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# **STATE AND SOCIETY IN THE BALKANS BEFORE AND AFTER ESTABLISHMENT OF OTTOMAN RULE**

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## **THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST AND THE DEPOPULATION OF BOSNIA IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY**

**Abstract:** Using available contemporary sources and previous research results, this paper deals with the way that the protracted Ottoman conquest of the Balkans affected the population of the Bosnian urban areas and countryside during the fifteenth century. The very first Ottoman incursions into Bosnia during the 1380's were marked by people fleeing and running away from potential negative consequences of such military raids, and the process of depopulation continued, with varying intensity, even after the fall of the Bosnian Kingdom in 1463. Due to the very nature of preserved sources, this work is not an extensive statistical study or a detailed demographic overview of the period in question. That means that this analysis will not be able to provide an exact number or percentage of people who left Bosnia due to the Ottoman conquest, but it will focus on, present and highlight those sources which talk about the tendency of people to leave their homeland, run away and evade, either the Ottoman army, or the changes brought by Ottoman rule in general.

**Keywords:** Bosnia, Ottoman conquest, resettlement, Ragusa, defter.

Few topics divide scholarly and popular opinion in the way that that the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans does. Even after more than a century of debate and discussion, binary models of positive/negative perceptions still dominate existing views regarding the emergence and rise of the Ottoman Empire. This is partly down to the fact that most historians themselves have failed to restructure their approach to the subject, continuing to produce competing narratives and often diametrically opposing terminology and theories in order to describe the processes. However, despite the vagueness and nuances in vocabulary and concepts, as well as a reluctance on part of some modern scholars

to acknowledge it, there can be no doubt that the initial Ottoman territorial expansion in the Balkans during the fourteenth and fifteenth century was followed by war, violence, disorder and destruction, which stands in stark contrast when compared to the more tranquil and prosperous periods of the later centuries.<sup>1</sup> The establishment of Ottoman power in the Balkans was strongly opposed not only by the local ruling elites, but also by the majority of the people who were uncertain of their destiny under a new system of administration and government. Not feeling safe in the times of war, which were followed by economic deprivation and famine, many of them sought refuge in migrating to safer areas which were located further away from the conflict zones in the border regions. Many contemporary sources testify about the large-scale movements of people from the Bosnian Kingdom towards the coastal towns of Dalmatia, and even further across the Adriatic Sea into Italy. Thus the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia had a significant influence on the heavy depopulation of urban areas and the countryside during the fifteenth century. This paper will seek to shed some light on the available source materials and to provide an insight into why some people migrated and why others remained in Bosnia accepting to be integrated into the Ottoman administrative system.

### **Previous research and available sources**

Among the many migrations and movements of people that affected the Balkans from the settlement of Slavs and Avars in the early Middle

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<sup>1</sup> The problem of warfare, violence and mass devastation during the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans and the way it has been dealt with by specialists in Mediterranean, Byzantine, Ottoman and Balkan studies is discussed by Oliver Jens Schmitt, *The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans – Research Questions and Interpretations*, *The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Interpretations and Research Debates*, Vienna 2015, 12–13, 19, 25–27, 39. He argues that justified criticism and attempts to revise the prevailing nationalist narratives have resulted in another extreme view which ignores, marginalizes or underplays violence, as well as demographic, political and socio-cultural disruption in the Balkans caused by Ottoman warfare. This in turn leads to scholars avoiding the term “conquest”, negating the consequences of military activities and violence-induced change, preferring to perceive the period in terms of transition, transformation and integration.

Ages until the modern times, the Ottoman conquest stands out as having the most significant impact on the ethnic and social structure of Bosnia.<sup>2</sup> However, despite its obvious importance, the topic has not been adequately examined in historiography. For example, in the proceedings of a large conference held in 1989 which treated migration processes in the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, this subject was not given the due and separate attention it deserved.<sup>3</sup> This is not to say that the issue has been completely avoided or overlooked, since some historians have briefly touched upon it in their various works.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, no one has yet dedicated a distinct research paper using all the existing sources in order to highlight or estimate the influence that the Ottoman conquest had on the depopulation of Bosnia during the fifteenth century. The failure to address this issue properly gave rise to many wrong opinions, especially regarding the ancestry of modern inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The available source materials for the study of this problem are contemporary diplomatic reports kept in the communal archives on the Dalmatian coast, especially in Dubrovnik, which testify about the arrival of people from Bosnia to coastal areas in times of trouble in the hinterland.<sup>5</sup> While in some instances people migrated to the seaside due

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<sup>2</sup> For a general overview of migrations in Bosnia, from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, see: S. Pavičić, *Bosna: Migracije*, Migracijske i etničke teme 16/4 (2000) 333–357. The article was originally written for the Croatian Encyclopedia, published in Zagreb in 1942, and thus has to be approached critically and treated with a great degree of caution. For medieval migrations in general, see: *Migrationen im Mittelalter. Ein Handbuch*, Michael Borgolte (ed.), Berlin 2014, with the literature listed there.

<sup>3</sup> See: *Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina*, Institut za istoriju – Institut za proučavanje nacionalnih odnosa, Sarajevo 1990.

<sup>4</sup> For instance: N. Filipović, *Osvrt na položaj bosanskog seljaštva u prvoj deceniji uspostavljanja osmanske vlasti u Bosni*, Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta u Sarajevu 3 (1965) 63–75; Idem, *Napomene o islamizaciji u BiH u XV vijeku*, Godišnjak Centra za balkanološka ispitivanja ANUBiH VII/5 (1970) 141–167; A. Handžić, *O kretanju stanovništva u regionu srednjeg toka Bosne (međuprostor Maglaj – Doboj – Tešanj) od druge polovine XV do kraja XVI st.*, *Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina*, Institut za istoriju – Institut za proučavanje nacionalnih odnosa, Sarajevo 1990, 57–66.

<sup>5</sup> D. Dinić-Knežević, *Migracije stanovništva iz južnoslovenskih zemalja u Dubrovnik tokom srednjeg veka*, SANU – Organak u Novom Sadu – Filozofski fakultet u Novom Sadu, Novi Sad 1995.

to famine, economic or other social reasons,<sup>6</sup> in a fair number of instances the sources directly assert that the main motive or cause for their arrival were the devastating incursions and raids of the Ottoman army.<sup>7</sup>

Some groups or individuals chose to return to their homes after the danger had passed, some opted to remain in Dalmatia, while others even went one step further by migrating across the Sea. This is confirmed by documents found in the rich archival collections in Italy, mostly in the Marches and Venice, which talk about a continuous influx of people from the Balkans to the Apennine Peninsula during the fifteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Using these sources certain historians have come to a liberal approximation that during the late Middle Ages thousands of Slavs per year settled in Italy,<sup>9</sup> and that Croatia, for example, experienced in the course of a little more than one century, from the fall of Bosnia in 1463 to the battle of Sisak in 1593, a population loss of around 60% of its previous inhabitants.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> P. Živković, *Gospodarske prilike kao osnovni uzrok migracijskih kretanja iz primorja u zaleđe i obratno*, Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina, Institut za istoriju – Institut za proučavanje nacionalnih odnosa, Sarajevo 1990, 49–50; D. Dinić-Knežević, *Migracije stanovništva iz bližeg zaleđa u Dubrovnik u XIV veku*, Jugoslovenski istorijski časopis 1–2 (1974) 19–40.

