

WOMEN IN THE 1528-1530 DETAILED SURVEY OF THE SANJAK OF BOSNIA

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Introduction

The subject of research in this work is Detailed Survey of the Sanjak of Bosnia from 1530 (Tapu defteri, Istanbul BOA TD No. 157). The paper will analyze the entries of women, try to identify them and analyze the contexts in which they appear. Detailer defters (Tahrir Deftersi, Mufassal defteri) are a type of official document of the Ottoman administration that were created as a result of population censuses that were periodically conducted in cities or sandjaks in order to determine the amount of taxes and to clearly know who and to whom is paying that tax. (Öz, 2010: 425-426). ¹Although the tax payers and tax bearers usually were men, this official record, as well as others, also records women. In the following article, cases when women are mentioned in the Detailed Survey of the Sanjak of Bosnia from 1530 will be presented.

Ottoman society recognized men, or males, as the heads of a household, householders, ergo as taxpayers. However, life is unpredictable and for various reasons, e. g. that the head of the house died, went missing etc., and his role had to be taken over by a woman. The policy of the Ottoman Empire was that the members of the reaya were obliged to pay personal taxes that directly depended on their ability to work, their marital status and religion. Muslim personal taxes were *resm-i mujerred* and *resm-i bennak*, while non-Muslims paid personal tax under the name of *ispenja*; widows were obliged to use its reduced version under

1 When writing this paper, the translation of the source into Bosnian language by Medžda Selmanović was used, which, along with the introductory study and editing by Dr. Elma Korić, is part of the publication of the Oriental Institute in Sarajevo for the year 2024.



the name *resm-i bive* (Kasumović, 2021, 47). Since the widows are the most mentioned category of woman, in the following lines, the widows mentioned in the Detailed Survey of the Sanjak of Bosnia from 1530 will be analyzed.

A significant number of examples have been recorded in which it is stated that the former widow's *baštine*² was enjoyed by other people, mostly men, for example the *baštine* of the widow Mara, in the possession of Ivan (fol. 25). These are examples from which we cannot say with certainty whether it was a buying and selling relationship or a new marriage of a former widow, so her new husband takes over hold of the *baštine* from her. Similar examples are the *baštine* of widow Stipaniša, in the possession of Ahmed, son of Radin (fol. 529), the *baštine* of widow Ružica, in the possession of Alađoz, son of Radič (fol. 529), the *baštine* of widow Drivica, in the possession of Mumin, son of Hasan (fol. 862), *baštine* of the widow Milica, in the possession of Mehmed, son of Ahmed (fol. 680), *baštine* of the widow Milja, in the possession of Skender, son of Radonja (fol. 914), *baštine* of the widow Milosava, in the possession of Jusuf, [son of] Alađoz (fol. 914), the *baštine* of the widow Ruža, in the possession of Bayezid, son of Vukašin (fol. 455). These and similar examples have one thing in common: they are *baštine* of widows bearing non-Muslim names that are now in the possession of Muslim males. We cannot give any more info about their relationship, unfortunately. The last one we will list in this section is the *baštine* of the widow Stana, in the possession of Aisha (fol. 809), interesting because it is a widow's *baštine* that was enjoyed by a non-Muslim woman and is now being enjoyed again by a Muslim woman. This is the only identified example of this kind on this *defter*. Unfortunately, we cannot say anything about the relationship between these two women.

An interesting example (fol. 73) is the *baštine* of Vukašin, in the possession of the widow Milahinja, [now] in the possession of Nasuh, Mijasin's son. There are various theories that we can present here, but again we cannot say with certainty that Vukašin is the late husband of the widow Milahinja, nor that Nasuh is her new husband. Another lovely example is the *baštine* of the widow Rada, in the possession of the Radovan's widow (fol. 132), where we see the *baštine* of one widow in the possession of another widow. Unfortunately, the *defter* does not give us any information about the relationship between the two of them, whether they were possibly sisters, mother and daughter, or whether the *baštine* was exchanged through a sale or a similar contract. Examples such as the *baštine* of the widow Katava, in the possession of Lalko (fol. 216), the *baštine* of the widow

2 *Baština* is a term of Slavic origin and refers to larger estates that were mostly owned by non-Muslims in the Balkans. (Emecen, 1992, 135).

Janika, in the possession of Miladin, son of Petev (fol. 118), the baštine of the widow Katalina, in the possession of Vukadin, [with] Dragić (fol. 529), the baštine of the widow Milica, in the possession of Milk, son of Miletina (fol. 440), the baštine of the widow Petrunja, in the possession of Bora, (fol. 486), the baštine of the widow Stana, in the possession of Živko (fol. 216); baštine of the widow Vladisava, in the possession of Milenko, son of Živko (fol. 877); the baštine of the widow Vladka, in the possession of Marko, son of Jokov (fol. 529), the baštine of the widow Katalina, in the possession of Dejan, her son (fol. 529) are similar to the above, the only difference between them is that in the latter both the widow and the current beneficiary of the baštine are both non-Muslims.

