

Aladin Husić

DEVŠIRMA U BOSNI (O REGRUTACIJI BOSANACA U JANJIČARE)

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Sarajevo, 2023.

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SAŽETAK

Devširma u Bosni jedno je od mnogih nerasvjetljenih pitanja bosanske, ali i regionalne povijesti. Ono je “lebdjelo” u historiografskim intepretacijama u tonalitetu koji su im dale putopisne vijesti ili *Janjičarski zakon* iz 1606. godine. Kao i u nekim drugim pitanjima, devširma u Bosni pokazala je specifičnosti kojima je odudarala od većine drugih regija Carstva u kojima je provođena. To i jeste bio motiv mnogih historičara u pokušaju da se dā odgovor na to pitanje koje se najčešće svodilo na motive zbog kojih se odstupalo od zakonskog pravila da su muslimani pošteđeni regrutacije u adžemi oglane jer su vojni obveznici u različitim vojnim komponentama, a oni koji nisu dio vojničke klase podložni su mobilizaciji u slučaju potrebe kao prateća pješadijska snaga.

Historiografski osvrti najčešće su se ograničavali na devširmu, interpretirali je na svoj način u kontekstu širih pitanja bosanske prošlosti. Osmanistička produkcija Bosnu je najčešće promatrala u kontekstu janjičarskog korpusa (Uzunčaršili), ograničena na opće odredbe o devširmi, i nekoliko izvora – naredbi koje se odnose na regrutaciju mladića iz Bosne. U novije vrijeme historičari (Kojundžu i Jilmaz) su to pitanje aktuelizirali i ograničili na dio problema koji se tiču devširme u Bosni. Gulaj Jilmaz se bavila tim pitanjem za područje Hercegovine, iz izvorne perspektive komparirajući rezultate dobijene na području Hercegovine iz dva perioda, kraj 15. i početak 17. stoljeća. Kojundžu se fokusirao na kritiku *Janjičarskog zakona* iz 1606. godine, pokušavajući odgovoriti na pitanje kada počinje praksa regrutiranja muslimana u Bosni i da li su oni stupali dobrovoljno ili pod prisilom. Bosanskohercegovačka osmanistika ostala je pretežno u okvirima pitanja koje je nekako nametao narativ Janjičarskog zakona.

Naziv “danak u krvi”, nametnut putopisnim i narodnim narativima, dominantan u upotrebi u historijskoj literaturi, ne odgovara ni suštini niti

praksi koja je provođena u pojedinim regijama. Osim što izvorni naziv “devširme” znači prikupljanje i skupljanje, praksa u Bosni pokazuje da je “regrutacija” najprimjereniji termin za ovu praksu na našim prostorima. On u potpunosti odgovara intervalima prikupljanja tokom godine i uzrastu mladića koji su regrutirani. Istina, taj termin korišten je i ranije, samo je ostao u sjeni “danka u krvi” ili izvornog naziva “devširma”. “Danak u krvi” posebno ne odgovara fizičkim karakteristikama regrutiranih mladića.

Putopisna percepcija doprinosila je negativnom pogledu na regrutiranje mladića, fokusirajući se najčešće na narodna osjećanja, roditelje kojima je teško padao rastanak sa sinovima. I pored toga, neki putopisi nude značajne informacije čije ishodište su najvjerovatnije službeni izvori. Ono što se putopisima može prigovoriti jeste fokus na negativne pojave, ponekad neosnovana pretjerivanja i predimenzioniranje zloupotreba o kojima govore i neki osmanski izvori. Zloupotreba je bilo, no one nisu dominantna pojava u devširmi, kako se nekad iz putopisa stječe dojam kao da su one pravila devširme. Cjelokupan proces bio je propisan zakonom (*kanunom*), posebnim aktima (*fermanima*) za svaku provedbu regrutacije i nepostupanje prema njima podlijegalo je sankcijama. Dva zakonska akta, prvi iz vremena sultana Bajezida II (1481–1512), a drugi sultana Ahmeda I (1603–1617), poznatiji kao *Janjičarski zakon*, u detalje pravno reguliraju sva pitanja koja se tiču devširme i janjičarskog korpusa. U drugom slučaju riječ je o “risali” čija namjera je bila propise očito nedovoljno afirmiranog zakona pretočiti u pravni tekst koji će poslužiti u te svrhe, posebno u vrijeme rastućih nepravilosti i transformacija koje su bile na pomolu. Kako god, taj dokument je nazvan zakonom i kao takav služio je kao pravni osnov za izdavanje drugih akata u narednim ciklusima regrutacija.

