

BAYRAM ŞEN  
(Paris)

SHUTTLE BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN TWO  
EMPIRES: THE PETITIONS OF BOSNIAN MUSLIM  
MIGRANTS IN THE OTTOMAN AND  
AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ARCHIVES  
AT THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY\*

*Summary*

This paper aims at defining the general tendencies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Bosnian Muslim emigrants to the Ottoman Empire and the returnees who decided not to stay in the Ottoman Lands. Although the number of the Bosnian Muslim emigration to the Ottoman Empire seems to be very low, the returnees on the other hand keep the high percentage of the whole Muslim migrants to the Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*Key words:* Bosnia and Herzegovina, Migrants, Returnees, Austro-Hungarian Empire, Ottoman Empire, 19<sup>th</sup> Century Mass Migration.

INTRODUCTION

It is possible to talk about the continuous migration of communities at the end of the Ottoman Empire effected by the loss of territories. It was also grounded and fostered by diverse ideological and political backgrounds.

---

\* Ovaj rad je prezentiran na Naučnom skupu "Kulturno-historijski tokovi u Bosni od 15. do 19. stoljeća" održanom između 15-17. maja 2015. godine kojim je obilježeno 65 godina rada Orijentalnog instituta u Sarajevu.

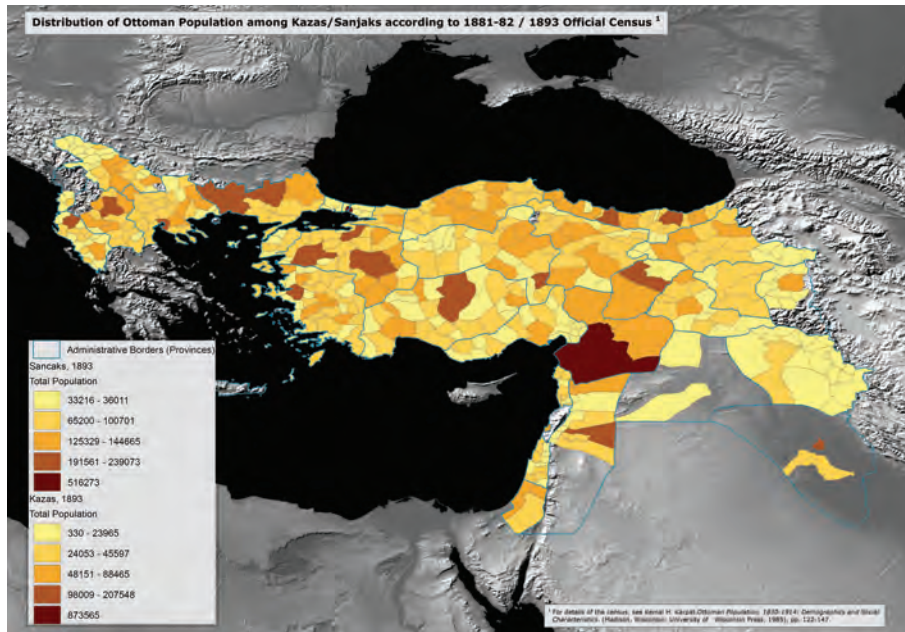
"This article has been funded by EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7), under the the project titled as Politics of Memory and Memory Cultures of the Russian-Ottoman War 1877/1878: From Divergence to Dialogue, (PIRSES-GA-2011-295167) All the findings from all participants of this 4-year-project will be published in the Journal of Balkanistic Forum in Bulgaria."

After the wars with the Russian Empire since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ottoman Empire settled the groups who were “ethnically” Turk or religiously Muslim to the Balkans. This act can be described as something done while the Ottomans were still defining themselves from the perspective of the “Empire”. Especially after 1850s, Circassians, Nogais, Tatars, and Abkhazians etc. were settled to the Balkans as a preparation to a possible attack from the Balkans or from the West, but also the Ottomans still hang onto the idea of taking the lost lands back.<sup>1</sup> These settlements were themselves related to the imperial and Islamist policies of the Ottoman Empire, which specifically took place during the rule of Abdülmecit and Abdülaziz.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, during the rule of Abdülhamit II and especially after the Russo-Ottoman War in 1877-1878, the migration from Caucasia and the Balkans towards to the Anatolia, the Muslim identity was equally important for the policies of the Ottoman Empire, but Abdülhamit II had a dual position towards the immigrants from both Balkans and the Caucasus. He was, at the first moment, not very supportive of the migration from Bosnia after the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as he had the idea to regain those territories. After the total loss of the region both politically and economically, Ottoman administration started the project to Islamize the Anatolian population, via a slow but steady increase of Muslim population as a result of forced migrations after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878 (*93 Harbi*) was decisive in Abdülhamid II’s Islamist policies.

<sup>1</sup> There are many articles and books about those emigrations. For example, see: Mark Pinson, “Demographic Warfare: An Aspect of Ottoman and Russian Policy, 1854-1866” (Harvard University, 1970); Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 66-70; Maria N. Todorova, *Balkan Family Structure and the European Pattern: Demographic Developments in Ottoman Bulgaria* (Budapest and New York: CEU Press, 2006), 17-23; Brian Glyn Williams, “Hijra and Forced Migration from Nineteenth-Century Russia to the Ottoman Empire: A Critical Analysis of the Great Tatar Emigration of 1860-1861”, *Cahiers Du Monde Russe* 41, no. 1 (2000): 79-108; Roumen Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans: Historiography of the Bulgarian Revival* (Budapest and New York: CEU Press, 2004), 218-219.

