



FORCED MIGRATION FROM THE BALKANS TO ANATOLIA: 1878-1900

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Abstract

Migration can be dependent on many factors including economic, individual, political, natural disasters, ethnic and other social violence and wars. However, in this paper we mainly examined return migration from the Balkans to Anatolia in the form of escaping from violence and wars which we term forced migration.

Towards the end of the Ottoman Empire, there were great conflicts between the central power of the Ottoman Empire and different nations. There were also wars between the Empire and some other countries. These wars and conflicts no doubt created migration of Turkish people and other minority groups who lived in the Balkans and other places.

It should be stated that nations in the Balkans were trying to create more homogeneous populations in order to build nation states by forcing minority groups to leave their territories. With the weakening power of Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, it should be said that non-muslim groups were indeed in a life threatening situation created by the gangs of the Balkan nations. In order to provide Muslims with the means of migration, it can be seen that from the beginning of the conflicts, Ottoman Empire tried its best by sending ships and paying the cost of migration to individuals. A similar task was also undertaken by the authorities following the arrivals of migrants in Anatolia. They were settled in different towns and villages under the strict control of authorities. This procedure, no doubt, significantly increased Muslim population in Anatolia. We can say that today's Anatolian population is a result of these resettlements.

In order to find out where the migrants were settled, the Ottoman notebooks called "Şura", "Dahiliye", and "Meclis" in the Turkish Prime Ministry Archive were examined.

The aim of this paper is to examine the forced migration of Turkish Muslims from the Balkans to Anatolia in the period of 1878-1900 and its effects on the economic and social structure of the Ottoman Empire.

Key Words: Forced Migration, the Balkans, Ottoman Empire.

BALKANLAR'DAN ANADOLUYA ZORUNLU GÖÇ: 1878-1900

Özet

Göç, ekonomik, bireysel, politik, doğal afetler, etnik ve diğer sosyal çatışmaları içeren bir çok faktöre bağlı olabilir. Bu makalede, Balkanlardan Anadolu'ya 1878-1900 tarihleri arasında şiddetten ve savaştan kurtulmak için kaçanların oluşturduğu ve zorlama göçler dediğimiz dönüş göçleri incelenmiştir.

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun sonlarına doğru, Osmanlı'nın merkezi otoritesi ile egemenliğindeki farklı milletler arasında büyük çatışmalar ve ayrıca Osmanlı ile diğer ülkeler arasında savaşlar vardı. Bu savaşlar hiç şüphesiz, Balkanlarda yaşayan müslüman Türklerin ve diğer bazı azınlık grupların yaşadıkları yerleri terketmesine yol açmıştır.

Belirtilmesi gereken önemli bir nokta, Balkanlardaki milletlerin daha homojen bir nüfus yaratma çabası içerisinde kendilerinden olmayan grupları göçe zorladıklarıdır. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Balkanlarda gücünün azalması ve kontrolü kaybetmesiyle, Müslüman olmayan gruplar kendilerini diğer milletlerin çeteleri tarafından yaratılan büyük bir tehlike içinde bulmuşlardır. Bu süreçte Osmanlı'nın anayurda dönmek isteyen Müslümanlara yardım için elinden geleni yapmaya çalıştığı görülmüştür. Aynı yardım göçmenlerin Anadolu'da yerleştirilmesinde de yapılmış ve göçmenler yöneticilerin kontrolünde farklı kasaba ve köylerde yerleşime tabii tutulmuştur. Bu durum ise, Anadolu'daki müslüman nüfusun belirgin bir şekilde artmasına yol açmıştır. Bu nedenle, günümüz Anadolu nüfusunun bu yerleşimlerden etkilendiğini ve bu göç hareketleriyle şekillendiğini söyleyebiliriz.

Bu makalede, Balkanlardan gelen Müslüman nüfusun Anadolu'da nerelere yerleştirildiğine dair bilgilere ulaşmada, İstanbul'daki Başbakanlık Arşivinde bulunan "Şura", "Dahiliye" ve "Meclis" defterleri incelenmiştir.

Bu makalenin amacı, Balkanlardan Anadolu'ya 1878-1900 yılları arasında yapılan zorunlu göçleri ve bu göçlerin Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun ekonomik ve sosyal yapılanmasına olan etkilerini incelemektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Zorunlu göç, Balkanlar, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu.

A brief historical overview of migration in the Balkans

As Lee (1996: 16) defines, migration is simply a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence. It can be from one street to another street, from a city to another city within the same country, and from one country to another.