I pored postojanja zakona, kod svakog narednog ciklusa regrutacije u pokrajine su upućivani posebni fermanni u kojima su se dodatno pojašnjavala neka pitanja. U njima su definirani krajevi, uzrast i druge osobenosti regrutacije, posebno u slučaju promjena te detaljnijeg preciziranja nekih zakonskih odredbi općenitijeg karaktera. Sama činjenica da naredbe (*fermani*) upozoravaju određene nosioce vlasti na svim nivoima: beglerbezi, sandžakbezi, kadije, mutesellimi, spahije, janjičarski serdari, dizdari

tvrđava, age, vojvode (hasova, vakufa), upućuje da su mogući propusti na nekom od tih nivoa i da odgovorni podliježu sankcijama. Iz nekih, istina rijetkih primjera, vidljivo je da su u opstrukciji provođenja regrutacije sudjelovali i lokalni nosioci vlasti, zapovjednici, kadije ili ajani u nekim područjima. Kazne za suprotstavljanje i postupanje protivno zakonu su veoma stroge za sve. Ferman s početka 17. stoljeća (1601) propisuje smrtnu kaznu vješanjem pred vlastitom kućom onome ko opstruira i prikriva regrutaciju. Čini se da su zloupotrebe vremenom rasle, posljedica čega je smaknuće dva visoko rangirana oficira janjičarskog korpusa pri regrutaciji za vrijeme sultana Murata IV (1623–1640).

Još nije precizno odgovoreno u kojim vremenskim razdobljima je vršena regrutacija. Premda su neke putopisne vijesti radikalne (svake godine), većina putopisaca ima umjeren stav, u intervalima od četiri ili pet godina, ovisno od dojmova i vremena u kojem su boravili u Osmanskom Carstvu. Rezultat je to očigledno različite prakse koja se provodila prema potrebama janjičarskog korpusa. Stoga se Uzunčaršilijeva rješenja, na temelju mnoštva osmanskih izvora, svakih sedam godina ili “po potrebi”, doimaju uvjerljiva. Što se Bosne tiče, teško je ustanoviti periodičnost regrutacije, ali se naziru neki vremenski rasponi pet do deset godina. Najkraće razdoblje koje se moglo ustanoviti je četiri godine, iako se naredba iz 1607/8. godine odnosi na kadiluke (Vučitrn, Peć, Prizren) koji administrativno nisu pripadali Bosni.

Prva konkretnija vijest poimenične regrutacije s područja Bosne potječe s kraja 15. stoljeća. Iz sačuvanog fragmenta izvora vidljivo je da je provedena na području dva kadiluka – Mileševo (nahija Polimlje) i Novi (nahije Drobniak i Banjani). Usljed još uvijek niskog stepena prihvatanja islama tada su regrutirani samo mladići nemuslimani (38). Sredinom 16. stoljeća regrutacijom provedenom u regiji Novog Pazara i nekih drugih područja Bosne obuhvaćena su 72 mladića. Većina regrutiranih je s područja kadiluka Novi Pazar (60). Ostalih 12 mladića je s područja drugih kadiluka, koji nisu poimenično istaknuti. Za pretpostaviti je da je ona bila barem nešto šira i da je obuhvaćen veći broj mladića. Regrutacija s početka 17. stoljeća (1604) obuhvatila je znatno širi prostor i ona nam nudi mnogo značajnije informacije o devširmi. Regrutacija je gotovo u potpunosti