<sup>2</sup> Although the mass immigration from Balkans or the Caucasians to the Ottoman Balkans took place at the end of nineteenth century, there were some important immigration periods also from Balkans to the Ottoman Empire since the seventeenth century. Please see, Antonina Zhelyazkova, “Islamization in the Balkans as an Historiographical Problem: The Southeast-European Perspective”, in *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography*, ed. Adanır, Fikret and Faroqhi, Suraiya (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2002), 235-237; Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

## A GENERAL LOOK AT THE NINETEENTH CENTURY MASS MIGRATIONS



**MAPI:** *Administrative divisions based on the geo-referenced reproduction of R. Huber's map of Ottoman Empire's administrative divisions according to Yearbook (Salname) of 1899.<sup>3</sup> The administrative divisions are revised following Justin McCarthy's<sup>4</sup> listings of sancaks and kazas taken from 1884-85 and 1898-99 Salnames as well as the divisions followed in the census. Even though the title of the map refers to the "Ottoman Empire" certain provinces were excluded from the census and therefore lacked a detailed population data at the level of kaza or sancak divisions. The excluded provinces are as follows: Asir and Yemen, Hejaz, Trablusgarb, Bengazi and Special Administrative or Autonomous Units such as Egypt, Tunisia, Eastern Rumelia, Bulgarian Principality, Crete, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Mount Lebanon and Samos.<sup>5</sup>*

After 93 *Harbi*, there was an influx of Muslim population from Balkans to Anatolia. Bosnian Muslims occupied small but significant portion of this influx. In fact, nineteenth century was the century of demographic mobility in which Rumelia, and then Anatolia were faced with mass

<sup>3</sup> Detailed digital version of the map can be obtained from Library of Congress web site: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2007633930/>

<sup>4</sup> Justin McCarthy, *The Arab World, Turkey, and the Balkans (1878-1914): A Handbook of Historical Statistics* (Boston, MA: G.K. Hall, 1982), 13-25.

<sup>5</sup> Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics*, 150-151.

migrations due to massive territory losses. The first wave of these mass migrations was triggered by the loss of the Crimea. The Crimean Tatars, Nogais and others were forced into migrating to the Ottoman Empire and, mostly, settled in Rumelia. The second wave of migrations was triggered by the Russian expansion towards Caucasus and reached its peak after the incorporation of the Southern Caucasus into the Russian Empire resulting in the emigration of Caucasus tribes to Anatolia. The third wave was the direct consequence of Ottoman Empire's defeat in *93 Harbi*. The loss of Rumelian lands as well as some parts of the Eastern Anatolia meant that both the migrants of the first wave and second wave alongside the new ones flowed into Anatolia. Although, the fourth and the fifth waves<sup>6</sup> are out of this article's scope, they were interrelated to the former ones to the extent that all of these mass migrations had no expiration date. That is to say, all of these mass migration waves were intermingled as overlapping processes.

Despite the fact that these mass migrations changed the social, political and cultural outlook of the entire Ottoman Empire, there is no exact detailed statistical data on their origins, settlement zones and more importantly numbers of migrants. The "archival turn" of 1990s produced empirically rich and invaluable monographs in the field of historical migration studies. The first example of such research was Nedim İpek's monograph on Balkan migrations to Anatolia during and after the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78.<sup>7</sup> The basic structure of his narrative is replicated in other monographs: An introduction dealing with the political historical background and settlement of the migrants in reference to state policies and governmental organization of the settlement process which is followed by a limited account of administrative and economic problems experienced by the Ottoman state. The whole story is usually narrated from the perspective of the Ottoman state.<sup>8</sup> Thanks to these empirical researches trying to reconnect journal articles, memoirs with archival sources the part of which still wait to be cataloged, therefore being unavailable, we

<sup>6</sup> The fourth wave was triggered by the Ottoman-Greece War of 1898 and the fifth, and may be the last one in an imperial setting, was triggered by the First Balkan War.

<sup>7</sup> Nedim İpek, *Rumeli'den Anadolu'ya Türk Göçleri, 1877-1890* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> Two well-known examples are Süleyman Erkan, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri (1878-1908): Tatarlar, Çerkezler, Abhazlar, Gürcüler, Ahıskanlılar, Dağıstanlılar, Çeçenler, Diğerleri* (Trabzon: Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi Kafkasya ve Orta Asya Ülkelere Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi, 1996); Abdullah Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri, 1856-1876* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1997.). For the latest example, see: Jülide Akyüz Orat, Nebahat Oran Arslan, and Mustafa Tanrıverdi, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Kafkas Göçleri (1828-1943)* (Kars: Kafkas Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2011).

have a fairly deepened knowledge about the Ottoman state's immigration policies, regulatory institutions, etc. But, all those contributions remain without a framework that encompasses regionally parceled narratives of migration. Thus, it is difficult to analyze the mass migrations and their impact on the late Ottoman society from a wider perspective. Without replacing their focus on settlement by a focus on the migration as a process which does not end once the migrants settled down, it is impossible to see the continuities and ruptures, re-settlement practices and even internal migration patterns triggered by the mass migrations of the nineteenth century. In addition, they lack definitive data on the statistical aspects of these migrations. This lack of information began to be filled by the recent literature based on Ottoman registers found "here and there" scattered across the *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri*<sup>9</sup> (Department of Ottoman Archives under the General Directorate of State Archives).

According to an abridged statistical list dated to 27 November 1878 and prepared for the immediate use of newly established *İdârey-i Umûmiye-i Muhâcirîn Komisyonu* (General Commission for the Administration of Immigrants), population of immigrants arrived in the Ottoman Empire and waiting to be settled, or transported to Anatolia having been scattered through different provinces and sub-provinces was 729.127.<sup>10</sup> This total number corresponds with what the existing literature came up with before, even though the list have a note indicating that the numbers represented the number of migrants whose daily subsidies were cut and transported, or who were left on their own means in their settlement zones. It is hard to guess whether this total numbers corresponds to the settled migrants or not. When they are compared to the numbers provided by the existing literature, it is clear that these numbers only represented a snapshot of the current situation in 1878. Most of the provinces with large number of immigrants used as stations for temporary accommodations before migrants departed to settlement zones.<sup>11</sup> But it is also probable to suggest by looking at the differences that most of the immigrant groups were settled in the same province without a change in their final settlement destination. At least, the majority of the figures provided by this list correspond with the statistics given to Talat Pasha (1874-1921) for assessing the demographics of the Ottoman Empire in 1916-17.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> From now on abbreviated as BOA.

<sup>10</sup> See below, Table I, Column titled "Y.PRK.KOM1878".

<sup>11</sup> Compare the figures given for Adana, Kastamonu, Kosova, Selanik, Yanya in Y.PRK. KOM1878 column to the figures given by Erkan1996 and İpek2013 columns.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Murat Bardakçı, *Talât Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrûkesi: Sadrazam Talât Paşa'nın Özel Arşivinde Bulunan Ermeni Tehciri Konusundaki Belgeler ve Hususî Yazışmalar*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (İstanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2009), 35.

