethnic communities, schools of thought, sects (Shi’a and Sunni), acknowledging their peculiarities – “everyone has a distinct personality and all humans [regardless of creed, sect or ethnicity] represent an infinite plurality in character.”<sup>12</sup> The Islamic influence and impact of modernity of Western Europe formed a Bosnian Muslim worldview which, in time, would later assist Ishak to establish his place in the Australian Islamic community.

Ishak was born in Rahic, Bosnia, in 1912, which was at that time a “crowned country” (Latin: *corpus separatum*) of the Habsburg Monarchy (1878–1914) and under Western influence. He grew up, studied and worked in the interwar period of the Yugoslav Kingdom (1918–1941), which included the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>13</sup> His mother died when he was a two. His grandmother took young Ishak and looked after him as if he was her son. She loved him dearly and was his guardian. When he was 13, Ishak’s father, who was a *Hafiz* (learned man who memorises and recites the Qur’ān), sent him to the Islamic Theology College (*Gazi-Husrev-bey Madrasa*), which was built by the Ottoman Turks in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in the city of Sarajevo.

<sup>5</sup> Dzavid Haveric, “History of the Bosnian Muslim Community in Australia: Settlement Experience in Victoria” (PhD diss., Victoria University, 2009), 20.

<sup>6</sup> Mustafa Imamovic, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: Evolution of its Political and Legal Institutions*. Sarajevo: Magistrat, 2006), 113.

<sup>7</sup> Mustafa Imamovic, *Bosniaks* (Sarjevo: Vijece Kongresa bosnjackih intelektualaca, 2000), 30.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Mohammed Amin, “Review of ‘Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence’ by Mohammad Hashim Kamali,” August 25, 2011, <https://www.mohammedamin.com/Reviews/Principles-of-Islamic-jurisprudence.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Buntzie Ellis Churchill and Bernard Lewis, *Islam: The Religion and People* (New Jersey: Wharton School Publishing, 2009), 214.

<sup>11</sup> Halil Mehtic, *Khutba* (Deer Park, Victoria: Australian Bosnian Islamic Centre, 2023), 2.

<sup>12</sup> Ishak Imamovic, *Outlines of Islamic Doctrine* (Brisbane: W. S. Smith and Paterson Pty. Ltd., 1971), 384.

<sup>13</sup> Haveric, “History of the Bosnian Muslim Community in Australia.”

Ishak studied at the *madrasa* and completed his scriptural requirements in the interpretation of the Qur'ān (*tafsir*), oral tradition (*ḥadīth*), Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), philosophy, poetry and rhetoric among other subjects. He was a talented intellectual and, soon after graduation, he went to higher education to study Sharia (Islamic law) in Sarajevo.<sup>14</sup> He studied for five years at the Sharia-Judge School (*Mektebi-i-nuwwab*), which was built in 1887 by the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in the Moorish style, a subset of Islamic design known for its elaborate ornamentation. The curriculum comprised Arabic, Turkish, Persian and a few European languages, Sharia and legal studies referred to “European law” also *usul al-din* covering the foundational discipline in the Islamic faith, the Islamic concept of God and the perspectives of differing theological schools.<sup>15</sup> It also included subjects in sciences and humanities. The school gained a reputation not only in Istanbul, but in the Middle East, including Cairo.<sup>16</sup>

After graduating in Islamic law in Sarajevo in 1933, Ishak studied civil law in Debar, Macedonia, where he also worked as a *qadi*, (a Muslim judge who renders decisions according to Sharia). His role as a *qadi*, among other Bosnian *qadis*, was in the Kingdom's Sharia courts through the regulations of the Hanafī *madhab*. The role included jurisdiction over all Muslim family affairs, responsibility over the conduct of Muslim wardship affairs, keeping the registers of Muslim births and deaths, contracting, dissolving Muslim marriages and giving the registers the status of public records.<sup>17</sup>

During his time as a *qadi*, the application of Sharia to Bosnian Muslims was placed within the framework of the group's religious rights. The legal authorities recognised Sharia courts and their legal norms not just tacitly, but explicitly in which Sharia was considered part of the Muslim religion and for the “protection of minorities” since the agreement at Saint Germain in 1919.<sup>18</sup> This was one in a series of international obligations accepted by European countries with regard to the Muslim populations previously in areas under Ottoman rule.<sup>19</sup> After his work in Macedonia, Ishak returned to work in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the Bosnian towns of Cazin and Brcko, Ishak was appointed a chief judge in the local courts. However, during the Second World War, he left his family. Fleeing from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and from Zagreb, Croatia, he took refuge in 1944 in Salzburg, Austria, where he would live for five years. Living without his wife, son and daughter, he felt deep hollowness. He worked in a hospital, served as an imam with many Muslim refugees and

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<sup>14</sup> Suada Nicevic and Hasan Handukic, “Personalities: Ishak Imamovic,” *Insight* 1, no. 1 (1986), 19.

<sup>15</sup> Fikret Karcic, *The Bosniaks and the Challenges of Modernity: Late Ottoman and Hapsburg Times* (Bosnia and Herzegovina, El-Kalem Publishing, 1999), 93.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 93-4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 183-5.

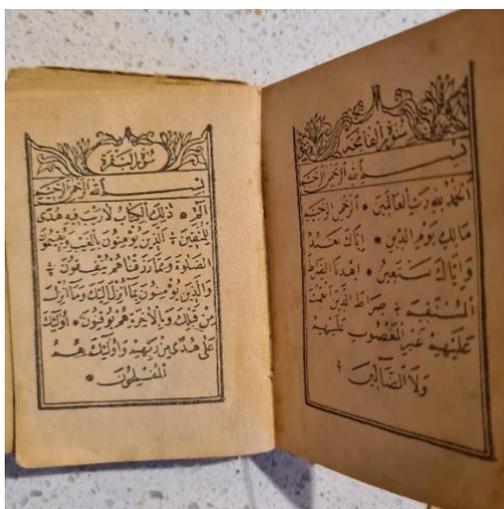
<sup>18</sup> Fikret Karcic, *The Other European Muslims: A Bosnian Experience* (Sarajevo: Center for Advanced Studies, International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2015), 65-66.