ograničena na sandžak Bosna (263) i sandžak Hercegovina (180), neznatno na Zvornik (25) i tek simbolično na Klis (3). Prema sudskim okruzima ili njihovim ispostavama, obaveze regrutacije svedene su na kadiluke: Novi Pazar (98), Saraj(evo) (65), Mostar (54), Brod (39), Čajniče (27), Taslidža (27), Mitrovica (20), Tuzla (19), Imotski (17), Prijepolje (16), Čelebi Pazar (14), Nevesinje (12), Foča (11), Višegrad (11), Tešanj (10), Blagaj (8), Gabela (5), Bogurdelen (3), Ljubinj (3), Olovo (3), Visoko (2), Zvornik (2), Golhisar (1), Gračanica (1), Livno (1), Prozor (1).

Iako se općenito, kada je u pitanju regrutacija, govori o djeci “raje”, veliki broj regruta iz Bosne je gradskog porijekla. Gradovi u kojima je provođena regrutacija su: (Bosanski sandžak) Travnik, Zenica, Čelebi Pazar, Kreševo, Mitrovica, Novi Pazar, Saraj(evo), Tešanj, Visoko, Višegrad; (Hercegovina) Čajniče, Foča, Imotski, Mostar, Nevesinje, Taslidža, Prijepolje i Ljubuški; (Zvornik) Bogurdelen (Šabac), Tuzla, Zvornik. Raspored tereta na seoska naselja između Bosanskog i sandžaka Hercegovina je gotovo pa ujednačen. Regrutacijom su obuhvaćena 104 seoska naselja u Bosni i 105 seoskih naselja u Hercegovini. S obzirom na različite demografske potencijale dvije regije, rezultat govori da je Hercegovina prema ukupnom broju dokumentiranih sela bila opterećenija (15,67% sela), dok je u Bosni to bilo znatno niže (7,22% seoskih naselja). Svako lokalno područje pokazuje izvjesne specifičnosti u pogledu udjela u regrutaciji.

Regrutacija u Bosni se odvijala na način koji odudara od drugih područja Rumelije. Dok je u nekim krajevima 1604. godine trajala u zimu i rano proljeće (januar, februar, mart i april), u Bosni je bila provođena u tromjesečnim ciklusima (februar, maj, august, novembar). Od vremena Bajezida II (1481–1512) zakon je regulirao pitanje uzrasta regrutiranih mladića od 14 do 18 godina. Regrutacija na području Hercegovine (1494) pokazuje da su regruti bili uzrasta 12 do 15 godina, što se vjerovatno dogodilo prije donošenja zakona. Ta praksa je očigledno temeljena na crkvenom poimanju punoljetstva. U kasnijim izvorima vidljivo je da je zakonski okvir poštovan i da su rijetki slučajevi regrutiranja mladića ispod starosne granice od 14 godina, i to najmlađi s 13 godina. I izvori sredinom 16. i početkom 17. stoljeća daju rezultat od 16,8 godina prosječne starosti regruta. Izuzme li se regrutacija s kraja 15. stoljeća, kasniji izvori potvrđuju

pretežno regrutaciju muslimana, uz manji procenat regrutiranja nemuslimana u Bosni. Već sredinom 16. stoljeća muslimani su činili 78% dokumentiranog regrutnog potencijala, dok je taj procenat početkom 17. stoljeća iznosio 87% mladića iz muslimanskih porodica. Regrutiranje nemuslimana ni po čemu se ne razlikuje od muslimana, počev od uzrasta do drugih specifičnosti koje su pratile regrutaciju. Bilo je neznatnih odstupanja od zakonom propisanih normi u pogledu regrutiranja braće ili dvojice mladića iz jednog sela, što je vjerovatno rezultat želje roditelja. U protivnom, na takve pojave bio bi pokrenut spor pred sudom, na koji su roditelji imali pravo, ili na upućivanje žalbe višim instancama, kako je uobičajena praksa kod prekoračenja i odstupanja od zakonom propisanih obaveza. Želja nemuslimana za uvrštavanje u red janjičara prisutna je i u nekim drugim krajevima na području Balkana, ne samo u Bosni.