<sup>7</sup> H. Šabanović, *Pitanje turske vlasti u Bosni do pohoda Mehmeda II 1463 g.*, Godišnjak Istoriskog društva Bosne i Hercegovine 8 (1955) 37–51, provides an outline of these attacks which is by no means extensive or comprehensive and needs to be revised. See also: D. Kovačević, *Prilog pitanju ranih bosansko-turskih odnosa*, Godišnjak Istoriskog društva Bosne i Hercegovine 11 (1960) 257–263. Despite being somewhat outdated and incomplete, F. Szakály, *Phases of Turco-Hungarian Warfare before the Battle of Mohács (1365–1526)*, Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 33/1 (1979) 65–111, is still an instructive and useful overview of the military and political history of the period.

<sup>8</sup> F. Gestrin, *Migracije iz Dalmacije v Italijo v 15. in 16. stoletju*, Zgodovinski časopis 30/3–4 (1976) 269–277; Idem, *Migracije iz Dalmacije u Marke u XV i XVI stoljeću*, Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest 10 (1977) 395–404; Idem, *Migracije Slovena u Italiju kroz vekove*, Istorijski časopis 31 (1984) 67–77; L. Čoralić, *Migracije i život iseljenika iz Bosne u Veneciji (XV–XVII st.)*, Bosna i Hercegovina i Svijet, Sarajevo, 1996, 115–123; M. Šunjić, *Slaveni nastanjeni na području Ankonitanskog distrikta u 15. stoljeću*, Spomenica akademika Marka Šunjića (1927–1998), Sarajevo 2010, 35–52.

<sup>9</sup> F. Gestrin, *Migracije Slovena u Italiju kroz vekove*, 69.

<sup>10</sup> Claims made by I. Jurković, *Klasifikacija hrvatskih raseljenika za trajanja osmanske ugroze (od 1463. do 1593.)*, Migracijske i etničke teme 19/2–3 (2003) 147–174; Idem,

Although these estimations might seem exaggerated, especially if we take into account the fact that we do not know the precise number of people who lived in these areas prior to the Ottoman conquest, and although specifying an exact figure of population losses on the basis of limited, and quite often insufficient contemporary records is extremely contentious, one should bear in mind that the Ottoman sources also give evidence about the vast depopulation and desolation of Bosnian lands. In fact, the early Ottoman *defters* constitute the most comprehensive body of evidence for the study of historical demography in the 1400's and they provide us with first hand data about the situation that the Ottoman administration encountered in the first decades of Ottoman rule in Bosnia. For now, I shall only concentrate on numbers contained in the two published *defters*, of the Bosnian *sancak* in 1468/69,<sup>11</sup> and the *sancak* of Herzegovina from 1477,<sup>12</sup> since I believe that they are informative enough for the present purpose and that they can serve as a basis for a general assessment of the depopulation of Bosnia in the fifteenth century. A more extensive analysis should also include data from the other two fifteenth-century Bosnian registers, from 1485 and 1489, but for the time being I will rely on research of these records which were presented in the works of Nedim Filipović and Adem Handžić.<sup>13</sup>

While using these *defters* we should always be aware that they must be approached critically and with a degree of caution. Despite giving valuable and reliable statistical material, they are still a somewhat problematic source for the study of demographic changes. One should be careful with the conclusions that can be deduced from them since they are not a census and do not include all the inhabitants of a certain area. The information they provide ought to be double-checked and it is best to use and combine them with other available sources. Only then

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*Osmanska ugroza, plemeniti raseljenici i hrvatski identitet*, Povijesni prilozi 31 (2006) 36–69.

<sup>11</sup> A. Aličić, *Sumarni popis Sandžaka Bosna iz 1468–69. godine*, Mostar 2008.

<sup>12</sup> A. Aličić, *Poimenični popis sandžaka vilajeta Hercegovina*, Sarajevo 1985.

<sup>13</sup> N. Filipović, *Osvrt na položaj bosanskog seljaštva u prvoj deceniji uspostavljanja osmanske vlasti u Bosni*, 63–75; A. Handžić, *O kretanju stanovništva u regionu srednjeg toka Bosne*, 57–66.

can a historian achieve a certain degree of control over the facts at his disposal.<sup>14</sup>

Taking all of this into consideration, on the basis of the existing sources I will, unfortunately, not be able to provide an extensive statistical study or a detailed demographic overview of the period in question. That means that this paper will not give an exact number or percentage of people who left Bosnia due to the Ottoman conquest, but it will focus on, present and highlight those sources which talk about the tendency of people to leave their homeland, run away and evade, either the Ottoman army, or the changes brought by Ottoman rule in general. This will then, hopefully, create a clearer image of the way that Ottomans implemented their power in Bosnia, the effects that this caused, as well as what the authorities did to combat the evident depopulation and displacement of former residents.

### **Ottoman military raids and their effect on population loss in Bosnia**

Ever since the Ottoman incursions into Bosnia began in the 1380's, there were numerous reports of people fleeing the proverbial "fear of the Turk".<sup>15</sup> In fact, the first ever documented Ottoman raid on Bosnian territory in October of 1386 was followed by considerable fear and panic among the Vlachs and other communities from the domains under the control of the Bosnian King. Sensing the distress of these people, the Ragusan government deliberated and finally allowed the fleeing

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<sup>14</sup> E Miljković, *Osmanske popisne knjige kao izvori za istorijsku demografiju: primer nahije Kukanj*, Glasnik Zavičajnog muzeja Pljevlja 10 (2015) 29–41. See also: G. Boykov, *The human cost of warfare: population loss during the Ottoman conquest and the demographic history of Bulgaria in the late Middle Ages and Early Modern Era*, The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Interpretations and Research Debates, Vienna 2015, 101–165.