<sup>19</sup> Fikret Karcic, *Shari'a Courts in Yugoslavia 1918-1941* (Center for Advanced Studies, El-Kalem - Publishing Center of the Riyasat of the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019), 183.

studied philosophy at the University of Salzburg.<sup>20</sup> He spoke Bosnian, Arabic, Turkish, Macedonian, German and later English.<sup>21</sup>

## ISHAK SETTLES IN AUSTRALIA AND BUILDS HIS AUSTRALIANNES

Arriving in 1949, immediately after the war, Ishak came to Australia as an experienced *qadi* and university graduated Muslim – a thinker and intellectual in the field of Islamic sciences. He came to Australia with very few things, including a pocket amulet, *En’-‘Am*, an Islamic sacred text written in Arabic and published in Sarajevo in 1943 (see Figure 2). The first post-war migratory wave brought only small groups of Muslims to Australia and some were educated in a *madrasa* (Islamic school or college), such as Bosnian Imam Ahmed Skaka, a long-standing imam in the old Afghan mosque, who came to Australia in 1950. He studied Islamic theology at the *Gazi-Husrev-bey Madrasa*. Lebanese Imam Fehmi al Imam, later a mufti in Australia, arrived in 1951.<sup>22</sup> There was also Sayyid Ibrahim Dellal, a “grandson of an Ottoman Mufti, also appointed in religious affairs in the Balkans,”<sup>23</sup> a pioneering Turkish migrant of 1950 known for his religious and educational contribution in Australia. In the period before the Second World War, one or two *qadis* may have come from the Indian sub-continent who may be not as educated as Ishak. However, so far, no historical account has been found of the arrival of any *qadi* in Australia after the war. Thus, Ishak should be regarded as the first post-war *qadi* to Australia.



**Figure 2: A pocket amulet, *En’-‘Am***

Since he left for Australia, he was unwillingly separated from his beloved wife, Zuhra, and two children, a son, Sefkija and a daughter, Esmā. Living without them he felt hollowness and grief for the next 15 years in Australia until the family was finally re-united in 1964.

<sup>20</sup> Sefkija Imamovic, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 23, 2017.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Dzavid Haveric, *Muslims making Australia Home: Immigration and Community Building* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2019).

<sup>23</sup> Salih Yucel, “Sayyid Ibrahim Dellal: An Analysis of Untold Stories of a ‘Living History,’” *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 3 (2018), 135.

Although Australia was considered a “promised land,” the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* of the White Australia Policy<sup>24</sup> often was harsh towards migrants, especially those from non-English-speaking backgrounds. They were socially isolated, family reunion was difficult, their ethnic identities were denied and they were given the hardest jobs without health and employment insurance. However, there was a gradual prospect for a better life, especially for hardworking people. For the early arrived Muslims, a sense of belonging started to develop for a new homeland and they received support when they joined the multi-ethnic Islamic Society of Queensland (‘Islamic Society of Holland Park’), Holland Park.<sup>25</sup>

After compulsory work in the cane fields, Ishak cleared wilderness areas and the forest, built roads, then worked at the BHP mine in Newcastle. Later he occasionally worked in administrative jobs. Over time, Ishak saved enough money to buy 52 acres of land in Rochedale, a suburb in Brisbane, which was later cultivated.<sup>26</sup> Around his house were many chicken and pineapple farms. In such a remote environment, Ishak spent the first years of his settlement living a lonely and isolated life, especially being an intellectual.<sup>27</sup> He received letters from his relatives telling him, “To persist in a foreign country and wishing him good health, earnings, and peace.”<sup>28</sup> Year after year, working on the uncultivated land in Rochedale, he built a house in the Bavarian style and soon brought several young people, Bosnian Muslims, to settle in the area.<sup>29</sup>



**Figure 3: Esma Street and Zuhara Street, Logan, in the Brisbane metropolitan area**

When the settlement around him expanded, he asked to name three streets, which was approved by the local council – two streets with Muslim names, Zuhara (after his wife) and Esma (after his daughter), and one called Rahic, after the small Bosnian town where he was born. This reflects his pride in Bosnia, but also his rooting and attachment to Australia<sup>30</sup> and a

<sup>24</sup> Gwenda Tavan, *The Long Slow Death of White Australia* (Brunswick: Scribe Publications, 2005), 133.

<sup>25</sup> Haveric, *Muslims making Australia Home*, 145.

<sup>26</sup> Nicevic and Handukic, “Personalities,” 19.

<sup>27</sup> Esma and Aida Nicevic, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 25, 2023.

<sup>28</sup> Postcard from relatives, private archive.

<sup>29</sup> Sehija Med Sandalj Kobic, “Priča Iz Dijaspore: Ishak Imamović, Prvi Bošnjak U Australiji” [A Story from the Diaspora: Ishak Imamovic, the First Bosnian in Australia], *Miruh Bosne*, April 14, 2015, <https://miruhbosne.wordpress.com/2015/04/14/prica-iz-dijaspore-ishak-imamovic-prvi-bosnjak-u-australiji/>.