Table I. Total Number of Immigrants according to Five Sources

Vilayet/Sancak	3 Registers <sup>13</sup>	Erkan1996 <sup>14</sup>	İpek2013 <sup>15</sup>	Y.prk. kom1878 <sup>16</sup>	Bardakçı <sup>17</sup>
Adana		6,464	6,464	16,351	5,737
Ankara	44	20,735	20,735	15,000	29,785
Aydın	2,838	52,958	51,938	44,181	89,603
Beyrut			2,542		1,019
Kala-ı Sultaniye	1,615	32,169	22,440		29,495
Canik	12,555			15,000	
Çatalca		1,557	1,557		8681
Diyarbakir		450	450	5,000	
Edirne		110,997	110,997	50,000	112,119
Erzurum		34,660	19,572		5,104
Haleb	2,718	1,556	1,556	15,586	1,068
Hüdavendigâr		171,157	169,283	68,513	214,310
İstanbul	35,224*			110,060*	
İşkodra	6,410	8,178	2,346		2,800
İzmid	6,297	46,463	46,463		56,373

<sup>13</sup> This table is derived from three Ottoman registers of immigrants: Y.PRK.KOM 3/49 (03.06.1882) published in Kemal Gurulkan et al., “Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkas Göçleri”, vol. 2 (İstanbul: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2012), 410-430. BEO 291/1 (16.11.1881) published in Berat Yıldız, “Emigrations from the Russian Empire to the Ottoman Empire: An Analysis in the Light of the New Archival Materials” (M.A., Bilkent University, 2006), 34-35; 48; 53-58; 63-91; 95-104; 120-125. Y.PRK.KOM 3/22 (13.11.1881) published in Derya Derin Paşaoğlu, “Muhacir Komisyonu Maruzatı’na Göre (1877-78) 93 Harbi Sonrası Muhacir İskânı”, *International Journal of History* 5, sayı 2 (March 2013): 347-387.

<sup>14</sup> Erkan, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri (1878-1908): Tatarlar, Çerkezler, Abhazlar, Gürcüler, Ahıskanlılar, Dağıstanlılar, Çeçenler, Diğerleri*, 68-69.

<sup>15</sup> Nedim İpek, “The Balkans, War and Migration”, in *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications*, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2013), 651. Originally published in Nedim İpek, “Balkanlar, Girit ve Kafkaslar’dan Anadolu’ya Yönelik Göçler ve Göçmen İskân Birimlerinin Kuruluşu (1879-1912)”, *Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 1, no. 1 (1995): 198-211. It is revised and enlarged as a part of chapter in, Nedim İpek, *İmparatorluk’tan Ulus Devlete: Göçler* (Trabzon: Serander Yayıncılık, 2006), 311-336. Probably the sources of the numbers are the same document Erkan uses.

<sup>16</sup> BOA, Y.PRK.KOM, 1/52, 2 Z. 1295 (27.11.1878).

<sup>17</sup> Bardakçı, *Talât Paşa’nın Evrak-ı Metrûkesi: Sadrazam Talât Paşa’nın Özel Arşivinde Bulunan Ermeni Tehciri Konusundaki Belgeler ve Hususî Yazışmalar*, 35.

Karesi	15,524				65,565
Kastamonu		29,074	28,815	65,000	34,308
Konya		12,463	11,908	15,000	126,295
Kosova		63,336	58,535	95,000	61,314
Mamuretü'l-aziz	443	809	809		336
Manastr		3,310	1,651		2,192
Nigde	1,538				
Selanik	23,279	14,136	6,462	130,000	4,846
Sinop	6,346				
Sivas		58,150	57,259	30,000	61,171
Suriye	6,711	10,859	10,789	34,436	9,178
Tokad	3,865				
Trabzon	1,131	38,076	35,189		
Yanya				10,000	

These kinds of summarized statistical information on migrants were, possibly, derived from other kind of detailed registers of immigrants (*muhâcirîn defterleri*) in which the immigrants were categorized according to ethnic/religious affiliations, place of origin, gender and age. The size and comprehensiveness of these registers vary according to bureaucratic priorities. These registers cover a long span of time, differentiate between different migration periods (most of the time they made a distinction whether the migrants arrived before or after the *93 Harbi*) and provide a systematic division of migrants according to their ethno-geographical, or ethno-religious origins in conjunction with their settlement locations at the level of *sancak*, or *vilayet*.<sup>18</sup> These registers provide a bird-eye view of settlement process at the time they were produced. So they lack what others have; more detailed information on the migrants. In other words, these registers can shed light on, at least, ethnic/religious composition of the immigrants after the *93 Harbi*. The first known example of these registers dates back to 13 November 1881 and covers the migrants settled in two provinces and one special district (*mutasarrıflık*), which are respectively Selanik, Sinob and İzmid.<sup>19</sup> The second example is more comprehensive in nature, compiled in the same

<sup>18</sup> For two distinct specimen of the type, see Yıldız, “Emigrations from the Russian Empire to the Ottoman Empire: An Analysis in the Light of the New Archival Materials”; Paşaoğlu, “Muhacir Komisyonu Maruzatı’na Göre (1877-78) 93 Harbi Sonrası Muhacir İskânı”.

<sup>19</sup> Y.PRK.KOM 3/22 (13.11.1881).

month of 1881 and it is comprised out of ethnical/religious distribution of immigrants across Biga, Niğde, Aydın, Ankara, Trabzon and Canik according to gender and arrival time.<sup>20</sup> The third and last example covers Karesi, Haleb, Mamuretü'l-aziz, Erbaa, İşkodra.<sup>21</sup> All three registers follows a standard categorization, they divide the immigrants, according to their arrival time, under religious/ethnic groups, and then, subdivide them according to gender. The first and the second registers provide a detailed settlement information dividing the *vilayets* according to sub-administrative divisions but the last one only uses provincial level for that information. The ethnic/religious groups are listed under three headings for the period before the 93 *Harbi*, and seven headings for the period after 93 *Harbi* including Circassians, Crimean Tatars and Nogais, Dagestanis, Soukhomis, Batumis for the ones originated from Caucasus and the Rumelian Turks, Albanians / Bosnians for the ones originated from Rumelia.