<sup>15</sup> Dž. Dautović, *Metus Turchorum – Strah od Turaka u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni*, Osmansko osvajanje Bosanske kraljevine, Sarajevo 2014, 75–103. Cf. J. Kalić, 'Strah turski' posle Kosova, Sveti knez Lazar. Spomenica o šestoj stogodišnjici Kosovskog boja 1389–1989, Beograd, 1989, 185–191.

populace to escape the uncertainty of the unguarded regions in the hinterland and to come with their families and property to the fortified town of Ston on the Pelješac peninsula.<sup>16</sup> The same scenario was played out in the autumn of 1388 and 1389, as well as in the summer of 1390.<sup>17</sup>

The Ottoman conquest of Skopje in late 1391, and the subjugation of the Serbian magnate Vuk Branković shortly thereafter, opened up a direct path to the Bosnian borders and the Ottoman attacks on Bosnia became more frequent and stronger in intensity.<sup>18</sup> Each of those raids was followed by the displacement of people who sought refuge behind the strong walls of the fortress of Ston.<sup>19</sup> The threatened Bosnian nobles, however, were allowed to enter the city and remain there until the danger had passed.<sup>20</sup>

The Ottoman defeat at Ankara in 1402 allowed a short period of respite from these attacks, but the offensive operations in Bosnia were resumed almost as soon as sultan Mehmed I consolidated his power as the sole ruler on the Ottoman throne. The aggressive assaults, mainly targeting areas to the north and west of the Bosnian borders, continued after 1414, and were everywhere followed by disorder, destruction, and the taking of multitudes of people into captivity. Contemporary reports

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<sup>16</sup> “Pp. de permittendo quod recipiantur in Stagno familie, pastores, animalia et arvensia Vlacorum et circumvicinorum propter eorum salvamentum terrore Teucrorum partes discurentium” (23 October 1386), M. Dinić, *Odluke veća Dubrovačke republike*, knj. II, Beograd 1964, 242, 298.

<sup>17</sup> Đ. Tošić, *Bosna i Turci od kosovske do angorske bitke*, Zbornik za istoriju BiH 1 (1995) 85–97.

<sup>18</sup> D. Bojanić-Lukač, *Kako turske vojske prezele Skopje (1391)*, Muzej na grad Skopje – Zbornik 2–3 (1965–1966) 5–10; M. Dinić, *Oblast Brankovića*, Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor 26/1–2 (1960) 26. See also: M. Šuica, *Vuk Branković: slavni i velmožni gospodin*, Beograd 2014, 139–142.

<sup>19</sup> For example in 1398: “Prima pars est de recipiendo in Stagno personas de foris affugentes timore Turchorum et aliorum exercituum volentes se reducere ad saluandum in Stagno e recipere eorum familias et res ac homines armorum qui venire voluerint” (26 January 1398), Dubrovnik State Archives (hereafter: DSA), *Reformationes*, vol. 31, fol. 108.

<sup>20</sup> For instance: “Prima pars es de respondendo Vladde matri Iurech Radiuoieich quod veniat in Stagnum et stet ad sui placitum, et si vult inde veniat Ragusium pro eius maiori securitate et meliorum stacion” (23 December 1397), *Ibidem*, fol. 105v.



speak of tens of thousands of individuals being captured and enslaved.<sup>21</sup> If the famed chronicler Ashik-pasha Zade is to be believed, the booty from such raids was so plentiful that it caused a significant drop in prices on the slave market in Skopje.<sup>22</sup>

Even though these attacks from 1414 and 1415 were primarily directed against the Kingdom of Hungary, consequences were inevitably felt in Bosnia as well, because the Ottoman incursions caused further divisions on the Bosnian political scene. In the following period quarrelling Bosnian nobles sought to ally themselves to Turks as often as possible, relying on their military support in their petty local conflicts. Thus in April 1416 the Ragusan government was forced to prohibit the arrival of the poor “who were fleeing the Turks” and who were coming to Ragusa on ships in significant numbers.<sup>23</sup> Despite that, a larger influx of refugees came in October, when the government of Ragusa again forbade the receiving of the poor and sick who were arriving “de partibus Sclauonie vel aliunde”.<sup>24</sup> Despite the extremely harsh punishment defined for disrespecting the orders, which amounted up to 15 days in prison, these preventive measures did not offset the problem. In November of the same year it was again decided that no refugees from the “Bosnian Kingdom or elsewhere” should be received in the city. Furthermore, the existing ones were to be expelled from

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<sup>21</sup> See: N. Isailović – A. Jakovljević, *Šah Melek (Prilog istoriji turskih upada u Bosnu 1414. i 1415. godine)*, Spomenica akademika Sime Ćirkovića, Beograd 2011, 441–463.

<sup>22</sup> G. Elezović, *Turski izvori za istoriju Jugoslovena*, Brastvo 26 (1932) 67–69. Cf. B. Hrabak, *Skopskiot pazar na robje vo XV i XVI vek*, Glasnik na Institut za nacionalna istorija 24/1 (1980) 151–161.

<sup>23</sup> “Captum fuit quod deinceps nulla barca sive aliud lignum de Ragusio nullo modo audeat vel presumant afferre intra civitatem istam nostram Ragusii aliquos ex istis pauperibus qui fugiunt a Turchis sub pena voluntatis dominii et cridetur in locis consuetis” (4 April 1416), DSA, *Consilium Minus*, vol. 1, fol. 78.

<sup>24</sup> “Captum fuit de cridendo publice in locis consuetis quod nemo andeat vel presumant conducere ad hanc ciuitatem Ragusii per mare vel per terram nec recipere in domum suam aliquem vel aliquam ex istis infirmis sive pauperibus venientibus de partibus Sclauonie vel aliunde in pena standi diebus XV in carceribus comunis pro quolibet et qualibet vice et in denariis ad beneplacitum dominationis” (4 October 1416), Ibidem, fol. 87v

Ragusa after they receive aid in the amount of two dinars in bread or other foods.<sup>25</sup>

Similar situations occurred almost after every large-scale Ottoman attack against Bosnia – in 1426,<sup>26</sup> from 1433 to ‘36,<sup>27</sup> in 1438 and ‘39,<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> “Captum fuit quod omnes inopes qui venerunt de regno Bossne et aliunde mendicantes a duobus mensibus citra remoueantur a ciuitate et quod committatur vicecomitibus quod habeant diligentem et bonam custodiam de non permittendo eos venire ad ciuitatem et similiter portariis quod non permittant ipsos tales inopes intrare ciuitatem et talium expulsio et remotio committatur officialibus cazamortuorum qui provideant talibus pellendis de grosis duobus pro quolibet in pane vel alio prout ipsis videbitur et hoc intelligatur et de entibus in districtu. (19 November 1416), Ibidem, fol. 92v. Cf. D. Dinić-Knežević, *Migracije stanovništva iz južnoslovenskih zemalja u Dubrovnik tokom srednjeg veka*, 240–241.

<sup>26</sup> See the letter from Ragusa to Emperor Sigismund, published in: L. Thallóczy – J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium relationum Reipublicae Ragusanae cum Regno Hungariae*, Budapest 1887, 317, 319; and Emperor Sigismund’s letter to Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, published in: N. Iorga, *Acte si fragmente cu privire la istoria romanilor*, Vol. III, Bucuresti 1897, 80–81. These letters claim that a 4,000 strong Turkish army, led by the marcher lord Ishak, entered Croatia and Slavonia on two occasions, both times taking with them many thousands of inhabitants of both sexes.