<sup>30</sup> Haveric, “History of the Bosnian Muslim Community in Australia,” 122.

level of respect towards him because not everyone can influence the naming of streets. There he welcomed Bosnians, and other migrants from Yugoslavia, helping them to find their way and how to “get on their feet” in a foreign country. His house was always “full of the world”, because Australian people of various ethnic and religious backgrounds were welcomed by him as he moved everyone who came across his path near the garden.<sup>31</sup> His attachment to this new homeland was further enhanced by his multi-ethnic and ethnic community engagement.<sup>32</sup>

## **AUTHOR, IMAM AND JUDGE: SPIRITUAL FATHER OF A GROWING COMMUNITY**

When Ishak first settled in Brisbane, he searched for a mosque. Distinguished Indian Muslim Fazal Deen took Ishak to a mosque and first introduced him to Abdul Rane, later an imam at Holland Park Mosque (also called Mount Gravatt Mosque).<sup>33</sup> At the moment of his approach to the mosque, he heard fragments of a conversation in a language he knew, Arabic. He thought for a while, then quickly stepped through a gate with “Mohammedan Mosque” written on it, into a courtyard and went to the door of a simple wooden house. With his visit to the mosque, Muslims at the feast of Eid, mostly from India and Pakistan, met for the first time a European Muslim in Brisbane.<sup>34</sup> Looking at the white European Muslim in Australia, they confused and amazed by his Muslim identity:

“Mr Englishman,” a person who speaks their language [Arabic language of Islam], greeting [*salaaming*] and wishing them *Eid Mubarak*. So, what kind of Englishman is this with a white “bolero” hat on his head?, they asked. In his heart they saw Islam, on his tongue they heard Islam...and, here they saw that he knows about Islam better than many. The Pakistanis were dumbfounded, asking further questions, “Where is Bosnia? Is Arabic spoken in Bosnia too?”<sup>35</sup>

Ishak introduced himself: “I am Ishak Imamović, a Bosnian Muslim (Bosniak), from Bosnia living here in Rochedale.” Soon, he became a member of the Brisbane Islamic community. Due to his Islamic education, he was offered the position of imam at Holland Park Mosque by the Muslims in Brisbane. He politely thanked the Indians and Pakistanis for the honour, but did not accept the role, which was held by the elderly Indian Mullah Fazal Abdul.<sup>36</sup> He was also asked to take the role of imam by the Bosnian community members but he told them he is the *qadi* not an imam.<sup>37</sup> However, he was often a *Muezzin* calling *azan* (call for prayer) and, when the imam was unavailable, he gave the *khutbahs* (Friday speeches) during *juma* (Friday congregation) and *tarawih* (prayer during the Ramadan), so he

<sup>31</sup> Kobic, “Priča Iz Dijaspore.”

<sup>32</sup> Dzavid Haveric, *Bosnian Muslims in Australia: A Historical Overview* (Melbourne: Graphic Zone, 1999), 41-2, 121-2.

<sup>33</sup> Janeth Deen, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 20, 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Haveric, “History of the Bosnian Muslim Community in Australia,” 250.

<sup>35</sup> Kobic, “Priča Iz Dijaspore.”

<sup>36</sup> Mustafa A. Ally, *100 Years of History: Holland Park Mosque 1908-2008* (Queensland: Islamic Society of Holland Park, 2008), 22.

<sup>37</sup> Sefkija Imamovic, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 23, 2017.

occasionally acted as an imam.<sup>38</sup> He regularly taught *duas* (invocations, acts of supplication) and other Islamic principles and practices to the community members, including a future imam, Haji Rane.<sup>39</sup> However, his first initiative within the multi-ethnic Muslim community was his voluntary work of clearing native bush from the fences around the mosque.<sup>40</sup>



**Figure 4: Sheikh Ishak Imamovic in front of old Holland Park Mosque**

Muslim community members were joyful when they learned that Ishak was a *qadi*, an expert in Islamic law. For them it was a turning point in their community advancement, which would benefit in terms of Islamic knowledge and practices. It is said “the company of good people brings grace to one’s moral.”<sup>41</sup> Just as “the tree is a prerequisite for the existence of the forest,” there is no Muslim community without individuals, such as an imam or *qadi*, who nourish its Islamic ethos by leading spiritual tradition.<sup>42</sup> By keeping the message of Islam, its spirituality, ideals of ethics and social virtues, he contributed to the community development and Islamic education. Ishak was respectfully called *Effendi* (a Turkish term meaning “distinguished Muslim”) by community members.<sup>43</sup>

Ishak and other Muslims in Brisbane discovered a more sophisticated Islam than what existed in their homeland, because in Australia they had been able to meet fellow Muslims from many different ethnic, racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The multi-ethnic Muslim community echoed that “their hearts of them began to pound in unison despite the fact they came from distant lands.”<sup>44</sup> They all sought the truth and spiritual guidance, finding

<sup>38</sup> Ally, *100 Years of History*, 30.

<sup>39</sup> Esma and Aida Nicevic, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 25, 2023.

<sup>40</sup> Haveric, *Muslims making Australia Home*, 146.

<sup>41</sup> Afif Abd al-Fattah Tabbarah, *The Spirit of Islam: Doctrine and Teaching* (Beirut, Lebanon: Librairie du Liban, 1978), 239.

<sup>42</sup> Ferid Muhic, “Bosniaks and Bosnia: A Study in the Philosophy of Politics (1),” *Illuminatio/Svjjetionik/Almanar* 1, no. 1 (2020): 119.

<sup>43</sup> Sefkija Imamovic, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 23, 2017.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

satisfaction in reunion and universal fellowship. It initiated Ishak to be deeply engaged within that multi-ethnic Muslim community in Brisbane composed of Pakistanis, Indians, Albanians, Bosnians and a few Lebanese, followed by Indonesians and Turks, and he became a member of the mosque committee. Later, Dr Mazeni Alwi, a visiting Malaysian scholar, would remark:

At the Holland Park Mosque, I was greatly impressed with the number of nationalities gathered in one place – there were immigrants from South Asia, South Africa, Lebanon, Eastern Europe and our own region. During Islamic festivities when Muslims would gather at the mosque, standing out among the crowd would be the Bosnian “patriarch” [Sheikh], Mr Ishak Imamovic.<sup>45</sup>