According to these three registers, which excluded some significant immigration zones like Sivas, the total immigrants settled in the above-mentioned provinces and *sanjaks* is 89.796 in 1882. It is possible to suggest that this low figure does not necessarily represented the long process of migration movements when it comes to Bosnian emigration to the Ottoman Empire. Because as it can be observed in Table II, the Bosnians (including Albanians) were part of the mass migration but it is not possible to say that there was a mass Bosnian Muslim emigration caused by the 93 *Harbi*.

Table II. Bosnian emigrants after the 93 *Harbi* according to three registers

Source	Date	İşkodra		Karesi		Other Provinces	
		Emigrants	% of Total	Emigrants	% of Total	Emigrants	% of Total
Y.Prk.Kom 3/49	1882	6410	%87,67	32	% 0,48	0	%0
BEO 291/1	1881	0	%0	0	%0	0	%0
Y.Prk.Kom 3/22	1881	0	%0	0	%0	0	%0

Bosnian Muslim emigration, as part of the general mass migration statistics, constitutes a small portion of the problem because Bosnian Muslim emigration was a continuous and dynamic one. It spread over a long time. Bosnian Muslim emigration, therefore, constitutes a niche in the study of mass migration in the nineteenth century Ottoman

<sup>20</sup> BEO 291/1 (16.11.1881).

<sup>21</sup> Y.PRK.KOM 3/49 (03.06.1882).

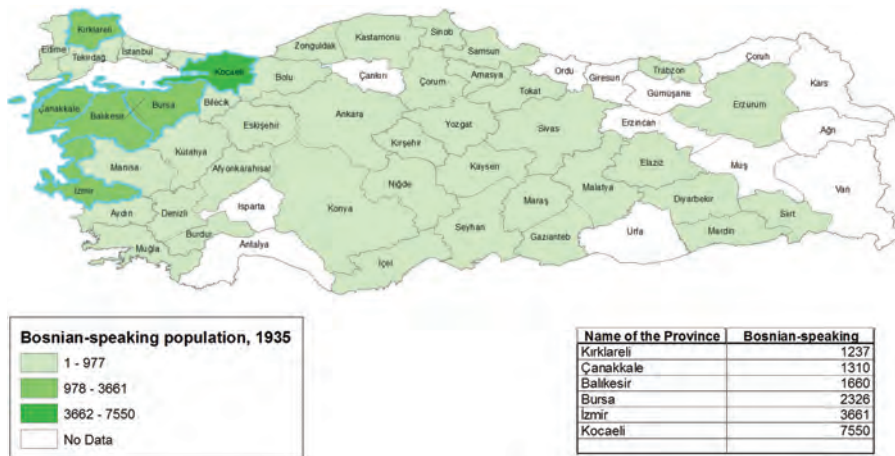


context. The best way to clarify this peculiar characteristic is to look at the returnees. The qualitative analysis of returnees' stories clarifies the absence, or relatively weak presence, of Bosnian Muslim emigrants in the statistical data even if the data source is detailed.

*Disillusionment: the returnees*

...Someone sitting cross-legged on the corner, first took off his shoes and later his socks and telling something in Bosnian to the men next to him with a shine gushed from his skinny face. The men sitting next to him was as yellow, red and young as a Serbian villager. How sorely he was laughing? We are really weak to discover the state of mind of the people whose language we do not understand. We presume they talk something different, more important than what we talk everyday. Even though we are interested in them for a while, a little later we forget them and return back to us, to our language and our environment, that is to say to ourselves...<sup>22</sup>

**The Distribution of Bosnian-speaking population in Turkish Republic according to 1935 Census**



**MAPII:** *The map of Turkey dated 1935 after the first census of population. Unfortunately, the first population census after the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1927 did not include the nations and the mother tongues. This map shows the existence of the Bosnians who declared that their mother tongue was Bosnian. Although it did not give an exact number or exact situation of Bosnians in Turkey (because some probably did not declare their mother tongue as Bosnian or as we can see from the other census, 1935 census did not include the second language of the people), it is important to notice how it gives some clues about the existence of the Bosnian population.*

<sup>22</sup> Sait Faik Abasıyanık, *Semaver* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002).

## HISTORIOGRAPHICAL DISCUSSION ABOUT THE BOSNIAN RETURNEES

The scholarly literature focusing on the emigration mostly analyzes the process of disillusionment from the perception of the place where the migrants came to, in other words, the settlement policies of the receiving place.<sup>23</sup> Although there are many studies about the immigration/emigration of the Bosnian Muslims to/from the Ottoman Empire, they analyze the process as an instrument of a state/empire. While migration analysis is tied to the idea of re-animated centrality of the empire as the ideal political setting<sup>24</sup>, some studies tend to base their conclusions under subtitles, such as “pull-push discussion”<sup>25</sup>, from *Dar ’ül Harb* (places still under non-Muslim administration therefore open to Holy War) to

<sup>23</sup> Fahriye Emgili, “Bosna-Hersek’ten Türkiye’ye Göç (1878-1934)” (PhD, Ankara University, Graduate School of Social Sciences, Department of History, 2011); Muammer Demirel, “Türkiye’de Bosna Göçmenleri”, *Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 12, no. 2 (2008): 285; Züriye Çelik, “Osmanlının Zor Yıllarında Rumeli Göçmenlerinin Türk Basınındaki Sesi: ‘Muhacir’ Gazetesi (1909-1910)” (MA Thesis, Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Atatürk ilke ve İnkılapları Tarihi, 2007); Amra Dedeić-Kırbaç, “Tarih ve Gelenek Bağlamında Türkiye’de Boşnaklar”, *International Journal of Human Sciences* 9, no. 1 (January 2012): 696-711; Özhan, Ayla Dedeoğlu and Elif Üstündağlı, “Bosnian immigrants acculturation to consumer culture experienced in Izmir”, *Ege Akademik Bakış*, 11, no. 1 (2011):1; İbrahim Erdal, “Rumeli ve Anadolu muhacirlerinde kimlik ve vatan algısı”, *Identity and homeland sense of Anatolian and Rumelian refugees* 11, no. 81 (2009): 78; İsmail Şahin and Cemile Şahin, “Avusturya’nın Bosna-Hersek’i İşgalinden Sonra Anadolu’ya Yapılan Boşnak Göçleri: Eskişehir Lütfiye Köyü Örneği”, *Karadeniz Araştırmaları* 42, no. 42 (2014): 131-154; Tuğça Tacoğlu Poyraz, Gülay Arikan, and Adem Sağır, “Boşnak göçmenlerde göç ve kültürel kimlik ilişkisi: Fevziye Köyü Örneği”, *Relationships between migration and cultural identity in Bosnian immigrants: The examples of “Fevziye Mahallesi”* 7, no. 1 (2012): 1941-1965.