Više izvora govori da se regrutacija u Bosni pretežno provodila u nekoliko kadiluka, obuhvatajući srednju i istočnu Bosnu te dijelove Hercegovine. Naprijed je istaknuto o kojim kadilucima je riječ na samom početku 17. stoljeća. Dvije decenije kasnije (1622), kada je provođena regrutacija, fermanom su navedeni: Novi Pazar, Taslidža, Foča, Berane, Mostar, Imotski, Bogurdelen. Mnogo je interesantnije da je 1530. Benedikt Kuripešić devširmu ograničio na prostor od Sarajeva do Mitrovice i Zvečana. Slučajno ili ne, to je prostor s kojeg potječe najveći dio regruta Bosanskog sandžaka 1604. godine, ali i u ranije dokumentiranim slučajevima, bilo da se radi o 15. ili sredini 16. stoljeća. I iz sastava sultanske tjelesne garde krajem treće decenije 17. stoljeća evidentna je pretežna ograničenost na identičan prostor.

SUMMARY

The *devşirme* in Bosnia is one of the many unresolved issues of Bosnian and regional history. It “floated” in historiographic representations and in the tone that was provided for it by travelogues and the *Janissary Law* from 1606. As with other questions, the *devşirme* in Bosnia had certain characteristics that made it stand out in comparison to other regions of the Ottoman Empire in which it had been implemented. This was the motive of many historians who attempted to answer the question by identifying the causes that brought about the deviations from the legal norm, which stated that Muslims were exempt from being recruited into the *acemi oğlani* because they were obliged to serve in other various military components, whereas those who were not members of the military class were subject to conscription, in the case of necessity, as an accompanying infantry force.

Historiographic overviews that treated the *devşirme*, usually interpreted it in their own way and in the context of broader issues of the Bosnian past. The written production of Ottoman studies often observed it in the context of the Janissary corps (*Uzunçarşılı*), limited to general regulations about the *devşirme*, and several sources – orders that referred to the recruitment of young men from Bosnia. Recently, historians such as Koyuncu and Yılmaz re-evaluated the issue and limited their research to the problems which concerned the *devşirme* in Bosnia. Gülay Yılmaz treated this issue based on the sources about the territory of Herzegovina and by comparing results achieved for two different periods, the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. Koyuncu focused on the critique of the *Janissary Law* from 1606, trying to respond to the questions of when the practice of recruiting Muslims in Bosnia did begin and whether they accepted it of their own free will or under “compulsion”. The Ottoman studies in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained within the framework of the issues that were imposed by the narrative of the *Janissary Law*.

The phrase “blood tax”, which was put forward by the travelogues and popular narratives, and which dominates the historical literature, does not correspond either to the essence or to the practice in which the *devşirme* was conducted in certain regions. Apart from the fact that the very origin of the term *devşirme* denotes gathering and collecting, the practice in Bosnia shows that “recruitment” is the most appropriate term in these areas. It completely corresponds to the intervals of collecting during the year, as well as to the age of the young men who were recruited. Admittedly, this term was also used previously but it somehow remained in the shadow of the “blood tax” or the original name *devşirme*. “Blood tax” in particular does not tally with the physical characteristics of the recruited youths.