<sup>27</sup> The Burgundian knight Bertrandon de la Broquiere states that somewhere near Plovidiv in 1433 he saw “around fifteen people tied with thick chains around their necks, and ten good women, that were recently seized in the Kingdom of Bosnia, during an incursion conducted by the Turks”. *Le Voyage d’Outremer de Bertrandon de la Broquiere*, tr. Charles Schefer, Paris 1892, 199–200. In March of 1434 the count of Spalato wrote to Venice that the Bosnian Kingdom had been devastated and occupied by the Turks throughout the whole of the previous year, meaning that trade between Bosnia and Dalmatia was forcefully obstructed. M. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija (odnosni u XIV. i XV. st.)*, Sarajevo 1996, 191. In August of 1435 the Ragusans informed Emperor Sigismund that around 1,500 Turks, led by Ishak’s son Barak, arrived to the lands of Duke Stjepan from where they attacked the surrounding areas. DSA, *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 11, fol. 265. Barak remained in Bosnia at least until spring of the following year, since in March 1436 the Ragusan citizen Maroje Đurković was instructed to look for him around Podvisoki, Zenica or Vrhbosna, all of which must have been under direct Ottoman control at the time. DSA, *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 12, fol. 18

<sup>28</sup> In January of 1439 the Ragusan government wrote to its count of Ston: “Abiamo recepute due lettere de vuy conte, per le quale ne advixata chome li Narentini se paregiano parezarsi allo ladi della Ponta per pagura delli Turchi, et chome dubitati che li homini de Humia e de Crayna se paregiano nela Punta, et per lo simel chome li homini della contrata de Dumno sono reduti alla marina per pagura deli Turchi che fano la via verso della detta contrata” (24 January 1439), DSA, *Lettere di Levante*, vol. 12, fol. 119v. Cf. S. Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan Vukčić Kosača i njegovo doba*, Beograd 1964, 31 n. 62.

from 1448 to ‘49,<sup>29</sup> etc. – and the examples are far too numerous to mention individually in this work. This ultimately resulted in the Ragusan Republic experiencing a record increase in the number of inhabitants at the end of the fifteenth century. Whereas the city and the surrounding areas had an estimated 50–60,000 inhabitants at the beginning of the century, by 1498 the number rose to almost 90,000.<sup>30</sup> The impact that these Bosnian settlers had on Ragusa is well shown by the fact that the fifteenth and sixteenth century Ragusan chronicles projected the first influx of Bosnian refugees into the very distant past, dating it to the year 1371. They state that many people from Bosnia fled the Turks and came to their

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<sup>29</sup> The initial attacks targeted the lands and subjects of Duke Stjepan Vukčić: “Prima pars est de scribendo comiti nostro Slani quia si causa interuenient quia subditi, et homines voyuode Stipani metu Turchorum aufugerent cum animalibus et rebus ac bonis suis et vellent se recipere ad Terras nouas debeat eis enuntiare et edicere quia si volunt esse secum debeant se recipere vel Stagno vel in districtu Ragusii, quoniam in territorio Terrarum nouarum securi esse non poterunt” (10 March 1448) DSA, *Consilium Rogatorum*, vol. 10, fol. 165v. Pietro Soranzo, count of Curzola writes in March of 1448 to his superiors in Venice: “... come una grandissima quantitate di Turchi sono intradi in la Bossina, e parme per quello se diuulga, che i uoia uegnir ai danni del conte Stephano, non so se i abbia altra intention ... Item el scriue al conte Stefano à Narenta, e per tutti i suo luoghi, che tutti i se debbia redur alle fortezze in auer, et in persona, in mode che tutti i uomeni potenti di Narenta, et dei altri luoghi soi sono reduiti alle Marine.” F. Radić, *Prilog za povjest slavenskog juga god. 1448*, *Starine JAZU* 27 (1895) 227–228. Next year the count of Curzola, Francesco Lombardo, wrote to the Signoria in Venice: “Per alias meas dominio vestro scripsi qualiter applicuerat in Bosinam certa quantitas Teucrorum et intulerunt multa damna et ceperunt multas personas et certa pars exercitus ipsorum Teucrorum cum illis quos ceperant recessit et fuit in Romaniam secum ducens ipsos captivos. Alia pars exercitus mansit pur in Bosina” (15 March 1449), Zadar State Archives, *Korčulanski arhiv*, box 12, vol. 19, fol. 16v. Cf. M. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 245; D. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti. Sveta kruna ugarska i Sveta krana bosanska 1387–1463*, Zagreb – Sarajevo 2006, 316. I would like to use this opportunity to thank colleague Marko Rimac from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Split, for sending me images of this document.

<sup>30</sup> This number was never surpassed later on and the population of the Republic was three times greater at the end of the fifteenth century than in 1673/74. See: N. Vekarić, *The Population of the Dubrovnik Republic in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries*, *Dubrovnik Annals* 2 (1998) 7–28.

city with their families, carrying riches in gold and silver, and that all of them had been accepted as Ragusan citizens.<sup>31</sup>

We should also bear in mind that between these interspersed Ottoman assaults Bosnia was often a scene of combat among the conflicted Bosnian nobles. In most cases these wars were either instigated by the Turks, or were waged because of Turks. A German armourer, Jörg from Nuremberg, who spent time in the service of Bosnian Duke Stjepan Vukčić claimed that on one occasion the Duke's own son Vladislav came with a large Ottoman army and took away many people from his father.<sup>32</sup> Duke Stjepan did indeed complain to Venice in 1466 that Vladislav brought the Turks to his land and in just one day managed to seize and abduct 30,000 souls from him, setting everything to fire and flames as a "cursed and disobedient son".<sup>33</sup>

This all meant that approaching the mid-fifteenth century, years of war far outnumbered the years of peace in Bosnia. The almost constant fighting debilitated the economy and had an extremely adverse influence on the security of people and the quality of their life in general.<sup>34</sup> Whole

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<sup>31</sup> "L'anno di Cristo 1371. Venne a Ragusa quest' anno gran moltitudine di gente di Bosna con famiglie loro, con gran havere d'oro e argento in glama; quali erano cacciati da Turchi, et per non star più a pericolo, fuggirono; et furono creati per cittadini di Ragusa". *Annales Ragusini Anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina*, Zagreb, 1883, 235.