**Figure 5: Multi-ethnic Muslim members at Holland Park Mosque; Ishak second from the left**

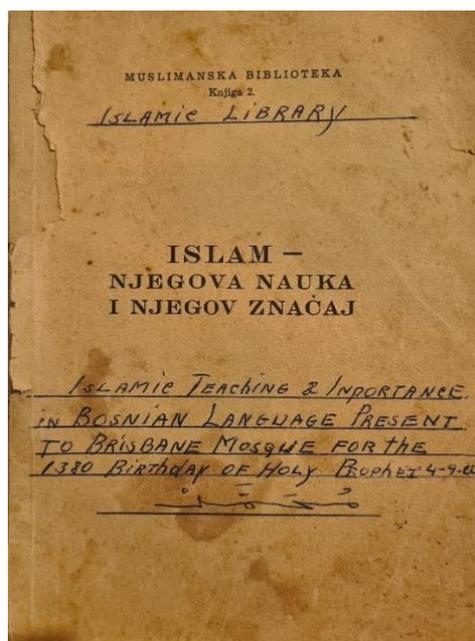
With new Bosnian arrivals in the 1950s and 1960s, Ishak was an early contributor to the establishment of the Bosnian ethnic community in Brisbane. They were mainly in Logan City, becoming a thriving community, where they congregated and became integrated into society.<sup>46</sup> In Holland Park Mosque, Ishak taught the Bosnian Muslims in their ethnic Bosnian language about “Islam – its science and its importance.”<sup>47</sup> He maintained correspondence with Imam Ahmed Skaka, from Adelaide, who visited Ishak in Brisbane on a few occasions, enhancing ethnic ties among Bosnian community members in Australia.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Haveric, *Muslims Making Australia Home*, 146-7.

<sup>46</sup> “Bosnische Australier,” Wikibrief, accessed October 23, 2023, [https://de.wikibrief.org/wiki/Bosnian\\_Australians](https://de.wikibrief.org/wiki/Bosnian_Australians).

<sup>47</sup> Muslim Library, *Islam – Njegova Nauka i Njegov Znacaj* [Islam – its Science and its Importance], vol. 2 (Vienna: Islamic Library, Buchdruckerei Emil Gottstein, 1954).

<sup>48</sup> Sefkija Imamovic, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 23, 2017.



**Figure 6: *Islam – its Science and its Significance* in the Bosnian language, which was presented to Brisbane Mosque for the 1380th birthday of the Holy Prophet on 4 September 1960**

From within the multi-ethnic Muslim community, Ishak was described as a humble, quiet person with a soft voice and a man of “European style.” Elegant in appearance and ethical in behaviour, he had a charismatic personality. Friday *juma* was his special day, an occasion when he was wearing fine European clothes with a white Panama straw hat.<sup>49</sup> Nasib Mohammed Deen, a prominent Pakistani member of the community, gave a *jinnah* cap (also called the *karakul* cap worn by educated urban men in Central and South Asia since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century), made from the fur of the Qaraqul breed of sheep, to Ishak and he often wore it like some Muslims during *juma*. When he led prayers, he also wore a traditional Bosnian *fez* (also *tarboosh* popular in the Ottoman era).<sup>50</sup> His *khutbahs* and *naseeha* (advice) were remembered by the community members for calling on them to address others in a gentle manner.<sup>51</sup> His *khutbahs* would always have ethical teachings, such as exhibiting kindness to others: “Tell My bondmen to speak that which is kinder...”<sup>52</sup>

Ishak was a traditional but flexible Muslim, not a blind follower of rigid dogma. He did not want to impose his opinion on other Muslims; rather, he encouraged them to follow their Islamic faith, suggesting they remain faithful to their Islamic convictions for their own sake. He was a Muslim example on how to respect Australian Muslims and non-Muslims by carrying Islamic morals with him, never talking behind others’ backs and always avoiding arguing.<sup>53</sup> By teaching about spiritual life, he shared with them values such as security, peace and help in casting off grief and uneasiness. Through their remembrance of God, their “hearts

<sup>49</sup> Esmā and Aida Nicevic, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 25, 2023.

<sup>50</sup> Sultan Deen, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 26, 2023.

<sup>51</sup> Sefkija Imamovic, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 23, 2017.

<sup>52</sup> Qur’ān 17:53.

<sup>53</sup> Nicevic and Handukic, “Personalities,” 19; Sefkija Imamovic, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 23, 2017.

can find satisfaction” as the best means to attain these values.<sup>54</sup> Ishak loved to walk and talk with friends, did not drive a car, so he went to *juma* by catching a bus. He was also respected by non-Muslims, having many friends among them who often gave him a lift to his home from the city.<sup>55</sup>

As the Qur’ān states:

O people of the Book! You have no ground to stand on unless you observe the Torah and the Gospel and what is revealed to you from your Lord. What is revealed to you from your Lord will surely increase many of them in rebellion in their denial of the truth. But do not grieve for those who deny the truth.<sup>56</sup>

Accordingly, Ishak firmly believed in the truth and that Christianity, Judaism and Islam had Abrahamic roots so maintained respect for other faiths.<sup>57</sup> He was interested in comparative religion because of the Bosnian multifaith background and subjects he studied in those fields, but also a growing religious pluralism in Australia.

His teaching on the Islamic virtues within the community in Queensland had a positive impact among the members. He was often asked for advice on jurisprudential affairs of the growing Muslim community by the Australian Federation of Islamic Societies (later the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils), a national umbrella for all Muslims in Australia supporting Muslimness in an Australian context.<sup>58</sup> With his contribution he was also among those who promoted the “diversity within unity and unity within diversity.”<sup>59</sup> At that time, the organisation networked Muslim representatives of many different ethnicities, including Ibrahim Dellal, Professor Abdul Khaliq Kazi, Sheikh Fehmi al-Imam, Imam Ahmed Skaka, then Mohamed Hassan, Dr Qazi Ashfaq Ahmad, Bilal Cleland, Professor Mohamad El Erian among other learned pioneers of that generation.

Ishak also took part in creating an important document at the international level of world Bosnian diaspora to promote peace, tolerance and harmony. While in Australia, he gave his unreserved support in this matter. In late 1963 a congress was held in Germany for Bosnian Muslims with 152 representatives from 19 countries (Australia, Canada, USA, Great Britain, New Zealand, Turkiye, Lebanon, Syria, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan, Pakistan, Sweden, France and Argentina). As an elected member of the congress, he and his colleagues proclaimed a Resolution, appealing to all dispersed compatriots to promote these ideals:

We (Bosnian Muslims) support democratic views for peace...we believe that freedom and developed societies can exist only in a democratic society...we emphasise the significance of respect for human beings and families as a cell of human society...we think that the state should function for the whole society and not just for one class or group...these freedoms must rely on equity and justice...we support religious freedom and awareness,

<sup>54</sup> Tabarrah, *The Spirit of Islam*, 195.