The perception created by the travelogues contributed to the overall negative impression of the recruitment of young men, focusing mostly on the popular sentiments, the parents who found it difficult to deal with being separated from their sons. Nevertheless, some travelogues offer important information which has most probably been sourced from official documentation. The objections that can be directed towards these texts are their overwhelming emphasis of the negative aspects, sometimes even providing unsubstantiated exaggerations and excessive portrayal of the abuses that are even reported by some Ottoman sources. The malpractices did exist, but they were not dominant in *devşirme* as the travelogues claimed, portraying them as if they were a rule of the *devşirme*. The whole procedure was prescribed by law (*kānūn*), special acts (*fermān*) for every implementation of conscription and not following these orders was subject to penalties. Two legal acts, one from the reign of Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512), and the other from the time of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603-1617), known as the *Janissary Law*, regulate in detail all issues that concern the *devşirme* and the Janissary corps. The latter was a “*risala*”, i.e. a treatise that was supposed to turn the regulations of a law, which had obviously not been affirmed well enough, into a legal text that would serve the purpose of its affirmation, especially in the time of growing irregularities and the fast-approaching transformations which seemed imminent. In any case, this document was at least called a law and served as such, and other documents were issued in accordance with it, particularly in the ensuing cycles of recruitment.

Despite the existence of the law, each new cycle of recruitment implied the sending of special *fermāns* which additionally explained certain matters, defined the regions, age and other particularities concerning the *devşirme*, specifically in the case of changes, providing additional clarification of some legal norms, which were sometimes more general in character. The very fact that the orders (*fermāns*) cautioned certain bearers of authority on all levels: the beglerbeys, sancakbeys, kadis, mütesellims, spahis, janissary serdars, the dizdars of the fortresses, agas, voivodes (of hâsses, of waqfs), implies that certain oversights on those levels were possible and that those responsible for them would be subject to penalties. From some, although scarce examples we can also see that in certain areas even some local bearers of authority, “commanders, kadis, ayans”, obstructed the implementation of recruitment. Punishments for obstruction and acting against the law were very severe for all. One *fermān* from the beginning of the seventeenth century (1601) prescribed the death penalty by hanging in front of their own house for anybody who obstructed or covered up the recruitment. It seems that abuses grew with time and, as a consequence, two high ranking officers of the Janissary corps were executed during the recruitment procedure in the time of Sultan Murad IV (r. 1623-1640).

It has not yet been determined with any kind of precision at what intervals was the recruitment conducted. Although some travelogues are rather radical, claiming that it was every year, and most of the authors have a more moderate estimate, stating that youths were recruited every four or five years, depending on their impressions and the time during which they stayed in the Ottoman Empire. This was obviously due to the differing practice, which was implemented according to the necessities of the Janissary corps. Therefore, Uzunçarşılıs solutions, based on many Ottoman sources, which claims that it was every seven years or “according to necessity”, seem the most convincing. As for Bosnia, it is difficult to determine at what intervals was the recruitment performed, but some periods can be discerned and they lasted from five to ten years. The shortest period that could be established was four years, although the order from 1607/08 concerned the *kadılıks* which did not belong to Bosnia in an administrative sense (Vučitrn, Peć, Prizren).

The first concrete piece of information regarding nominal recruitment from the territory of Bosnia comes from the end of the fifteenth century. From the preserved source fragment one can establish that it was implemented on the territory of two *kadılıks*: Mileševo (the *nahiye* of Polimlje) and Novi (the *nahiyes* of Drobnjak and Banjani). Due to the very low percentage of acceptance of Islam, on that occasion only non-Muslim young men were recruited (38 of them). In the mid-sixteenth century, the recruitment which was implemented in the region of Novi Pazar and some other areas of Bosnia managed to gather 72 young men. Most of the recruited were from the territory of the *kadılık* of Novi Pazar (60 of them). The remaining 12 youths were from the territories of other *kadılıks* which were not named. It can be assumed that it was somewhat broader and that it encompassed a larger number of young men. The recruitment from the beginning of the seventeenth century (1604) covered a much wider area and it provides us with a lot of important information about the *devşirme*. Recruitment was almost completely limited to the *sancaks* of Bosnia (263) and Herzegovina (180), slightly including Zvornik (25) and in a symbolic way Klis (3) as well. According to the judicial districts or their branches, the duties of recruitment were specified on the following *kadılıks*: Novi Pazar (98), Saraj(evo) (65), Mostar (54), Brod (39), Čajniče (27), Taslidža (27), Mitrovica (20), Tuzla (19), Imotski (17), Prijepolje (16), Čelebi Pazar (14), Nevesinje (12), Foča (11), Višegrad (11), Tešanj (10), Blagaj (8), Gabela (5), Bogurdelen (3), Ljubinje (3), Olovo (3), Visoko (2), Zvornik (2), Golhisar (1), Gračanica (1), Livno (1), Prozor (1).