<sup>24</sup> An important thesis that analyzes the Ottoman effects in Bosnia during the Austro-Hungarian Period: Leyla Amzi Erdoğan, “Afterlife of Empire: Muslim-Ottoman Relations in Habsburg Bosnia Herzegovina” (PhD, Columbia University, 2013).

<sup>25</sup> Some examples are as follows: İpek, *Rumeli’den Anadolu’ya Türk Göçleri, 1877-1890*; H. Yıldırım Ağanoğlu, *Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Balkanlar’ın Makûs Talihî: Göç* (İstanbul: Kum Saati Yayınları, 2001), Hayri Kolaşinli, *Muhacirlerin İzinde: Boşnakların Trajik Göç Tarihinden Kesitler*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Ankara: Kalkan Matbaacılık, 2004); Tufan Gündüz, “Migracija u Bosni i Hercegovini prema osmanskim dokumentima” in *Zbornik radova: Naučni skup “Migracije u Bosni i Hercegovini”*, ed. Izet Šabotić, trans. Naida Ikanović (Tuzla: Preporod, 2011), 125-135; Genç Osman Geçer, “İşgal Sonrası Bosna-Hersek’te Göç Olgusunun Vatan Gazetesi’ne Yansımaları”, *TÜBAR (Türklük Bilimi Araştırmaları Dergisi)*, 15, no. 28 (2010): 191-205.

*Dar'ül Islam*" (just the opposite)<sup>26</sup>, "focusing on the statistical data"<sup>27</sup>, and "migrants as national/religious heredities of the empires"<sup>28</sup>.

Returnees, on the other hand, are mostly ignored when discussing the re-flourished interest on the empires in contemporary political thought, and/or assimilation policies. The emigration to the Ottoman Empire was not a "one-way trip" for some of the emigrants.<sup>29</sup> Although the available sources show that the number of the migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina was much smaller than the number of the entire Balkan migrants, the percentage of the returnees to the Bosnia and Herzegovina was at the top as approximately 15 or 20% of the total migrants population.

The discussion is more common on emigration than the discussion on returnees in Bosnian Muslim emigration historiography. We may say that Gaston Gravier was the first historian who mentioned the existence of the returnees in his Bosnian Muslim migration article in 1911 in *Revue de Paris* (it was also published in *Pregled*, couple of months later in

<sup>26</sup> Muhamed Mufaku Al-Arnaut, "Islam and Muslims in Bosnia 1878-1918: Two Hijras and Two Fatwas", *Journal of Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (1994): 242-253; Kemal Bašić, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Bosna-Hersek Müslümanlarıyla Dini İlişkileri (Ayrılıştan 1914'e)", (Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitüsü İslam Tarihi ve Sanatları Anabilim Dalı, 1998), Önder Çetin, "20.yy Bosna'sında Bir Tartışma: Türkiye'ye Göç Hicret Sayılır Mı?" *Toplumsal Tarih* 201 (Eylül 2010).

<sup>27</sup> For some examples, please see Kemal H. Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 3 (July 1972): 243-281; Justin McCarthy, *Muslim and Minorities: The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of the Empire* (New York: New York University Press, 1983); Adem Handžić, *Population of Bosnia in the Ottoman Period: A Historical Overview* (Istanbul: Research Centre For Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCI-CA), 1994); Engin Akarlı, "Ottoman Population in Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Its Territorial, Racial, and Religious Composition" (Master of Arts thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1972).

<sup>28</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, *Balkanlar'da Osmanlı Mirası ve Ulusçuluk* (Ankara: İmge Yayıncılık, 2004); Kemal H. Karpat, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History: Selected Articles and Essays* (Leiden, Boston, Köln: BRILL, 2002). For some monographs of the Bosnian historians, see Safet Bandžović, "Uzroci muhadžirskih pokreta iz Bosne i Hercegovine 1878-1912", *Almanah*, no. 48-49 (2010): 89-129; Alija Nametak, "Jedna anonimna propagandna pjesma za iseljavanje bosanskih muslimana u Tursku", *Novi behar* IX, no. 20 (1936): 277-279; Jovan Cvijić, "O iseljavanju bosanskih muhamedanaca", *Književni glasnik*, June 16, 1910; Ferdo Hauptman, "Reguliranje zemljišnog posjeda u Bosni i Hercegovini i počeci naseljavanja stranih seljaka u doba austrougarske vladavine", *Godišnjak društva istoričara BiH*, XVI (Sarajevo, 1965), 151-171.

<sup>29</sup> Selim Deringil, "19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na Göç Olgusu Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler", in *Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan* (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1991), 435-442.

1911).<sup>30</sup> Gravier gave some important clues, such as numbers of migrants till 1911 and the regulations about the emigration and return processes. Almost along the same context, Vojislav Bogićević was mentioning in his article about the historical process and the legal status of the returnees published in *Historijski Zbornik* in 1950.<sup>31</sup>

Tomislav Kraljačić, on the other hand, directly dealt with the returnees in his article (*Povratak muslimanskih iseljenika iz Bosne i Hercegovine u toku Prvog balkanskog rata* in the conference paper collection *Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina*) in 1990.<sup>32</sup> He wrote specifically about the returnees during the Balkan Wars, however he gave some statistical information about them by using the archival sources [for example in 1902 there were 305 migrants but 1.031 returnees, in 1903, 194 migrants and 453 returnees, in 1904, 155 migrants and 246 returnees].<sup>33</sup>

	1902	1903	1904
<b>Number of Emigrants</b>	305	194	155
<b>Number of Returnees</b>	1.031	453	246

After these early studies, we had to wait for 2000s for increasing interest on the subject. Mina Kujović from the Bosnian Herzegovinian Archive wrote an article that includes a brief historiographical analysis of emigration and returnees in 2006 (*O bosanskim muhadžirima, povratnicima iz Turske u vrijeme austrougarske uprave*, *Gračanički glasnik*).<sup>34</sup> Also in 2006, the book of Safet Bandžović called *Emigration of Bosnians to Turkey* has been published (*Iseljavanje Bošnjaka u Tursku*). This monograph covers the entire period of emigrations of Bosnian Muslims from the whole Balkan region where the Bosnians live.<sup>35</sup> Lastly on this

<sup>30</sup> Gaston Gravier, "L'Émigration des Musulmans de Bosnie-Herzégovine", *Revue de Paris*, 1911, 213-224. For the translation of his article, see Gaston Gravier, "Emigracija Muslimana iz Bosne i Hercegovine", *Pregled* 7-8 (1911).