<sup>55</sup> Esmā and Aida Nicevic, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 25, 2023.

<sup>56</sup> Qur’ān 5:68-9.

<sup>57</sup> Esmā and Aida Nicevic, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 25, 2023.

<sup>58</sup> Haveric, *Muslims Making Australia Home*, 42.

<sup>59</sup> Sefkija Imamovic, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 25, 2017.

mutual respect, economic development, private ownership and initiatives...we support the UN resolution about human rights...we reject extremism in all its forms and as Muslims we support liberal and democratic views...<sup>60</sup>

As an Australian Muslim, knowing Islamic virtues, he saw many Muslims in the country turning to alcohol and other non-Islamic practices (*haram*), such as consuming pork or mind-altering drugs. He tried in vain to stop them from straying from Islam and thought much about the fate of the new generations. He also realised a deficit of Islamic literature published in Australia. He decided to write a book while working in Newcastle in the late 1950s. Initially, his ambition was to complete a book to improve, enlighten and raise the consciousness of Muslims, in particular, but also non-Muslims. He fully devoted himself to his book even without much financial support and little backing from fellow Muslims.<sup>61</sup> Although coming from a non-English speaking background, he was persistent in his English writing with a typewriter on thin paper.

Ishak retired in 1967 from his full-time work and, after several years of writing, he finally compiled his manuscript while waiting for his wife and children to arrive in Australia. Despite his hardship and patience, his voluntary writing became his truly scholarly occupation.<sup>62</sup> Ishak's friend, Sultan Deen, remembered that Ishak's "book was first launched in the mosque by the Imam, Haji Rane. Copies of his book were available in the mosque and within the community for its members and visitors."<sup>63</sup> Queensland Muslims, in particular, can be proud of the fact that a major publication has been brought to light in their own state for English-speaking Muslims of all ethnic backgrounds.<sup>64</sup>

In 1971, when his Majesty King Faisal of Saudi Arabia donated 1,000 pounds sterling to the Royal Saudi Arabian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, towards a "lonely outpost of Islam," for a mosque and an Islamic centre in Brisbane. In the same year, Ishak was also among a few Brisbane Muslim donors who completed the payment of \$1,000 of his pledge for building the mosque.<sup>65</sup> This example testifies that Muslims in Brisbane used personal resources, not waiting for external donations.

In 1979, Ishak died following a heart attack while mowing the grass in his garden.<sup>66</sup> Ishak's body was brought to Mt Gravatt Cemetery and his funeral was attended by 250-300 people, Muslim and non-Muslim. After a plot was dug by the Muslim community members, Sultan Deen was among those who helped to put timber blocks inside the plot for the deceased. Sefkija, Ishak's son, put the body of his deceased father in the plot. Then, Haji Rane led the community members for *janazza* prayer for Ishak's farewell to a better world.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Mustafa Imamovic, *Bosniaks: Monograph of the Bosnian Views 1955-1967* (Sarajevo: Bosniak Instiuitut, 1996), 319-21.

<sup>61</sup> Nicevic and Handukic, "Personalities," 19.

<sup>62</sup> Esma and Aida Nicevic, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 25, 2023.

<sup>63</sup> Sultan Deen, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 26, 2023.

<sup>64</sup> Bahadur Ali, "Book Review: Outlines of Islamic Doctrine," *The Crescent*, n.d., 4-5. This edition of a local Brisbane newspaper was likely printed in the 1970s.

<sup>65</sup> Ally, *100 Years of History*, 90.

<sup>66</sup> Esma and Aida Nicevic, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 25, 2023.

<sup>67</sup> Sultan Deen, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 26, 2023.

Ishak Effendy, loving father and grandfather, learned teacher of Islam and great teacher of life, rests at Mt Gravatt Cemetery in Brisbane under a shiny granite headstone with the inscription:<sup>68</sup>

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate,  
 Oh my Lord, please forgive my sins  
 And also, please forgive my parents  
 And all the Believers  
 On the Day of Judgement.



**Figure 7: Sheikh Ishak’s grave at Mt Gravatt Cemetery, Brisbane**

As Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, “the ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr.”<sup>69</sup> Ishak’s legacy, the book *Outlines of Islamic Doctrine*, is still “alive” in Australia with its musty smell associated with old books. The remainder of his original 5,000 copies can be found through the Brisbane Muslim community’s network where they were principally distributed. The author acknowledged Bosnian Muslim and his Australian wife of German origin, Mr Hasan and Eva Handukic who assisted Ishak in making the manuscript ready for print and Imam Rane who provided him with a good deal of literature. Ishak’s pioneering venture and tireless penmanship will remain in the memory of not only community members, but will also give the opportunity to enrich study of the subject. Regrettably, almost 55 years have passed since his 1971 book was published, but it has not yet found its place in academic references.

<sup>68</sup> Aida Nicevic, conversation with author in Brisbane, January 25, 2023.

<sup>69</sup> Ibn al-Jauzi, *al-‘Ilal al-Mutanahiya fi al-Ahadith al-Wahiyah* (Turath for Solutions, 2013), vol. 1, *hadith* no. 83.