Even though, in general terms, when it comes down to recruitment, there is a lot of talk about the children of “reaya”, many recruits from Bosnia came from urban settlements. The towns in which the recruitment was conducted were: (the sancak of Bosnia) Travnik, Zenica, Čelebi Pazar, Kreševo Mitrovica, Novi Pazar, Saraj(evo), Tešanj, Visoko and Višegrad; (Herzegovina) Čajniče, Foča, Imotski, Mostar, Nevesinje, Taslidža, Prijepolje and Ljubuški; (Zvornik) Bogurdelen (Šabac), Tuzla and Zvornik. The distribution of the burden between the villages of the *sancaks* of Bosnia and Herzegovina was almost equal. The recruitment encompassed 104 villages in Bosnia and 105 villages in Herzegovina. Considering the

different demographic circumstances in the two regions, the result shows that Herzegovina, according to the complete number of documented villages, was burdened more (15.67% villages), whereas in Bosnia the number was significantly lower (7.22% villages). Every local area shows certain particularities regarding the proportion in recruitment. The recruitment in Bosnia developed in a way that was different from other regions of Rumelia. While in other parts during 1604 it lasted in winter and early spring (January, February, March and April), in Bosnia it was conducted in three-month cycles (February, May, August, November). Since the reign of Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512), the law regulated the issue of the age of the recruited boys, specifying it to be from 14 to 18 years of age. The recruitment carried out on the territory of Herzegovina in 1494 shows that the recruited young men were from 12 to 15 years old, which implies that this took place before the law was passed. The practice was obviously based on the religious understanding of adulthood. In later sources, it is apparent that this legal framework was respected and that the cases of recruiting young men below the age limit of 14 years old were rare, with the youngest being 13 years old. Sources from the mid-sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century provide us with the average age for recruits as being 16.8 years old. If we exclude the recruitment from the end of the fifteenth century, later sources confirm the predominant recruitment of Muslims, with a smaller percentage of non-Muslim recruits in Bosnia. Already by the mid-sixteenth century Muslims made up 78% of documented recruits, while this percentage at the beginning of the seventeenth century amounted to 87% of youths coming from Muslim families. The recruitment of non-Muslims does not differ in any way to that of Muslims, beginning from the age to all other particularities that the recruitment involved. There were insignificant deviations from the legal norms when brothers were recruited, or two young men from the same village, as per the wish of their parents. Otherwise, in such circumstances, a legal dispute would be initiated as the parents had a right to it, or they would be able to direct a complaint to higher authorities, as was the customary practice in the case of overreaching or deviating from the legal norms. The wish

of non-Muslims to be included in the Janissary corps was also present in some other areas of the Balkans, not only in Bosnia.

Many sources testify that recruitment in Bosnia was mostly implemented in several *kadılıks*, which encompassed Central and Eastern Bosnia, as well as some parts of Herzegovina. We have already stated the *kadılıks* from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Two decades later (1622), when recruitment was conducted, the *fermān* stated it should be carried out on the territories of: Novi Pazar, Taslidža, Foča, Berane, Mostar, Imotski, and Bogurdelen. It is rather interesting that in 1530, Benedikt Kuripešić limited the *devşirme* to the area from Sarajevo to Mitrovica and Zvečan. By coincidence or not, this was the region from which the largest number of recruits were conscripted on the territory of the Sancak of Bosnia in 1604, but from other instances recorded in the fifteenth and mid-sixteenth century as well. It is also evident that the Sultan's personal body guard by the end of the third decade of the seventeenth century was likewise limited to the same area.