<sup>31</sup> Vojislav Bogićević, "Emigracije Muslimana Bosne i Hercegovine u Tursku u doba austrougarske vladavine 1878-1918. god.", *Historijski zbornik* III, no. 1-2 (Zagreb: Povijesno društvo Hrvatske, 1950), 175-188. Also see Muhamed Hadžijahić, "Uz prilog prof.dr. Vojislava Bogićevića", *Historijski zbornik* III, no. 1-4 (1950).

<sup>32</sup> Tomislav Kraljačić, "Povratak muslimanskih iseljenika iz Bosne i Hercegovine u toku Prvog balkanskog rata", in *Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina*, ed. Nusret Šehić (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju u Sarajevu, 1990), 151-162.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 151-152.

<sup>34</sup> Mina Kujović, "O bosanskim muhadžirima, povratnicima iz Turske u vrijeme austrougarske uprave", *Gračanički glasnik*, god. XI, broj 22 (Gračanica: Izdavačka kuća "Monos", 2006), 71-78.

<sup>35</sup> Safet Bandžović, *Iseljavanje Bošnjaka u Tursku*, Institut za istraživanje zločina protiv čovječnosti i međunarodnog prava, 2006, n.d.

issue, Sandra Biletić, again from the Bosnian Herzegovinian Archive, published the most important examples of the returnees' petitions of 1902 in *Grada* in 2013 (*Iskustva Bosanskohercegovačkih Povratnika iz Iseljništva za Vrijeme Austro-Ugarske Uprave*).<sup>36</sup>

Apart from these specific studies on Bosnian migration, another recent work on Caucasian migration to the Ottoman Empire and the question of returnees represents James Meyer's paper about the Russian Muslims on the same period.<sup>37</sup> He argues against the "forced" nature of these movements. He offers a discussion of both return movement and migrants' efforts to outplay the system through citizenship claims and appeals for aid. His main argument clearly demonstrates that the migrants were not passive actors in negotiating how they would be received or not during their quest back and forth between Russian and the Ottoman Empires. After those people migrated to the Ottoman Empire, they continued to live with their Russian passports for a period of time. For that matter, we can number some important Pan-Turkist writers who emerged from those kinds of migrants: Ahmet Ağaoğlu, Yusuf Akçura and Ali Hüseyinzade also kept their Russian passports while they were living in the Ottoman Empire and they went back and forth a lot.<sup>38</sup> So, can we see those kinds of movements in the Bosnian case? Yes, we can see those kinds of social play among the Bosnian emigrants. Although there was not any famous figure among them, some were claiming that they had Austrian passports as they faced any problems in the Ottoman Empire borders.

When we take the returnees in Bosnia during the Austro-Hungarian Period into consideration, the nature of the movement was reshaped by the existence of the returnees. Moreover, the way from "motherland" to homeland for returnees depended on the records given to the Austro-Hungarian consulates in the Ottoman Empire or if they escaped from the Bosnia and Herzegovina, it depended on the petition given to the provincial government that would accept the returnees or not. The reasons for the emigration, changes both in the administration and the settlement policies of the Ottoman Empire can be accessed by the analysis of these returnees in more detail because we can observe

<sup>36</sup> Sandra Biletić, "Iskustva bosanskohercegovačkih povratnika iz iseljništva za vrijeme austrougarske uprave (1878-1903)", *Grada Arhiva Bosne i Hercegovine*, br. 5 (Sarajevo: Arhiv BiH, 2013), 20-182.

<sup>37</sup> James H. Meyer, "Immigration, Return and the Politics of Citizenship: Russian Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, 1860-1914", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 39, no. 1 (Cambridge University Press, 2007): 15-32.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 26-27.

their grievances, experiences, factual details, complaints. In short, the existence of returnees makes the migration process more visible.

We can get those petitions from The Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Provincial Government Registers (Arhiv Bosne i Hercegovine Zemaljska Vlada) in Bosnia and also we can find the samples from archives of the Immigrants Commission of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Dâhiliye Nezâreti Muhâcirîn Komisyonu) in the Ottoman Archives or journals published in Bosnia during the Austro Hungarian Period, such as Bošnjak. Those petitions were given to the Provincial government and they obviously contain some exaggerations about the living conditions of the petitioners in order to persuade the government to accept them. Due to the fact that they were written directly to the bodies of state administration, they were written in a very formal way and this formal position hides the sincere thoughts of the petitioner. In some petitions, only the names were changed, but the rest stayed the same.

In spite of all these comments, analyzing those petitions critically gives invaluable details to understand basically the way of emigration and returnees, the social structure of the emigrants, in other words the pattern of the migration movement of the Bosnian Muslims during the Austro-Hungarian Period comes into sight.

The main reasons for their migration can be described as economical, religious or related to family issues. What were their expectations before migration? The common answer to this question was a house, field, land, money, prosperity or in other words a better life. These immigrants were usually from the poor strata of society (I have to say that not all of them, there are some other examples from other social strata); some who had better financial situation bought land. In general, the petitioners indicated that some people convinced them that life would be better with house, land, field etc. given in Ottoman Empire, so they sold whatever they owned in Bosnia.<sup>39</sup>

They mainly complained about the harsh living conditions and inadequate subsidies and nutrition on the side of the Ottoman state. Many of them lost some of their family members to illness, esp. pertussis. They

<sup>39</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Đulaga Lović, from Turski Vakuf, Bosanska Gradiška, 20.11.1902, "I migrated together with Huska Hrnić and Izet Hoca who convinced me to emigrate. They said we would have a totally different life compared to the one in Bosnia and we would have a more beautiful house, land, money etc. and I sold whatever I had."; Idriz Čibukčić, from Bijeljina, 16.10.1902, "There were a general talk and disturbance among the Muslims during 1900's, that there was a more beautiful and comfortable life in Turkey and Czar Sultan was giving a house, land, cattle, household goods and money to every Bosnian who migrated."

