CHAPTER 2

**Krstjani and Muslims**

The supposition of rupture between the *krstjani* and the Bosnian Muslims has become an unchallengeable ideological shibboleth. The absolutely imposed necessarily involves a taboo that undermines it. Figure 1.1 presents an ideological construct of Bosnian history as involving entirely separate “Christian” and “Muslim” trajectories. In this split vision, the “other” bounds, but is entirely unlike the observer. The smaller the differences, the more crucial they are. They are maintained by doctrine and ritual. In the Bosnian case, the differences often surprise: different forms of the same name – Adam and Adem, Abraham and Ibrahim, Mojsije and Musa (Moses), David and Davud, Isus and Isa (Jesus) – experienced and represented as different persons in discrete constructs of the Tradition.

That “Bosnian Christianity’s” historical trajectory is separate from that of “Bosnian Muslimhood” is the *credo* of the dominant historiography. It requires *krstjan* and Muslim trajectories to be separate, so that anything Christian is non-Muslim, the Muslim un-Christian. Insofar as doctrine, rite and virtue contradict this, differences must be found in language and form. The quantifiable

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**Figure 1.1** Separate trajectories
phenomena, the material of history modelled on natural science, clearly indicate continuity, however, so the claim of historical discontinuity can be defended only by fetishism and splitting of the Ego.

The representation of difference informed by opposed ideologies will involve similar content being on both sides. Its presence is, therefore, defined as obscure, unintelligible, taboo, and fetishized. This results in two overlapping trajectories with two differentiated communities sharing some aspects of ritual or sacred places or parts of the religious calendar, as shown in figure 1.2.

Culture, history and life that are simultaneously Christian and Muslim present problems for such historical interpretation. When subjected to it at all, they are often presented as survivals of a previous history in a new one, syncretism, and pseudo-Muslimhood in Christianity or pseudo-Christianity in Muslimhood. Such interpretations do scant justice to the role of such phenomena in living tradition or its adherents’ consciousness.

1 “Christian features” in Muslim culture are usually seen as evidence of the original Christianity Muslims abandoned, willingly or not, and so the authentic, primordial foundation of a “Christian history” to which “Muslim features” have been added to disrupt it. For examples