<sup>32</sup> "Item in dem LX iar do hete herczog Steffan ain son mit namen Ladislav ua der was ein rechter haide vnd was albeg wider sien vatter vn gesellt sich zu den turken vnd in kurzen zeyten kam er mit XL tausendt mannen vnd furte vil volks seinem aigen vatter hinweg", Jörg von Nürnberg, *Geschicht von der Turkey*, Memmingen, ca. 1482–83, 3v. See also: J. Džambo, 'Geschicht von der Turkey' Jörge iz Nürnbergas izvješćem o propasti Bosne 1463. godine, *Zbornik radova o fra Anđelu Zvizdoviću*, Sarajevo – Fojnica 2000, 239–258.

<sup>33</sup> "E lui meno i Turchi in el mio paize per alcuni passi, dove mai avanti Turcho nesun pote intrar; e in uno solo çorno de xxx. mille anime me feze menar via, metendo tuto a fogo et a fiamma come fiol maledeto et disobediente" (10 March 1466), Š. Ljubić, *Listine o odnosajih između južnoga Slavenstva i Mletačke republike*, vol. X, Zagreb 1891, 354.

<sup>34</sup> Desanka Kovačević, *Trgovina u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni*, Sarajevo, 1961, 67, 164. The impact that the Ottoman military presence in Bosnia had on trade and economy is well illustrated by an example of traders from two Bosnian towns – Prača and Foča. Ever since the second half of the fourteenth century merchants from these two vibrant trading communities made regular trips to Ragusa where they engaged in trade credit

communities were affected, many individuals were killed, some enslaved, others sought to save themselves by running to the hills and other unapproachable areas. Still, the largest number of them found refuge by running away across the northern border to Hungary and elsewhere to the West, but the documents we have about these courses of migration are scarce and the process cannot be reconstructed in detail. One exceptional document from 1437 explicitly states that numerous Serbs and Bosnian heretics inhabited towns and villages of Sirmia north of the River Danube for years, living together with other Christian residents.<sup>35</sup>

Far more information is available about people from Bosnia moving to Dalmatia, to the islands in the Adriatic, and even further into Italy.<sup>36</sup> In the July of 1454, for example, the commune of Spalato paid for one ship to take 100 poor Bosnians to Apulia, and for another to take 76 of them to the Marches. Two months later, communal records again contain

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agreements with rich Ragusan dealers. The detailed and complete debt records of the Dubrovnik archives register a two decade hiatus in the activities of these Bosnian merchants during the period from 1448 to 1468, which roughly corresponds to the time of establishment of Ottoman supremacy over the Bosnian Kingdom. See: E. Kurtović, *Trgovci iz Prače u knjigama zaduženja 1369–1524. godine*, Građa Arhiva Bosne i Hercegovine 6–7 (2015) 121; Idem, *Hrebeljanovići, Balićevići i ostali fočanski trgovci u periodu 1469–1524. godine*, Zbornik u čast akademiku Desanki Kovačević Kojić, Banja Luka 2015, 327–328.

<sup>35</sup> Testimony of Ladislaus, count of the Posega county: "... fungimur perpetuo mediante nostra consciencia testamur et pollicemur, quatenus maiorem partem predictarum parcium Syrmie Rascianos inhabitare, licet tamen quedam civitates et ville christiano nomine funguntur, tamen in quamplurimis Rasciani et eciam Boznenses cum christianis mixtim commorantur; quedam ciuitates ac ville sectis hereticorum Boznensium ac Huzytarum infecte per plurimos annos extiterunt ... ymmo ex altera parte Danubii quasi per spacium unius miliaris vel circa mixtim Rasciani et Boznenses heretici cum christianis moram faciunt personalem" (25 February 1437), E. Fermentžin, *Acta Bosnae potissimum ecclesiastica cum insertis editorum documentorum regestis, ab anno 925 usque ad annum 1752*, Zagreb 1892, 159. Cf. S. Čirković, *Seobe srpskog naroda u kraljevinu Ugarsku u XIV i XV veku*, Seobe srpskog naroda od XIV do XX veka. Zbornik radova posvećen tristagodišnjici velike seobe Srba, Beograd 1990, 41–42. This document is also discussed by J. Šidak, *Heretički pokret i odjek husitizma na slavenskom Jugu*, Zbornik Matice srpske za društvene nauke 31 (1962) 5–24.

<sup>36</sup> N. Filipović, *Osvrt na položaj bosanskog seljaštva u prvoj deceniji uspostavljanja osmanske vlasti u Bosni*, 65.

expenses of around 250 kilos of beans distributed to poor Bosnians who were migrating to Apulia.<sup>37</sup> And these were not isolated cases. Research conducted in the Venetian Archives shows that the most intensive period of settlement from Bosnia to Venice falls into the second half of the fifteenth century, which is in complete concordance with the general progression of migrations from the Balkans to Italy.<sup>38</sup>

And even though the Bosnian Kingdom was conquered in 1463 with the beheading of the Bosnian King in Jajce, for the overall Ottoman conquest this year does not represent such an extreme turning point. The Turks were able to freely enter, pillage and plunder Bosnia as they wished since the 1430's,<sup>39</sup> and from the fifth decade of the fifteenth century they even fully controlled certain areas of the Kingdom which previously belonged to certain Bosnian nobles.<sup>40</sup> The Ottoman-held stronghold of Hodidjed was located less than 40 km away from the former royal residences in Visoki.<sup>41</sup>

Sultan Mehmed II's conquest of Bosnia, however, did eliminate an intermediary state and a hindrance in the direct fighting between the Hungarians and the Turks. The effect this might have had on population loss can be assessed by comparing it to the situation in Hungary after the fall of the Serbian Despotate. Namely, in the beginning of 1462 Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus complained somewhat dramatically to a Venetian ambassador that in the previous three years since the fall of Smederevo Turks had abducted more than 200,000 people from his

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<sup>37</sup> M. Šunjić, *Slaveni nastanjeni na području Ankonitanskog distrikta u 15. stoljeću*, 36.

<sup>38</sup> L. Čoralić, *Migracije i život iseljenika iz Bosne u Veneciji (XV–XVII st.)*, 116.

<sup>39</sup> E. O. Filipović, *The Key to the Gate of Christendom? The strategic importance of Bosnia in the struggle against the Ottomans*, *The Crusade in the Fifteenth Century: Converging and Competing Cultures*, Crusades – Subsidia 8, Routledge, London – New York 2016, 151–168.

<sup>40</sup> See: H. Šabanović, *Krajište Isa-bega Ishakovića. Zbirni katastarski popis iz 1455. godine*, Sarajevo 1964.

<sup>41</sup> A. Bejtić, *Srednjovjekovni grad Hodidid bio je na Vratniku u Sarajevu*, *Radovi ANU BiH* 64, *Odjeljenje društvenih nauka* 20 (1979) 107–148, discusses the ubication of the medieval fortress of Hodidjed with a review of literature and previous opinions. See also: V. Mušeta-Aščerić, *Sarajevo i njegova okolina u XV stoljeću. Između zapada i istoka*, Sarajevo 2005, 124–132.