mentioned that they did not know Turkish and this caused less payment and worse behavior of the local people. For example, Alija Habibović, declared that “Although we had a great desire to go to Turkey and although we expected to find our Muslim brothers there, we were not really welcomed. Neither could we understand the Turkish people, nor did they understand us...we went to our Bosnian consuls. They received us nicely and cared for us until the last night I arrived here. It would be better to be killed in Bosnia than to leave/migrate. I suggest that nobody should consider hidžret.”<sup>40</sup> Also Arnautović Mahmud from Novoselija district office in Banja Luka wrote as follows:

I migrated to Ankara with my three children. My wife died 14 days before our migration. My brother Avdo previously migrated to Ankara, Haymana. He invited us to migrate there. I rented a room in Bekir Efendi Han. We were given aid per adult. I am over 60 years old and I had not worked in my life as hard as I worked in Turkey. Although we had a great desire to go to Turkey and although we expected to find our Muslim brothers there, we were not really welcomed. Neither could we understand the Turkish people, nor did they understand us...We went to our Bosnian consuls. They received us nicely and cared for us until the last night I arrived here. It would be better to be killed in Bosnia than to leave/migrate. I suggest that nobody should consider hidžret.<sup>41</sup>

The same sentiment in Habibović’s expression can be found among the others. Usually they stated that the economic situation of their family in Bosnia was very poor as Abdulmecit Afgan described – he states that they had nothing to lose and had no secure work or savings and they imagined that they would have better living conditions and employment in Ottoman Empire.<sup>42</sup> They clearly expressed that the state did not provide them an appropriate job opportunity. Some assistance was given for the families, but not for the single migrants. Some of them managed to live with their savings and their artisanship (as barbers, shoemakers, stone masons, etc.) but usually they had just temporary works in the fields or as servants. In addition, their housing conditions were not very good. Sulejman Mešinović from Banja Luka wrote as follows:

I migrated fifteen days from the Duhovi 1901 together with my whole family: my mother Hatice, my sister Diba, my brother Avdo and my father Arif Tica with full permission. My mother caused our migration, all of us objected to the migration. My mother would like to go to her

<sup>40</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Alija Habibović from Banja Luka, 12.03.1902.

<sup>41</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Arnautovic Mahmud from Novoselija district office in Banja Luka, 08.11.1902.

<sup>42</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Afgan Abdulmedid from Banja Luka, 22.04.1902.

mother Aiša Mušićka who is living in Ćnegöl but my grandmother also wants to return back now. My father was not eager to migrate but my mother forced him. Because of this, my father was always crying. During our travel, I escaped from the train at Doboj but I was captured and well beaten, as I was the easy meat, I was just 12 years old. Our first destination was Ankara and then Keskin Maden. My mother and sister died when we were in Ankara. They allocated a house for my father, my brother and me. This house was built for the migrants, which had a very unhealthy condition with two rooms. Its roof was constructed with just a few timbers and covered with a rush mat and mud. At the first rain the roof was demolished. My brother died at Keskin Maden, when he was 19 years old. We lived there in very unhealthy conditions. As we didn't have any earnings we pauperized. Other Bosnians were in the same situation. As far as I see, all of them will return. In Anatolia, in Turkey, people prioritize their own people. They do not give any chance to us, migrant Muslims, for living and earning our lives. I could not suffer staying there more and now I returned to Bosnia. It took 23 days by foot from Keskin Maden to İzmir and still my feet are in pain. My father Arif Tica will return as soon as possible.<sup>43</sup>

When one reads these petitions and observes the despair of the immigrants regarding their migration and return, it is useful to try to understand their living conditions in Bosnia and their motivations for migration. The entire story of migration was condensed into a one-page petition and as they returned there were only one or two lines about their previous conditions in Bosnia. These petitions were mainly letters of complaint about the harsh conditions in the Ottoman Empire, and it seems as if their decision to migrate was spontaneous without any long elaborative deliberation. As Suleyman Mešić from Bosanska Gradiška indicated in his petition: "I had nothing to lose as I did not have any assets and I chose to migrate".<sup>44</sup>

Furthermore, previous migrants were perhaps in better condition as Hasib Mizinović indicated that "those who had money and better health were among previous immigrants and those who suffered were late immigrants" who migrated around 1900.<sup>45</sup> As can be seen from the petition of Süleyman Arapović and Mustafa Balić, some of the immigrants just deserted from compulsory military service in Bosnia under the Austro-Hungarian government.<sup>46</sup> Some of the immigrants

<sup>43</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Sulejman Mešinović from Banja Luka, 08.11.1902.

<sup>44</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Sulejman Mešić from Bosanska Gradiška, 09.06.1902.

<sup>45</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Hasib Mizinović from Bosanska Gradiška, 26.07.1902.

<sup>46</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Sulejman Arapović from Prijedor, 12.01.1903; ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Mustafa Balić from Kozarac, 20.11.1902.



did not sell their real estates and movable properties as illustrated by Džafer Džaferović. Nevertheless, Džafer Javor seized his house and dwelled there, Džaferović then went to court against him in order to make him quit his property.<sup>47</sup> Some of them, just as Huska Čolić, sold their property to Suljo Čolić and during his immigration to the Ottoman Empire Suljo Čolić resold this house to Karl Schmitzer and repurchased the house from Schmitzer. Čolić proposed to repurchase his house by way of a mortgage loan.<sup>48</sup>

These petitions were, in general, written by men and they indicated their wives' and children's names as well in these petitions. There are fewer petitions written by women.<sup>49</sup> One interesting example is the petition of Ajka Suljić-Fazlić from Bijeljina, after her migration to Ankara with her husband and children.<sup>50</sup> Her husband decided to stay to earn money but she decided to return by taking her children to Bijeljina by walking and she did it in 3 months. In fact, these petitions also provide a detailed factual information on the route of migration that cannot be easily traced in other documents. There are lots of examples about the walking route for the migrants, in some cases they completed whole route by walking; sometimes they walked till the Ottoman Empire borders and then took a train by the help of Ottoman officers or while returning by the help of Austrian officers. Some of them indicated that in Skopje, the Ottoman gendarmes (*zaptiye*) tried to detain the returnees and to send them back to Asia Minor, but the consulate of Austria-Hungary intervened and prevented their detainment.<sup>51</sup> Another example is that of Serdarović Nurija from Zvornik:

I fled to Turkey on 24 October 1900 with my nephew, as we thought that we would have a better life there. We did not say anything to anybody, not even to my mother. She learned that I migrated to Turkey when I sent her a letter from Constantinople. I firstly went to Šabac and then we arrived at Belgrade where we met Bosnian Muhâcirîns. There we talked with the Turkish Consul... We arrived in Constantinople in 17 days. From Constantinople, we crossed the water and went to İzmit and then arrived in Ankara by rail. I stayed there for about a month and then we went to Adapazarı. We lived worse than dogs, not knowing the language. The

<sup>47</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Džaferović Džafer from Komičana, Kozarac, 06.10.1902.