Migration can also be defined broadly as geographic, social and cultural change of residence permanently or semi-permanently depending on economic, political, ecologic and individual factors (Yalçın, 2004: 13). Migration is indeed from one geographic place to another. However, it consists mainly of moving from one social group, community or society to another social group, community or society. Because of this, we should see it as a means of cultural change as it gives migrants new opportunities to interact with new social groups, communities or societies. Cultural interaction can happen even in the same country as a result of internal migration - rural-urban differences, ethnic differences etc; as migrating to another place provides migrants with new unfamiliar surroundings. The new place, whether within or outside the country will force migrants to interact with different people. There is no doubt that migrants in the

same culture or in a different culture are seen or treated as new comers or strangers and causes some form of disturbance.

As is well documented in the literature, migration can occur in different ways. However, two main types of migration are economic and forced migration (George, 1970: 39). As Ravenstein (1889: 286) pointed out, migration for economic benefit is the most common cause of moving to another place. Many of the migrants, indeed, move to a new place because of the expectation of a better way of life. The latter can be the result of wars, any kind of threat, etc. As Petersen (1996: 8) stated, with forced migration, migrants do not have any power to decide whether or not to leave. Even if they resist moving to a secure place, the alternative of staying can be terminal.

To some extent, being Turk is not far from being a migrant. Early historical data confirm that the earliest Turkish societies were even organized as nomadic. Then, we can see that, as a result of wars and invaded territories, the Turks migrated a great distance (from the central Asia to Europe) forming different empires (Khun, Gokturk, Selcuks, and Ottoman). As it is known, invasion of new territories requires population shifts. In other words, to be successful after an invasion, a king or emperor has to direct some of his subjects to these lands in order to get support in these territories. The Ottoman strategy was also similar: they either had taxation from new territories by force of the military or they simply sent Turkish people to the newly invaded territories. Therefore, it is not wrong to say that the Balkans had the same experience.

The Balkans has a number of ethnically different peoples according to religion, language and historical roots. As Hupchick (2002: 7) puts it, harsh and divisive geography of the Balkans is an important factor in shaping the lives of its inhabitants. Mountains generally fragmented human settlements contributing to the rise of strong ethnic group identities. In order to understand the ethnic structure of the Balkans before the Ottoman conquest we should have a quick look at the historical development of ethnic groups in the Balkans.

As Forbes and the others (1915: 12-31) pointed out, in the earlier times around 400 BC, the whole Balkans was known as Thracia. The very first invaders of the region were the Celts. Up until the 7th century AD the city of Belgrade was known by its Celtic name of Singidunum. The Serbian population was started to appear after the half of Bulgaria added to Serbian Kingdom in 6 AD. Then in 107 AD, the Balkans saw a Roman invasion and as Forbes and the others put it, enjoyed the benefits of Roman civilization for three centuries. Germanic peoples appeared in the third century taking place of the Celts. In the fifth century the region has also witnessed the arrival of the Huns in the region from Asia. They devastated the Balkans and after Attila died retreated to Asia again. The Goths once again were supreme in the peninsula. In the sixth century the Slavs were first seen in the region lacked leadership, cohesion and organization. Therefore they could not invade the Balkans alone and they accompanied the Avars. After the Avars were defeated in 799, interestingly the Slavs continued to remain in the region.

The Bulgarian arrival in the region is not clearly established. They were estimated to be seen in the region between 600 and 700 AD. From 893 AD to 927 AD Bulgaria reached a high level of power and prosperity. Forbes et al. also clearly pointed out that Christianity was introduced to the Balkans between 700 AD and 893 AD. Until coming into contact with the Ottoman Empire, therefore, we can assume that the main religion

was Christianity. They also state after 963 AD that Greek supremacy was notable following the defeat of Bulgaria by the Greeks. Between 1186 and 1258 the second Bulgarian Empire had temporarily come into existence.

The Albanian identity shows an important difference from the other identities explained above. Hupchick (2002: 8) claims that Albanians have descended from ancient Illyrian as they speak a unique language thought to be related to Illyrian language. He further explained that waves of Roman, Goth, Avar and Slav invasions pushed the Illyrians into the mountainous regions inhabited today by the Albanians. The author also claims that four and half centuries of Ottoman rule over the Albanians did little to weaken the structure of their society.