It is primarily up to Australian Muslims to find their forgotten treasure of written works, not only those by Ishak. The book, *History of Islam and Muslims in Australia*,<sup>70</sup> indicates several examples of written works that appeared earlier, but not in a book format. For example, in 1931, *Islam the Mohammedan Torch*, by Sheikh Abdullah (formerly J. A. Grafton), was the first Islamic newspaper printed in Australia as the official newspaper of the Islamic Society in Sydney, Redfern, NSW. The newspaper, even with only one edition, was an important but “humble attempt” to discuss topics that included: What is Islam?; the Immaculate Conception; the source of Christianity; the sayings of Mohammad, the Prophet of Islam; the Jewish conception of God; and tolerance in Islam.<sup>71</sup> Mahomet Allum, an Afghan, sent newspapers and letters plus published pamphlets on Islam, the Qur’ān, illness and healing powers.<sup>72</sup> In 1932, Allum published a booklet which included a community register, *The History of Islamism in Australia from 1863-1932*, edited by his fellow ex-cameleer and a former scholar of Oriental languages, Hassan Musa Khan, also the author of newspaper and magazine articles.<sup>73</sup> In Melbourne, *Penjoeloeh* (Torch) was the first Malay newspaper, followed by the *Australian Minaret* and *Crescent* periodicals published in Adelaide and Brisbane.<sup>74</sup> Interestingly, in Melbourne, Ibrahim Dellal wrote more than 20 unpublished poems, mostly in Turkish “focusing on *muhabbat* (love) of humanity.”<sup>75</sup> Altogether these examples suggest that Ishak, at least after the Second World War, was the first author of an Islamic book in Australia.

### ISHAK’S *OUTLINES OF ISLAMIC DOCTRINE*

While nowadays the majority of Muslims in Australia are not advocating for Islamic law, as they are happy with Australian law like the broader Australian society, some consider Islamic law to be a “set of personal religious values.”<sup>76</sup> They see the Australian legal system as, symbolically speaking, “Islamic”, insofar as its spirit is based on fairness, justice, equality and non-discrimination.<sup>77</sup> The Federal government has strongly affirmed the idea of “one law for all” – Muslim and non-Muslim citizens alike.<sup>78</sup> It is worth pointing out that Ishak’s work from a Muslim viewpoint may satisfy those of intellectual curiosity who are interested in this subject through *‘ilm* (Islamic knowledge) and an interfaith context.<sup>79</sup> He stated the existence of Muslim minorities, such as those in Australia, where a proper social system prevailed,

<sup>70</sup> Dzavid Haveric, *History of Islam and Muslims in Australia: Early Encounters, Settlements and Communities Prior to the Mid-1940s* (Germany: Lambert Publishing, 2019).

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>72</sup> Daud Batchelor, “Mahomet Allum, Australia’s Leading Herbalist-Benefactor,” *Australian Muslim Times*, March 15, 2020.

<sup>73</sup> Haveric, *History of Islam and Muslims in Australia*, 92.

<sup>74</sup> Haveric, *Muslims Making Australia Home*, 124; Haveric, *The Australian Minaret: Outline of the Periodicals Published from 1961 to 1971* (USA: Lulu Publishing, 2013).

<sup>75</sup> Yucel, “Sayyid Ibrahim Dellal,” 143.

<sup>76</sup> Abdullah Saeed, “Reflections on the Establishment of Shari’a Courts in Australia,” in *Shari’a in the West*, ed. Rex Ahdar and Nicolas Aroney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 231.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 233.

<sup>78</sup> Ann Black, “In the Shadow of our Legal System: Shari’a in Australia,” in *Shari’a in the West*, ed. Rex Ahdar and Nicolas Aroney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 253.

<sup>79</sup> Haveric, “History of the Bosnian Muslim Community in Australia,” 93-4.

gives rise to the emergence of social arrangements or regulations that enable them not only to live with the majority and to maintain their identities, but to enjoy the same rights as others.<sup>80</sup>



**Figure 8: Ishak Imamovic reading a book in Brisbane**

Unlike the religious reviews of other books discussing a range of interpretations of Islamic law from liberal to conservative even fundamentalist,<sup>81</sup> this sociological review highlights certain aspects of Ishak's flexible outline, which some may see as corresponding to the values of the Australian legal system. The book, as a comparative source, is not only an introduction to devotion that makes a Muslim attain communion with God, but about broad issues relating to the world around us and the questions that concern social and legal life. However, the author's Islamic discourse was not mentioned by leading Australian experts in Islamic law, such as Jamila Hussain or Ann Black, when they wrote about Sharia in this country.

The Islamic word *qadi*, sometimes transcribed as *kadi*, except in some traditional circles, also almost disappeared from the community vocabulary because of the lack of Sharia in Australia. Ishak's "long" surname, which also was not familiar within some Australian circles, may have somehow contributed to his "forgottenness." One of the first steps, perhaps even before reading his book, should be familiarisation with his (Bosnian) Muslim name.

For a long period of time, Ishak maintained correspondence with prominent European Muslim scholars, Dr Smail Balic in Vienna and Adil Zulfikarpasic in Zurich.<sup>82</sup> They published a newspaper, *Bosnian Views*, in Switzerland and Ishak wrote several essays in Bosnian on Islam and Muslims, such as *The Shariat Judicature in Serbia from 1918 to 1938* ('Messenger' *Glasnik*, Islamic Community, Sarajevo, 1939) and *The National Identity of Bosnian Muslims* (*Bosnian Views*, Bosanski Pogledi, Viena-Zurich, 1961). However, as an Australian Muslim, Ishak had a profound desire to tell other Australians what Islam meant.

<sup>80</sup> Imamovic, *Outlines of Islamic Doctrines*, 415.

<sup>81</sup> Jean-Francois Gaudreault-DesBiens, "Religious Courts, Personal Federalism and Legal Transplants," in *Shari'a in the West*, ed. Rex Ahdar and Nicolas Aroney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 168.

<sup>82</sup> Sefkija Imamovic, conversation with author in Brisbane, February 23, 2017.

With his dedication to writing in English, he wanted to tell how Islam would be beneficial for Muslims and to help non-Muslims understand the topic.<sup>83</sup> Initially, he titled his compilation “Islamic Doctrines,” thinking that one day his book would be a useful doctrinal source in Australia.