Kingdom.<sup>42</sup> These numbers are unquestionably highly inflated and implausible but the hostilities waged between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, which had especially intensified in the second half of the fifteenth century and were predominantly conducted on Bosnian territory, certainly turned Bosnia into a genuine zone of almost constant war, with vast uninhabitable regions.<sup>43</sup>

The population of Bosnia at the time was also affected by the Ottoman practice of *sürgün* which represented a kind of a state-controlled system of forced colonization, mass deportation and resettling of entire communities. This process took place in both directions and followed a general pattern of Ottoman methods of conquest.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, Hungarian King Matthias also tried to replace the population loss in his Kingdom by colonizing the abandoned towns and villages by settlers from Bosnia and Serbia.<sup>45</sup>

The Ottoman *defter*s in a way register the consequences and the final outcome of this situation. They portray a grim image of the conquered and

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<sup>42</sup> “Regia Majestas Hungarie dici nobis fecit, per medium Secretarij nostri, quem apud eam tenemus, quod cum promissionibus Legatorum apostolicorum et cum spe subsidij christianorum diu steterit in guerra cum Turcho, quodque ab annis tribus citra arrepte et asportate sunt per Turcos ex locis et territorijs suis anime CC milla et ultra...” (22 January 1462), I. Nagy – A. Nyáry, *Magyar Diplomacziái emlékek – Mátyás király korából (1458–1490)*, Vol. I, Budapest 1875, 112.

<sup>43</sup> For a detailed overview of Ottoman raids undertaken from Bosnia on Croatia and Slovene lands in this period see: B. Grgin, *The Ottoman Influences on Croatia in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century*, *Povijesni prilozi* 23 (2002) 87–104; I. Voje, *Vplivi Osmanskega imperija na slovenske dežele v 15. in 16. stoletju*, *Zgodovinski časopis* 30 (1976) 3–21; Idem, *Problematika turskih provala u slovenačke zemlje i organizacija odbrane u XV i XVI veku*, *Istorijski časopis* 25–26 (1979) 117–131; Idem, *Migracioni procesi iz Bosne u slovenačkim zemljama za vrijeme turskih provala u 16. stoljeću*, *Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina*, Institut za istoriju – Institut za proučavanje nacionalnih odnosa, Sarajevo 1990, 89–99; V. Simoniti, *Tuki so v deželi že. Turški vpadi na slovensko ozemlje v 15. in 16. stoletju*, Celje 1990.

<sup>44</sup> H. Inalcik, *Ottoman Methods of Conquest*, *Studia Islamica* 2 (1953) 122–129. The 1489 *defter* of the Bosnian *sancak* mentions cases that some individuals were even exiled from Bosnia to Istanbul. This happened to a Radosav, son of Radonja, whose deserted patrimony was given to a certain Sahin as a *çiftlik*. See: F. Kasumović, *Osmanska agrarna politika i nadmetanje za zemlju u Jugoistočnoj Evropi*, *Anali Gazi Husrev-begove biblioteke* 35 (2014) 120 n. 64.

<sup>45</sup> S. Ćirković, *Seobe srpskog naroda u kraljevinu Ugarsku u XIV i XV veku*, 43.

devastated land.<sup>46</sup> These conclusions are based on the fact that, for instance the earliest *defter* from 1468/69, records a significant number of villages as “abandoned” or “deserted”.<sup>47</sup> Aside from the villages, the *defter* also records a number of deserted or desolate pieces of land referred to as *mezraa*. This Turkish administrative term, which evades simple definition, was usually applied to a field, or an area which could be cultivated, in other words it was an arable piece of land. A *mezraa* could have had its territory, borders, clear signs of previous settlement, i.e. a graveyard, a well, fields etc., and the size of each *mezraa* varied greatly.<sup>48</sup>

The extent of the depopulation of Bosnia can perhaps be evaluated through the prism of the fact that this *defter* contains a special list of 265 deserted villages conveniently grouped at the end of the record.<sup>49</sup> If we add to them the 138 other deserted villages that are mentioned in the text of the register, we come to a total number of at least 403 abandoned villages in the Bosnian *sancak* in 1468/69. The *defter* also mentions altogether 101 abandoned *mezraa*. If this number is also complemented by the number of 108 *çiftliks* recorded in the possession of Muslims, which were mostly created from empty villages and *mezraas*, we arrive to a number greater than 500 deserted villages on the Ottoman held territory of the erstwhile Bosnian Kingdom by 1468/69.<sup>50</sup> This number is impressive even by modern standards. However, to provide some context, we should also say that the whole *defter* mentions around 2,000 villages.

The *defter* from the Herzegovina *sancak* lists 110 deserted villages with 57 deserted *mezraas* in 1477,<sup>51</sup> and this is not taking into account the abandoned patrimonies, vineyards, mills, fields of walnut trees, cherries

<sup>46</sup> N. Filipović, *Osvrt na položaj bosanskog seljaštva u prvoj deceniji uspostavljanja osmanske vlasti u Bosni*, 64.

<sup>47</sup> A. Aličić, *Sumarni popis Sandžaka Bosna iz 1468–69. godine*, passim.

<sup>48</sup> *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, Vol. I: 1300–1600, H. Inalcik (ed.), Cambridge 1997, 162–167. For an example how the term *mezraa* was previously misused in historiography see: G. Boykov, *The human cost of warfare*, 105.

<sup>49</sup> A. Aličić, *Sumarni popis Sandžaka Bosna iz 1468–69. godine*, 246–257.

<sup>50</sup> These calculations are taken from: N. Filipović, *Osvrt na položaj bosanskog seljaštva u prvoj deceniji uspostavljanja osmanske vlasti u Bosni*, 65.

<sup>51</sup> A. Aličić, *Poimenični popis sandžaka vilajeta Hercegovina*, passim. See also: M. Krešić, *Depopulacija jugoistočne Hercegovine izazvana turskim osvajanjem*, *Povijesni prilozi* 39 (2010) 107–123.



and figs, which are also inscribed in the *defter*, even though their number does give an impression of the overall desolation of the country.