As we touched upon briefly, the situation in the Balkans before the Ottoman invasions, the main population in the region was clearly Christian and made up of Serbs, Slavs, Bulgarians, Avars, Greeks and Albanians. Starting with the 14th century, the Turks were showing the signs of their interest in the Balkans. As Karpat (2002: 12) puts it, the borders of Ottoman Empire reached to its limits until the mid of 16th century and consisted of South East Europe, Anatolia, Middle East and North Africa. The first change in the Balkans was introduction of a new religion, Islam. Forbes et al. (1915: 46) state that many Bulgarians adopted Islam and the Turkish domination continued until 1878. Meanwhile, by means of population shifts many Turks migrated to invaded territories under control of Ottoman rulers and the Turkish population in the region increased dramatically. This was basically the policy of Ottoman Sultans to change the population structure of invaded territories and should be seen as a necessary way to bring the order. According to Forbes et al (1915: 47), the Turks offered two alternatives to the natives: serfdom or Turkdom and as a result of this, some had to seek refuge in the mountains and live as outlaws and some had to emigrate. For five centuries, the domination of the Turks far exceeded that of the Greeks and Romans. Despite all this domination, we should bear in mind that the number of Turkish people in the Balkans never exceeded native populations because as soon as Ottoman control in the region weakened, the Turks found themselves in a great danger.

The effects of French revolution in the form of freedom and nationalism made a great impact on the Ottoman Empire. As Hall (2000: 1) puts it, "The concept of nationalism, appearing from France and German countries, swept into the Balkan Peninsula early in the nineteenth century. The initial impact was largely cultural. Intellectuals made great efforts to standardize and celebrate the vernacular languages of the Balkans. In doing so, they frequently referred and connected to the medieval states that had existed in the Balkans before the Ottoman conquest." The concept of nationalism later becomes a great threat to the Ottoman millet system^(*). As a result of encouragement by the Russia and other European states, the nations in the Balkans revolted and fought for independence. It is feasible to say that building a nation state after centuries of living with culturally distinct people could not be an easy task. If the population in a territory is made up of culturally distinct peoples, then it becomes even more problematic. Therefore, we should understand Turkish migration from the Balkans as a form of nation-state building effort. That way, as Karpat (2002, 129) points out, the Balkan nations were aiming to have a Christian dominant population. To achieve this aim, there is no doubt that they had to get rid of Muslim Turkish people either by massacring or exiling them. During the Serbian

(*) The millet system of the Ottoman Empire allows different religious groups to live according to their religious beliefs without disturbing others.

revolution in 1804 and Greek revolution in 1821 many Muslim people were either killed or forced to escape. Bulgarians and Romanians also revolted. These examples actually were the earliest signs of continuous terror imposed on Muslim minority groups living in the Balkans. To discuss the problems created by these rebellions, a conference was organized in Istanbul on the 20th of January 1877. Representatives of European states demanded that the Ottoman Empire must withdraw its army from the Balkans and accept the Balkans nations' independence. With the rejection of this demand, Russia declared war on Ottoman Empire on the 16th of April 1877. (Shaw and Kural, 1977: 180-182). With the help of Bulgarian gangs, the Russian army killed nearly 300.000 Muslim people many of whom were Turks during 1877-78 Ottoman - Russian war (cited by Karpat, 2002: 129).

The retreat

In the period of 1878-1900, although the lands still therefore belonged to the Ottoman Empire, there were great conflicts between different nations. This period is also known as one of Ottoman Empire collapse. Once the empire had weakened and lost control of the Balkans, it became clear that Turks in the region were not able to protect their lands and lives. Therefore, we can say that the policy of changing the population structure of the Balkans by the Ottoman Empire had failed. As a result Turkish people had found themselves in great danger and were forced to go back to their ancestral home.

It should be noted that the forced migration occurred as a result of both the Ottoman-Russian war in 1877 and attacks of different gang groups on Turkish people and other minority groups such as Circassians and Crimeans. As a result, great migration flows towards Anatolia were seen during this period. This migration was of later generations of Turkish people who had settled in the Balkans from the 13th century to the 16th century. Between 1877 and 1900, the migrants came generally to Anatolia from the Balkans, Caucasia and Crimea, West and East Turkistan and Idil and Ural. Their number reached nearly 2 million, and half of them came from the Balkans.

The main reasons for these great flows from the Balkans were the war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia in 1877 and a number of attacks of different gangs in the Balkans. Attacks by these gangs aimed to make Turkish people and other minority groups escape from the lands which could be used as new settlement places for their own people. As can be understood from the official telegraphs by the local authorities to the governors of the cities (cited by Şimşir, 1970), ultimately it was necessary that great numbers of people in danger had no alternative but to migrate to Anatolia.