Figure 9: Ishak’s press identity card for *Bosnian Views*

Ishak’s scholarly work on the book, *Outlines of Islamic Doctrine*, in his declining years is a noble example of his indomitable faith of interpreting Islam for the modern world.<sup>84</sup> The book was published in 1971 by W. S. Smith and Paterson Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, in a large format size bound within a hard cover with its title embossed in gold. The author dedicated his book to Dr Shakir Sikiric, the renowned scholar and professor of the University of Sarajevo, the author of *Excellent Sufi Lodges and Monasteries* (in Turkish ‘Mukemmel Tekkeler ve Manastırlar’). His book comprises two parts – one focuses on theological principles and the other on social-legal aspects with interconnected chapters covering almost 500 pages.

Before the Second World War, a number of Islamic books in English were published overseas by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, such as a compilation of religious studies, although some were problematic, such as one by William St. Clair Tisdall,<sup>85</sup> which examined widely held beliefs about the historical origins and sources of the Qur’ān and this trend would continue. For instance, in 1936, several decades had passed since the systematic publication of *The Religion of Islam*, by an Indian Muslim scholar, Maulana Muhamed Ali, was published in Lahore nowadays Pakistan and USA. At that time, in Australia, no comprehensive study of Islam in English had been written. This was why in the 1970s, Brisbane’s Muslim community newspaper, *The Crescent*, published a brief review by Muslim thinker Bahadur Ali on Ishak’s book. He said, “I have devoted the whole of my life studying Islamic literature in English, Arabic, Urdu and Persian, side by side with comparative

<sup>83</sup> Nicevic and Handukic, “Personalities,” 19.

<sup>84</sup> Ali, “Book Review.”

<sup>85</sup> Clinton Bennett, “Victorian Images of Islam,” *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 15, no. 3 (1991): 118.

religion,” but there was a prevalent need for another refreshing work with a “vastness of system into discussing the great religion of Islam.”<sup>86</sup>

For the first time in the history in Australia, Ishak’s book appeared to be an authoritative introduction to Islam, containing a detailed discussion on the Islamic religious and social-legal principles. Its values are grounded in the author’s erudition, broadmindedness and originality, and most importantly knowledge of the law and methods by which it was developed. The book was principally written for the “Muslim world,” but it also provides “an ocean of wisdom” for those readers instigated to consider relevant Islamic aspects for a common social-cultural and multifaith environment, such as Australia. Unlike some similar Islamic books overseas, which were more focused on theological doctrine published or re-published in his time, such as those by Ameer Ali, Afif Abd al-Fattah Tabarrah, M. R. M. Abdur Raheem or Fazlur Rahman, Ishak’s book appeared to be a further scholarly input on Sharia legal concepts. The author’s focus is *fiqh* (the science of Islamic law) with philosophical and sociological considerations on individuality, family, community and society.

This 1971 book is primarily based on the author being “wide awake” to the full relevance of the Qur’ān and *ḥadīth* in every concept explored. It has been expanded by the inclusion of a number of a great Muslim and Western non-Muslim scholars evident from his bibliography, suggesting a “cosmopolitan undergirding.”<sup>87</sup> Such supporting international references, included those of Sir Thomas Arnold, Robert Ernest Hume, Shaikh Validuddin, M. Marmaduke Pickthall, Amir Hasan Siddiki, Richard Hartmann, Ernest J. Grube, Shaykh Ibrahim Burhanudin Halabi and Ahmad Deedat among others. By including this scholarly cross-cultural dimension in his discussion, Ishak’s book brings non-Muslim readers closer to the spirit of Islam.

For those interested in the religious aspects, they can find the conception and meaning of Islam, the doctrine of faith, worship and ethics, and articles of devotion. Using the work of Maulana Ali, Ishak sets out systematisation and explanations, bringing a refreshing insight on topics of beliefs and noble modes of veneration. As a work that not only gives a fulsome and detailed interpretation of a Muslim worldview – say for the pious Muslim seeking deeper understanding of their religion in Australian society – it is also obviously a scholarly work that would encourage Muslim students and academics to engage in interfaith dialogue [*Talking Faiths*].<sup>88</sup> A Christian scholar, Bruce Wearne, asserted that, as a treatise in “systematic theology [*kalam*],”<sup>89</sup> Ishak’s book is akin to Christian writings in this discipline, such as those of American Presbyterian theologian Louis Berkhof, who is also one of his

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<sup>86</sup> Ali, “Book Review.”

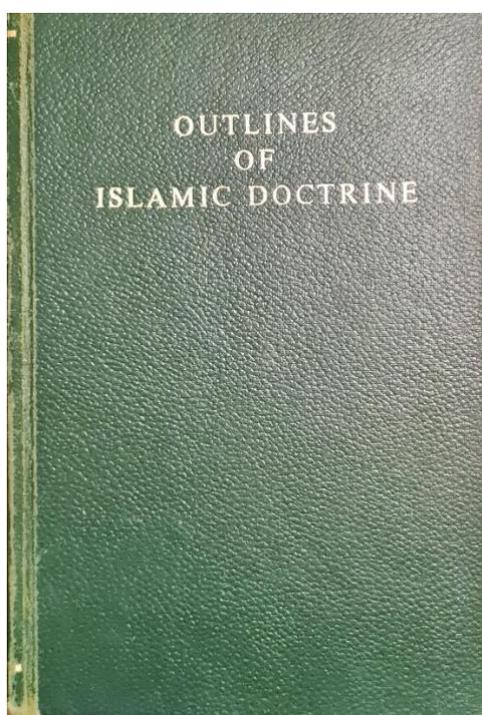
<sup>87</sup> Bruce C. Wearne, “Reflections on a Three-Way Conversation: Islam, Atheism & Christianity in our Time and in our Region,” unpublished research paper (Pt Lonsdale, Victoria, 2021), 14.

<sup>88</sup> Tim McCowan, Catherine Devine and Jan Molloy, “Talking Faiths: Your Story, My Story and Our Story, across Schools and the World Wide Web” (paper presented at the Making a World of Difference: Hearing Each Other, Healing the World conference by the Parliament of the World’s Religions, Melbourne, December 3-9, 2009), 274.