The biggest challenge in assessing the scope of the depopulation lays in the fact that for these particular areas there is a distinct lack of source materials that would allow us to reconstruct the situation prior to the changes induced by the Ottoman conquest and compare it to the information contained in the *defters*. In the territories adjacent to Bosnia, where the existing documents allow such an approach, research has shown that, for instance, almost half of the known settlements in the area of Braničevo in eastern Serbia were left without any inhabitants during the course of border warfare and the Ottoman subjugation of Serbia,<sup>52</sup> and that in the county of Vukovska in Slavonia almost 70% of medieval villages were uninhabited by the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>53</sup>

The *defters* do not give us any information about why or how, or indeed when these villages were abandoned. This might have happened before, or even after the Ottoman conquest, because of it, or because of some other factors. We must not generalize, simplify and throw the blame exclusively at the Ottoman expansion, because, it has to be taken into consideration that the conquest of the Balkans was a lengthy and protracted process during which not everybody migrated, not everybody left their homes, and for every abandoned village, there are two or three that were not. Not knowing how many people lived in the villages recorded as inhabited by the Ottomans, we are not in a position to speak about the degree to which they were depopulated. Certainly, many other sources testify about the continuation of normal life and circumstances in certain communities, even after the Ottoman conquest. This must have been a consequence of the fact that in those areas Ottomans were present for decades previously, and that the people learned to live in the new conditions. Many were just satisfied for the perceived stability that the Ottoman state brought them after years of war and insecurity.

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<sup>52</sup> A. Krstić, *Osmansko prodiranje i demografske promene u Braničevu (1389–1459)*, Braničevo u istoriji Srbije, Požarevac – Beograd 2008, 189–202.

<sup>53</sup> P. Engel, *A török dúlások hatása a népességre: Valkó megye példája*, Századok 134/2 (2000), 267–321. See also: F. Szakály, *Die Bilanz der Türkenherrschaft in Ungarn*, Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 34 (1988) 65–66, 71.

Nevertheless, elsewhere in Bosnia, especially in border regions, certain individuals and groups refused to come to terms with the newly established Ottoman government. Available sources from the second half of the fifteenth century speak of the common practice of fleeing which was widespread among the recently subjugated population.<sup>54</sup> In September 1472 Sultan Mehmed II threatened Ragusans that they must not hide any Vlachs, nor allow them to flee across their land, ordering that all those who arrive to Ragusan territory should be caught and handed over to his commander Hamza-beg.<sup>55</sup> But these threats could not contain the people who kept running away. Villagers from threatened areas began migrating to Italy in such large numbers that the Count of Spalato in 1493 forbade the owners of barges to transport them. However, he changed his mind shortly after and allowed everything to proceed as usual, because he thought that it was better for these people to migrate to Italy and remain Christians, than to stay under the Turks and become infidels.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, Sultan Bayazid II wrote to the Ragusans in October of 1497, stating that the *emin* of Novi was complaining that many of his subjects were fleeing to Ragusan territory.

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<sup>54</sup> For instance two men from “Subtus Clobuch partium Bosne” were charged in 1468 with seizing almost a whole family and selling the captives as slaves to the Turks, as well as with robbing their house, while the population was fleeing to Ragusa trying to evade the “fear of the Turks”: “... quas matrem et sorores et etiam dictum eius fratrem predicti querelati asduxerunt et vendiderunt eos Turchis ... Item derobarunt omnes res que erant et fuerant tunc in domo eorum, et hoc dum predicti derobati irent fugientes propter metum Turchorum versus Ragusium ...” (28 August 1468), M. Dinić, *Iz Dubrovačkog arhiva*, Knjiga III, Beograd 1967, 144. See also: V. Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, Beograd 1979, 47, 113, 118. The chaos and uncertainty brought about with the arrival of Ottoman armed forces caused many people to intensify their activity in the seizing of people and selling them as slaves to the Turks. In the Ragusan Latin sources they are frequently referred to as “robci”, which is a Slavic term meaning slavers, or “predones hominum”. A. Babić, *Društvo srednjovjekovne bosanske države*, Društvo i privreda srednjovjekovne bosanske države, Sarajevo 1987, 72. In many cases it is directly stated that their intended customers were Turks or that they cooperated with them in the abduction of people: E. Kurtović, *Vlasi Bobani*, Sarajevo 2012, 84, 86 n. 229; M. Dinić, *Iz Dubrovačkog arhiva*, III, 151–152.

<sup>55</sup> Lj. Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma*, knj. I/2, Beograd – Sr. Karlovci 1934, 251.

<sup>56</sup> M. Šunjić, *Slaveni nastanjeni na području Ankonitanskog distrikta u 15. stoljeću*, 36.

Thus the Sultan ordered that all those fugitives who were inscribed in the *emin's* lists should be returned.<sup>57</sup>

The 1489 *defter* also registers a significant number of run-away peasants, and it can be concluded that this was a common occurrence which affected a large number of villages. In quite a few instances the inhabitants of the whole village fled. The fleeing was mostly intensive in the border areas of the Ottoman territories, and it can be said that it did not only have an economic rationale, but that it was also motivated by social, political and religious reasons.<sup>58</sup>

The other thing that can be discerned from the 1489 *defter* is that a large number of villages which were previously recorded as deserted, had in the meanwhile been populated. The lack of sources does not allow us to precisely detect how this resettlement was carried out, but it can be assumed with a degree of certainty that the majority of abandoned and unoccupied areas were mostly colonized by Vlachs.<sup>59</sup> The resettlement of the newly acquired territories which were depopulated in the constant conflicts was an important issue for the Ottoman state, and was thus carried out with great organization and on the basis of rich experience that the Ottoman authorities acquired in these kinds of matters in their conquest of the Balkans.

This is also visible in the Herzegovina *sancak* where certain respectable Vlachs received vast lands that were previously deserted, under the condition that they resettle those places. A case in point is Pavle, son of Grgur, who was entrusted with 14 deserted villages in the *nahiye* of Livno, in the border regions. In that way the Ottomans solved the issue of resettlement of unoccupied areas and the upkeep of a fortress on their western borders.<sup>60</sup> Thus these sensible practices allowed for a quick repopulation of the abandoned and uninhabited territories.

Vlachs were particularly suitable for colonisation since they represented a mobile and especially vital group in the region. Of course, any mention of the settling of Vlachs in certain places must imply that

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<sup>57</sup> Lj. Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma*, knj. I/2, 323–324.

<sup>58</sup> N. Filipović, *Napomene o islamizaciji u BiH u XV vijeku*, 155–156.

<sup>59</sup> Ibidem, 152.

<sup>60</sup> N. Filipović, *Osvrt na položaj bosanskog seljaštva u prvoj deceniji uspostavljanja osmanske vlasti u Bosni*, 68.

those areas in question were previously discarded and deserted. A good example is the region of Maglaj and Tešanj. The 1489 *defter* gives a number of around 900 Vlach households which were settled in the area around Maglaj during the preceding decade.<sup>61</sup> This is quite a substantial number and allows us to ponder the extent of the depopulation in a region where around 900 households could be settled without much difficulty.