Another important reason for this migration was that Turkish people who lived in the Balkans were forced to undertake the Balkans states' (Christian) military service. Many had to escape from these lands in order not to serve the Christian military (Şimşir, 1970; Gözaydın, 1948). Besides being asked to undertake military service, Turkish people were also forced to pay extra taxes to the authorities of the Balkan states and this also compelled them to migrate.

There is no doubt that above all the principal objective was simply to create a more homogeneous population and then to construct a nation state. Therefore, the Turks were seen as a great obstacle in forming a nation state and they had to eliminate this danger. As

a result, many Turks had no other alternative but to leave their homes in the Balkans where many generations lived peaceably for centuries. Muslim Turks leaving the Balkans no doubt helped their enemies with their homogenous population creation. However, although not directly a result of this migration, the same can be claimed for the Ottoman side too.

With the return of the Muslim population to Anatolia, the Ottoman Empire was also increasing its Muslim population in Anatolia. There is some historical evidence suggesting that the Ottoman Empire was somehow interested in increasing its Muslim population in Anatolia. Aktar (2002: 23) claims that the 1915 Armenian exodus from Anatolia is one of the important turning points in clearing the non-Muslim people. In addition to this, we should not forget a population exchange between Greece and Turkey in 1923. Around 1.2 million Greeks and four hundred thousand Muslim people exchanged via an agreement signed by Greek and Turkish governments on 30th of January 1923. However, it cannot be said that the Ottoman Empire indeed intended to build a homogeneous Muslim population in Anatolia by way of these migration. If the Ottoman Empire did really try to have a homogenous population in Anatolia, we can say that the way of achieving this was not successful. The concept of nationality which was a strong ground for the nations in the Balkans to get independence from the empire was not used by the Ottomans. Instead they used the concept of religion and, by doing this, they created a mainly Muslim population in Anatolia without regard to the other ethnic identities that the people shared.

From the autumn of the 1877's, the exodus of Turkish people from the Balkans continued towards the beginning of 1879 (Şimşir, 1968: 409; 1970: 246-247). As Nuri (1926: 29-30) stated, the Ottoman Empire tried to provide free transportation to the escaping Turkish people. In these efforts the main transportation types were trains and ships. The ships of Şirket-i Hayriye (Hayriye Company), Tersane-i Amire and İdare-i Mahsusa were used beside trains to bring back people escaping from the Balkans. However, despite all these efforts, the transportation provided by the Ottoman Empire had failed to meet the expectations. As stated in "Şura 2276" and "Dahiliye 62639"^(*), the Empire had no other recourse but to hire some foreign companies. Ships from the British company Lloyds, French Messageries Maritimes and Fraissinet companies from Austria had also helped people to get to Anatolia. The increasing need for transportation of Turkish people forced the Empire to abandon free transportation; and ask migrants to pay half of their expenses. It is very difficult to give the exact numbers of migrants migrated to Anatolia. However using official records Shaw and Kural (1977: 238-239) claim that the number of migrants between 1878 and 1884 is 812, 193. They further say that between 1884 and 1897 another 202, 822 migrants were added to the previous figure making a total number of nearly one million people coming from the Balkans.

The majority of the new-comers firstly gathered in Edirne, Çanakkale, Samsun, İzmir and Istanbul. To handle the problems of newcomers, a "General Managing Commission of Migrants" (İdare-i Umumiye-i Muhacirin Komisyonu) was established and a "migrant directorate" in each city was formed (Orhonlu, 1976: 269-288). This institution tried to help migrants by housing them, and giving them agricultural equipment. However, as the number of migrants increased, this initiative largely failed. The Ottoman Empire did not want them to stay there permanently, and insisted that they move to the inlands of Anatolia.

(*) Sura, Dahiliye and Meclis are the names of the some Ottoman notebooks and documents in the Turkish Prime Ministry Archive.