<sup>48</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Huska Čolić from Komičana, Kozarac, 06.10.1902.

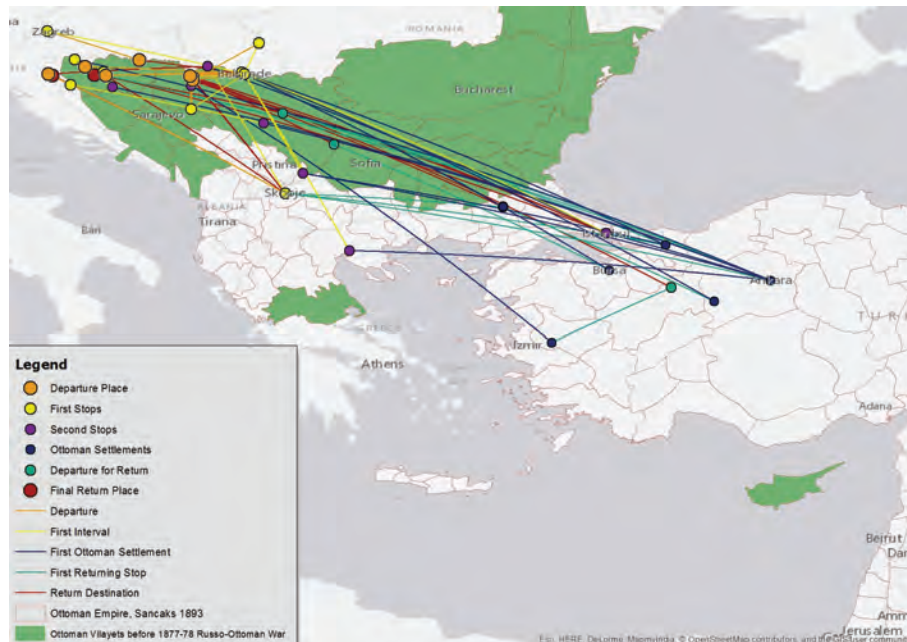
<sup>49</sup> Pemba Avdagić, who migrated from Banja Luka on 1901 and returned on 29.03.1903. ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Pemba Avdagić from Banja Luka, 29.03.1903.

<sup>50</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Ajka Suljić-Fazlić from Bijeljina, 05.12.1902.

<sup>51</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Osman Halilbašić from Bosanska Gradiška, 26.07.1902; ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Ibrahim Hrnić from Turskog Vakuf, Bosanska Gradiška, 26.07.1902.

Ottomans did not consider us their equals. During the last two years I was in Asia Minor, I met many Bosnians. If they do not have money, they all live in very harsh conditions. Bosniaks are forever *Fukara* [poor]. Three months ago I finally decided that I had enough of this life, and I realized that it is best to live in Bosnia and begged my mother to send me travel expenses... That is when I came to the Austrian Consul, who instructed me to wait until an answer comes from Sarajevo. But I did not wait, and I continued to walk for 15 days to Vranje-Niš-Leskovac-Sibenik-Šabac-Loznica-Mali Zvornik. I was so weak that I did not know where I was. I have travelled from Asia Minor over three months on foot. If necessary, I can even serve in the army. Please therefore forgive me as I escaped without a license.<sup>52</sup>

After 1900s, the usual initial settlement places of the returnees were Ankara, İzmit and Bursa. Generally, their migration route was Doblin, Mitrovica, Belgrade, Niš, Kumanovo, Skopje, Thessaloniki, İzmit and Ankara. And the main gathering points were Belgrade, Skopje and, Istanbul. After arriving at their destination points, some of them were replaced by the Ottoman Migration Office or they chose to change their first settlement place, opting for places such as İzmir, Adapazarı, Çanakkale or any place in the region of Thrace illegally.



MAP III. Sample mapping of 19 returnees

<sup>52</sup> ABH, ZVS I.B. 803/1902, Serdarović Nurija from Zvornik, 13.12.1902.

## CONCLUSION

All in all, as we can see from these examples of returnees, this migration story took place on the merges of the two empires and this is not a linear movement as usually taken by the researchers but a circular and permanent movement. I mean by that these kinds of movements cannot be perceived as pull-push that excludes the active role of the emigrants or by only focusing on the policies of the empires or basing these processes as a result of religious or ethnic bonds. Of course the religion is important but not at the point of deciding for migration but for the destination point. As far as I can see from the petitions, these people migrated basically because of better life conditions but as Muslims were migrating to Ottoman Empire, Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the other hand migrated to Serbia. There are many examples of Serbian returnees from Serbia very similar to the Bosnian returnees.

### ÍCI NAPRIJED-NAZAD IZMEĐU DVA CARSTVA: PREDSTAVKE BOSANSKIH MUSLIMANA MIGRANATA IZ OSMANSKIH I AUSTRO-UGARSKIH ARHIVA S KRAJA 19. STOLJEĆA

#### *Sažetak*

Ovaj referat rad ima za cilj da definiše generalne tendencije među bosanskim muslimanskim migrantima u Osmansko Carstvo i povratnicima koji su odlučili da ne ostanu u osmanskim zemljama. Iako izgleda da je broj bosanskih muslimanskih migranata u Osmansko Carstvo bio veoma nizak, povratnici, s druge strane, izgleda da su predstavljali visok procenat svih muslimanskih migranata u Osmanskom Carstvu toko 19. stoljeća.

*Ključne riječi:* Bosna i Hercegovina, migracije, povratnici, Austro-Ugarska, Osmansko carstvo, masovne migracije u 19. stoljeću.