## Conclusion

All the available source groups confirm that Bosnia suffered extensive depopulation during the century of conquest and implementation of Ottoman power in the region, but due to the particularities and limitations of the documentary materials it is extremely difficult to express this process in meaningful statistical data, numbers and percentages. Precise evaluation of the degree of human loss is made even more problematic by the circumstance that it is virtually impossible to reconstruct the demographic image of Bosnia prior to the Ottoman conquest. This uncertainty then leaves room for diverse interpretations, extreme and opposing views regarding key issues concerning the consequences and changes which were brought about with the establishment of Ottoman rule in the country. And while a historian should always be careful in his approach to such sensitive issues, producing a more balanced assessment of the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans, and Bosnia in particular, he must not disregard the basic fact that both the expansion and contraction of Ottoman borders generated and stimulated movement of people

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<sup>61</sup> A. Handžić, *O kretanju stanovništva u regionu srednjeg toka Bosne*, 60.

## Emir O. FILIPOVIĆ

### 15. YÜZYILDA OSMANLI FETHİ VE BOSNA'DA NÜFUSUN AZALMASI

#### Özet

Balkanlar'da Osmanlı idaresinin kurulmasına sadece yönetici yerel elitler değil, yeni idari ve siyasi sistemde kaderi belirli olmayan nüfusun çoğunluğu da karşı çıktı. İktisadi zayıflığı ve açlığı getiren savaş zamanlarında güvende hissetmeyen birçok kişi daha güvenli ve savaş alanlarından uzak olan sınır bölgelerinde kurtuluşu aradı. Birçok çağdaş kaynak, Bosna krallığından Dalmaçya sahil şehirlerine, hatta Adriyatik denizini aşarak İtalya'ya kadar uzanan büyük nüfus hareketlerini kaydetmektedir. Bu yüzden, 15. yüzyılda Bosna'nın şehir ve köylerindeki büyük nüfus azalmasında Osmanlı ilerlemesinin önemli bir etkisi vardı. Bu çalışma, mevcut kaynakları kullanılarak, bazı insanların niye göç etmeyi tercih ettiğini, bazılarının ise niye Bosna'da kalarak entegrasyonu ve Osmanlı idari sistemini kabul etmeyi seçtiğini açıklamayı hedeflemektedir.

Mevcut tarihi kaynaklar, söz konusu dönemin kapsamlı bir demografik-istatistiksel dökümünü vermeye olanak tanımıyor. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmada, Osmanlı fetihleri sonucunda Bosna'dan ayrılan insan toplulukları üzerine kesin rakam ve yüzdeler verilemedi. Buna mukabil, bu çalışma, insanların kendi evlerini terk etme ve Osmanlı ordusundan veya genel olarak Osmanlı idaresinden kaçma eğilimini açıklayan kaynaklara odaklanmaktadır. Bu kaynaklar Osmanlıların Bosna'da nasıl bir idare kurduklarını, bunun sonuçları ve yeni idari kurumların bariz olan nüfus azalmasını önlemek için aldığı tedbirler hakkında net bir resim çiziyor.

İncelenmiş tüm kaynak grupları, Osmanlı fethi ve idaresinin kurulduğu yüzyıl sırasında Bosna'nın nüfusunun büyük ölçüde azaldığı hipotezini desteklemektedir. Ancak, kaynakların içerdiği veriler sınırlı olduğundan istatistik bilgileri, rakamları ve yüzdeleri kullanılarak bu sürecin sayısal düzlemde ifade edilmesi oldukça zordur. Bu karışık

durum, insan kaybı sayısının kesin bir şekilde değerlendirilmesini o kadar zorlaştırıyor ki Osmanlı fethinden önceki Bosna'nın demografik durumunun incelenmesini de neredeyse imkansızlaştırıyor. Bu belirsizlik, Bosna'da Osmanlı idaresinin kurulmasının getirdiği sonuç ve değişimleri ilgilendiren temel sorunlarla ilgili aşırı uçlardaki ve birbirine zıt yorumlama biçimlerine neden oluyor. Tarihçilerin, bu konu örneğinde olduğu gibi, hassas meselelerle uğraşırken dikkatli olmaları gerekir ve Balkanlarda, özellikle Bosna'da Osmanlı mirasının nesnel bir değerlendirmesini yapmağa uğraşanların yine de şu temel olguyu gözardı etmemeleri gerekir: Nüfus hareketleri, Osmanlı sınırlarının hem yayılması hem de daralmasına bağlıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Bosna, Osmanlı fethi, nüfusun azalması, Dubrovnik, defter

**Емир О. ФИЛИПОВИЋ**

**ОСМАНСКО ОСВАЈАЊЕ  
И ДЕПОПУЛАЦИЈА БОСНЕ У 15. ВЕКУ**

**Резиме**

Успостави османске власти на Балкану жестоко су се успротивиле не само локалне владајуће елите, него и већина становништва чија је судбина била неизвесна у оквиру новог административног и политичког система. Не осећајући се сигурним у време рата, које је било праћено економским слабљењем и глађу, бројни су тражили спас у бегу према сигурнијим крајевима удаљеним од ратних зона у пограничним областима. Многи савремени извори сведоче о великом кретању људи и појединаца из Босанског краљевства према приморским градовима Далмације, па чак и даље преко Јадранског мора у Италију. Стога је османско освајање имало значајан утицај на велику депопулацију градских и сеоских средина у Босни током 15. века. Циљ овога рада био је да на основу доступних извора осветли околности због којих су неки мигрирали а други одлучили да остану у Босни, прихватавши интеграцију у османски административни систем.

Због врсте расположиве изворне грађе овај текст не представља екстензивну статистичку студију или детаљан демографски преглед разматраног раздобља. То значи да у раду нису дате прецизне бројке или постотак људи који је напустио Босну због османског освајања, него је његова пажња првенствено усмерена према томе да представи оне изворе који говоре о тенденцији људи да напусте своје домове, да беже и избегну, или османску војску или уопштено промене које је доносила нова османска управа. То би требало да створи јаснију слику начина на који су Турци успостављали своју власт у Босни, последица које су тиме изазване, као и поступака које су нове административне структуре предузимале с циљем супротстављања очитој депопулацији и расељавању бивших становника.

Све анализиране изворне скупине потврђују да је Босна претрпела екстензивну депопулацију током столећа освајања и успоставе османске власти у региону, али због посебности и ограничења извора веома је тешко изразити овај процес у статистичким подацима, бројкама и постоцима. Прецизна евалуација степена људских губитака је отежана због околности да је готово немогуће реконструисати демографску слику Босне пре османског освајања. Ова несигурност онда оставља простор за разне интерпретације, екстремне и супротстављене ставове у погледу кључних питања везаних за последице и промене које су наступиле успостављањем османске власти у земљи. И док би историчар увек требало да буде пажљив у свом приступу таквим осетљивим темама, креирање објективне оцене османског наслеђа на Балкану, и посебно у Босни, не сме занемарити основну чињеницу да је покретање људи било проузроковано како сужавањем, тако и ширењем османских граница.

**Кључне речи:** Босна, Османско освајање, расељавање, Дубровник, дефтер.