The regions where the migrants were sent to settle can be classified as follows.

a- Çukurova Region

The migration to this region was started just after 1856, continued during the 1877 - 1878 Ottoman-Russian war and followed a similar pattern thereafter. The migrants who came from Russia were settled in the Yumurtalık and Misis along the banks of Ceyhan River. Of course, this affected the density of the region's population. Today there are 48 migrant villages around Ceyhan (old Misis) and Yumurtalık: 24 of them are villages of Turks who have come from Bulgaria, 21 of them are those from Caucasia, and 3 of them are those from Crete. (Soysal, 1976: 56-63).

b- Central Anatolia Region

The migration which started after 1860 continued until 1952. The Circassian and Crimean migrants in the years 1870-1890 and migrants from the Balkans during 1880-1905 were settled in the lands of Central Anatolia. A number of migrant villages and provinces were founded around the cities attracting the greatest number of migrants, such as the Kulu, Karaman and Akşehir towns of Konya city (Hutteroth, 1968: 72-74). These migrant villages can still be found in some provinces of Eskişehir such as Sivrihisar town. The proportion of migrant villages in Eskişehir was about 42 per cent, and these migrants came mainly from Rumelia and Bulgaria (Tunçdilek, 1955: 1-4).

According to the administrative division, the other cities that had migrants in the central region were Ankara, Çankırı, Kırşehir, Yozgat (Şura-6299; Şura-7134; Dahiliye-Zilkade-30), Çorum (Şura-6761), and Sivas (Şura-1519; Dahiliye-71515).

c- Aegean Region

The newcomers to this region were mainly from Rumelia, Crete and other islands. Izmir was the place where a great number of migrants from Balkans were settled just after 1877-1878 (Şimşir, 1968: 320). A lot of migrants were also settled around Manisa (Şura-4628) and Aydın (Şura-2256; Dahiliye-62985; Şura-3795; Meclis-4014), and from time to time migrant villages were established in this region.

d- Marmara Region

This region was a visiting place of migrants because of its close proximity to Thrace. Çanakkale (Kale-i Sultaniye) was one of the migrant exporting places (Şimşir, 1968: 306). In the late half of the 19th century and later, a number of migrants from the Balkans, Crimea and other places were sent from Çanakkale to the Biga peninsula (Dahiliye-62985; Dahiliye-64919; Dahiliye-96092), Bursa valley (Şimşir, 1968: 628), Iznik and İzmit neighbourhood (Dahiliye-79603).

e- Eastern Black Sea and South East Regions

These regions were on the frontiers. Starting in 1865, migrants settled (Dahiliye-40454; Şura-180) in these regions, such as Diyarbakır, Pınarbaşı (Elazığ), but some of them migrated to other places like the far west (Dahiliye-43788). Towards the end of the 19th century Russians declared to the Ottoman authorities that they did not want migrants to

be settled in East, and South East Anatolia (Meclis-4800). However, some of the Caucassian migrants were settled in East and South Anatolia (Ardahan and Erzurum can be given as examples) (Dahiliye-64767; Dahiliye-69420).

Although the migrants were mainly Turkish people, 2.5 million people lived in other countries for many generations with culturally distinct peoples. This doubtless affected the demographic, economic and social structure of the Ottoman Empire.

Demographic effects of migration

As is well known, migration is one of the major factors in the increase of population in any country (Gürtan, 1969: 316). The total number of Ottoman population for the years 1877-78 is 13, 064, 109 (Karpat, 2002: 139). Therefore, there is no doubt that migration from the Balkans and other places towards Anatolia caused an increase in population density. In addition to this as Vergottini (1949: 17) puts it, if a country has very little natural population growth, the effect of migration on this growth can be remarkable. The rate of the natural population growth of Turkey between 1878-1900 is accepted as 1% (Kazgan, 1970: 317). This rate, no doubt, proves the effect of migration to Anatolia in this period.

This intensive population growth as a result of migration provided today's picture of the population distribution of Anatolia (Barkan, 1946: 50). Besides, this migration also affected the balance of population distribution between cities and villages. The new comers generally established new villages on empty lands causing an increase in the village population. Therefore, today's picture of the villages (there are a great number of little villages which are very distant from towns) can be seen as a result of past migration. (Tankut, 1939: 16-34)

As Karpat (2002: 133) touches upon, Muslim migration from lost territories had changed Ottoman population in two important ways. One is the remarkable increase seen in population and the other is the change of religious aspects of the population. In other words, as a result of migration towards Anatolia, not only the population increased but also the proportion of Muslims in the general population increased sharply in favour of Muslims: thus making the Ottoman Empire mostly a Muslim state. Non Muslims' proportion covering 38 % of Ottoman population decreased to 25 % in 1884 and to 20 % in 1897. Therefore, it is feasible to conclude that this migration was one of the major sources of today's Anatolian population. They undoubtedly affected the total population's size, gender and age differences (Tümertekin and Özgüc, 1977: 7).