<sup>89</sup> Wearne, “Reflections,” 14.

references.<sup>90</sup> In the Islamic theological lexicon, *kalam* refers to systematic theology or rational Islamic theological discourse as the “reconciliation between the revealed scriptures (*naql*) and human reason (*‘aql*).”<sup>91</sup>

*Outlines of Islamic Doctrine* has potential to throw new light on Islamic studies as it may be regarded as a foundational systematic text in Australia in the field. Those more attracted to less-known Islamic sociological and jurisprudential aspects can find in the book a vital source that exposes a picture of Islam in terms of insightful elaboration on social and legal aspects, such as loyalty, obedience, respect of government, justice, peace, safety and security against the often stereotyping of Islam. By using his knowledge in the traditional manner of Islamic thinkers,<sup>92</sup> his scholarship clearly highlights these systematised aspects and their importance, enabling readers to reliably orientate in it. It is the virtue of justice, the sense of responsibility and loyalty, apart from representing a moral pathway of thinking and acting that are qualities that attain “their full justification in organised society,” underlined Ishak.<sup>93</sup>



**Figure 10:** *Outlines of Islamic Doctrine* by Ishak Imamovic

Through the context of Islamic law, society and culture, the “sociological part” of the book concisely reveals principles in the doctrine of ethics that can be comparable with Western, predominantly Judeo-Christian, thought. It also teaches the principles of ethical and moral and social virtues, including:

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>91</sup> Mehmet Ozalp, “God and Tawhid in Classical Islamic Theology and Said Nursi’s *Risale-i-Nur*” (PhD diss., University of Sydney, 2016), 23.

<sup>92</sup> Ali, “Book Review.”

<sup>93</sup> Imamovic, *Outlines of Islamic Doctrine*, 402.

love and compassion, kindness and forgiveness, respectfulness and decency, truthfulness and honesty, faithfulness and loyalty, chastity and modesty, submissiveness and tender love, brotherhood and fraternal solidarity, the inviolability of the human person and his/her property, obedience and uprightness, justice and equity, moral exertion and striving, the acquisition of a livelihood and labour, the acquisition of knowledge and education, benevolence and charity, broadmindedness and tolerance...<sup>94</sup>

By using an analogous interpretation of Islam compared with other religions and cultures and their shared social phenomenon, it is also evident that the book discloses similarities with other faith traditions. Although it offers well-articulated aspects of the legal and sociological presentation focused on Muslims – to learn, interpret and apply those Islamic virtues from his book, which are in harmony within Australian social fabrics – it should be an encouraging experience for comparative analysis.

Ishak's Muslim social-legal concepts include the maintenance of the national standard, social security, national individuality, educational standard, national economy also the status of national minorities and relationships with neighbours. The best interests of peaceful and decent law and order "must be maintained in a human society."<sup>95</sup> It is then the goodness to one's self, towards one's family and blood relations, to those related by the culture and religion, neighbours and mutual ties with other members of society and in the national interest.<sup>96</sup> In the context of comparative religions, his Islamic teaching about social virtues, together with references of the aforementioned non-Muslim scholars, may assist in better understanding of Islamic doctrine, building bridges and social cohesion.

As such, the book is not written only for one Muslim ethnic group, but for Muslims of diverse backgrounds also with an appreciation of religious diversity. It includes social virtues for society in general, which can enhance social relations between different communities and national institutions, such as equality and uprightness. In that context, the author maintained that human brotherhood/sisterhood admits no barriers of creed, colour, occupation or descent – "All living beings are in the Divine family..."<sup>97</sup> Along this line, "human equality is in the same proportion to social unity as is the principle of unity a requirement for human equality."<sup>98</sup> Hence, the virtue of equality is basic to the social virtue, while the virtue of uprightness is basic to the concept of public order, as the author further stated:<sup>99</sup>

The virtue of uprightness, apart from conveying decency and integrity in general, is the moral virtue particularly attributed to public servants and government institutions as implied in the nature of their duty. It denotes not only a certain exertion of integrity in performing public duties and services, but also certain skills, intellectual ability and irreproachability.

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<sup>94</sup> Haveric, "History of the Bosnian Muslim Community in Australia," 94.

<sup>95</sup> Iqbal S. Hussain, *Islam and Western Civilisation: Creating the World of Excellence* (Lahore, India: Humanity International, Better Books, 1997), 234.

<sup>96</sup> Imamovic, *Outlines of Islamic Doctrine*, 343.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 353.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

However, the book is certainly not immune from omissions, such as more elaboration on women's rights in context of Sharia would be useful. His style of writing included several sentences that are too long. If they were shorter, perhaps they could be clearer. It also seems to be missing some immediate translation of Islamic terms, a few repetitions and typographical errors. Regardless, the book is highly recommended, but the Knower of everything knows best.

## CONCLUSION

Ishak faced multiple struggles settling in Australia. Like many migrants of that time, he was disrupted by “tectonic shifts,” uprooted from his country of origin and put in a great effort to build a new life while working hard, adjusting to another social environment and waiting long for his family to join him in a new homeland. As a Muslim scholar as well as *qadi*, educated at the *madrassa* and at the Sharia-Judge School, Ishak, finding freedom of religion in Australia, continued to nourish deep enrichment and consolation from his faith as a “way of life.”

Being respectful and loyal to his adopted country, he was among the early exemplars of how Muslims in Australia endured in their lives with the hope of a better future by dedicating themselves to the right cause. His community engagement in an Australian context through cooperation with Muslims of many different ethnicities and local Australian authorities was noticeable.

In particular, he developed a foundational document to create an all-encompassing Islamic doctrine for deeper understanding of Islam by Australian Muslim and non-Muslim scholars and students. For those especially interested in the field, they may find in it a treasure of concepts and information. As such, Ishak is a rare example of the early Muslim migrant who wrote such a fine volume even outside an academic environment. It cannot be explicitly said that his book was unavailable, although some newer books have “replaced” it, but not to the extent of its systematised themes, which is especially useful for comparison with civil law in Australia. Therefore, his book, as a clear deliverance of Islamic doctrine and an important work in the field, should be raised from indifference and forgetfulness.

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