Another factor associated with migrating Turks is that the unplanned settlements in the regions, Eastern Anatolia and Eastern Black-sea Region especially (Dahiliye-64541, 83650, 79603, and 81206), created serious problems such as separated and distant villages from the towns etc. (Tunçdilek, 1967: 20). This unplanned migration also created economic problems for the state such as the cost of building new roads, schools, and providing health services.

Economic effects of migration

The Turks in the Balkans were not able to carry on their economic activities (mainly farming) as a result of wars and rebellions. They consequently had to flee from their existing homes.

After their settlement in Anatolia, it should be mentioned that a sharp increase in agricultural production occurred. Their contribution to the economy was mainly agricultural and this situation indeed was one of the main obstacles of Turkish industrialization after the establishment of the Turkish Republic.

Another important economic effect was the decrease of cattle farms as a result of the use of empty state lands by new-comers. However, though these lands were officially empty, but in fact they were in use by cattle farm owners and called as “mer’a” Therefore, this created serious divisions in the agricultural production: the importance of cattle farms decreased (Tuncdilek, 1967: 24).

Social effects of migration

The most important social effects were conflicts between newcomers and settled local people as a result of the unplanned settlements of the migrants. Most of these conflicts derived from the fact that migrants started to be settled on both the registered and not registered lands of the local people. (Hutteroth, 1971: 63) Therefore, it can be concluded that the settlement of the migrants was the main source of the social problems. Other social problems came from the psychological problems of the migrants created by the change of environmental conditions, different types of crime and rebellions (Kurat, 1968: 188-189).

Most of the migrants coming to Anatolia were people who shared the same traditions. They came from the lands that used to belong to the Ottoman Empire. However, when they returned to the mainland, it was understood that they needed to be integrated socially again. This did not take long and migrants were gradually accepted by the local people. However, it should be noted that the change of their environment in relation to climate and products had certain negative effects on the people even if they shared the same cultural features.

The migrants had problems not only with the native people, but with nomads (Hutteroth, 1971: 60). The nomads perceived the migrants as a new kind of problem: empty fields previously used for their animals were thereafter occupied by the migrants.

The Ottoman Empire did not give permission to the migrants to settle in the cities until 1878. However, the increased number of migrants imposed a large burden on the villages and small towns. Therefore, a lot of carpenters, shoe-menders and other small size traders had to leave their villages and towns. In addition, many migrants who were used to city life and small-sized trade left given lands illegally in the villages and small towns and settled in the cities. In the end, the empire had to let migrants settle in the cities in 1878 (Eren, 1966). Thus, settlement of the migrants to the cities started creating a new problem so called "gecekondu" (shanty town) (Gökçe, 1971).

The migration from the Balkans to Anatolia created internal migration as well. Villages and towns started to push overpopulation towards cities and this led to greater industrialization of the growing cities.

With the rapid increase of the population, the lands held by the villagers became insufficient. Becoming smaller, these lands caused the villagers to fall into debt and as a

result, villagers sold the fields and were forced to be a worker either in their former fields or in cities.

CONCLUSION

As can be seen, as soon as the control of the empire was lost and despite centuries of Turkish occupation of the Balkans, Muslims had no alternative but to leave their homes and return to Anatolia where their ancestors lived centuries ago. It is clear that, as a result of wide spread concept of nationality, the new Balkan states did try to create a more homogenous population of their own and to achieve this they did not hesitate to use every means of forcing foreign groups to go back to where they culturally belong. We already mentioned that the Ottoman Empire, seeing the danger over Muslim Turks in the Balkans, tried its best to provide migrants with the means of transportation. The empire did not left migrants alone when they safely arrived in Anatolia. It should be stated that migrants were led to their new places to settle down. In other words, when they came back from the Balkans, they were resettled under the control of Ottoman authorities. We should also add that the high number of migrants might have created difficulties concerning settlement places. As a result of these problems, the authorities had nothing but send migrants to different places for settlement. As mentioned earlier, migrants were settled in a number of towns and villages in different Anatolian regions.

It is interesting to note that this migration of nearly one million Muslim Turks also helped the Ottoman Empire have a homogenous Muslim population in Anatolia. The Armenian exodus and population exchange with Greece made the population in Anatolia more Islamic and this contributed to building the Turkish Republic

Although return migration took place to save the lives of the Muslim Turks in the Balkans, it can be claimed that it had created important problems in the empire. These problems were mainly demographic, economic and social. The social tension stemmed from economic troubles mixed with administrative, law and political problems, and affected the whole social structure. It could be said that the traces of these effects have continued up to the present day and today's Anatolian population structure is a result of these massive migrations.

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