Examples such as the baštine of the widow Radina, in the possession of the inhabitants of the village (fol. 90), may lead us to assume that the said widow had no heirs or possibly remarried, and that her property came into the hands of the village. We cite similar examples below: in the village of Vogošta (fol. 647) the estate of Sabina, a widow who died, in the possession of a village residents, the baštine of a widow Milica, in the possession of a village residents (fol. 126), the baštine of a widow Milica, in the possession of a village residenst (fol. 445) and the baštine of the widow Ružica, in the possession of the inhabitants of the village (fol. 506). Only in the case of the widow Sabina is it emphasized that she died and that the baštine passes to the enjoyment of the inhabitants of the village, for the others we cannot claim this, although this is one of the possibilities why they are no longer in their enjoyment.

The next category consists of baštines that were once enjoyed by other people and are now enjoyed by widows, such as the baštine of Hizir, in the possession of the widow Ljubica (fol. 37). There are too many such examples and it would be burdensome for the text of the paper to list them all, but we will list the most interesting ones. In this category, too, there are examples of relationships where the former beneficiary of the baštine was a non-Muslim, and the widow herself was also a non-Muslim, for example (fol. 213) the estate of Borov, in the possession of the widow Alice. We cannot claim that it is a marital relationship because in other places in the defter, in about twenty examples, there is an emphasized spousal relationship: (fol. 362) Radič's baštine, in the possession of the widow Jelica, his wife. It is interesting that in the examples where the spousal relationship is emphasized, both spouses are dominantly non-Muslims, but there is also one example recorded when the spouses are Muslims: (fol. 210) Vukadin's estate, in the possession of Halil, son of Jusuf, in the possession of the widow Kumria, his wife. In other examples, such as (fol. 53) the baštine of Radak, in the possession of the widow Vladuša, the spousal relationship is not indicated and we

can only assume the same. Again, another family relationship is not excluded, as well as possible buying and selling could have been the case. The example of the *baštine* of Radosav, [son] of Radivoje, in the possession of the widow Pavica (fol. 101), is similar, except that in it we have more information about the original beneficiary of the *baštine*, so the name of his father, potentially the father-in-law of the widow Pavica, is also mentioned.

Several examples of *baštines* give us information about descendants of widows, thus, Fatima (Muslim), daughter of the widow Vladova (non-Muslim) enjoys her mother's *baštine* (fol. 765) the *baštine* of Fatima, daughter of the widow Vladova, on the *baštine* of the widow Vladova, her mother; the next example showing transfer of *baštine* from mother to daughter (fol. 566) *baštine* Milić, in the possession of the widow Rada, in the possession of Omča, her daughter, is similar. In the following example, the son Ferhad (Muslim) enjoys the *baštine* of his deceased mother, the widow Jelica (non-Muslim) (fol. 841) in the *baštine* of Ivaniš, in the possession of the widow Jelica, deceased, in the possession of Ferhad, her son. These and similar examples indicate the active acceptance of Islam among the local, non-Muslim population of the Bosnian Sanjak, which will be discussed further in the paper. We will also mention a few examples that testify to the active relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims during the transfer of the right to enjoy the *baštine*: (fol. 739) the *baštine* of Radolin, in the possession of the widow Shahija; (fol. 680) *baštine* of the widow Milica, in the possession of Mehmed, son of Ahmed.

Examples were also found in the *defter* where widows enjoy the *baštine* of their sons, and they are both non-Muslims: (fol. 482) the *baštine* of Jovan, son of Radovan, in the possession of the widow Vladka, his mother; (fol. 437) *baštine* of Radič, son of Milovac, in the possession of the widow Radosava, his mother; (fol. 447) *baštine* of Radašin, in the possession of the widow Stanisava, his mother; (fol. 455) the *baštine* of Jovan, son of Vuk, in the possession of the widow Boda, his mother, was given to the widow; (fol. 591); the village of Orlja (fol. 456) the *baštine* of Stipan, [with] Branoš, in the possession of the widow Divna, his mother, as well as for the sons to enjoy their mother's *baštine* (fol. 542) the *baštine* of Pavli, in the possession of the widow Vladina, in the possession of Kara, her son. When analyzing widow's *baštines*, we also see an example of a sister who is a widow enjoying her brother's *baštine* (fol. 824) the *baštine* of Vladisav Radič, in the possession of the widow Pava, his sister, as well as the widow's daughter enjoying her father's *baštine* (fol. 1014) the *baštine* of Vuček, son of Vukas, in the possession of the widow Olivira, his daughter; a similar example on the same folio is recorded for a daughter who is not indicated to be a widow: the estate of Radosav, [with] Vukić, in the possession of Vladova, his daughter.

In addition to the above-mentioned examples that allow us to look at family relations through the *baštine* enjoyed by widows, in some examples the statements are quite simple and we only have information about the name of the widow who enjoys the *baštine*: the *baštine* of the widow Jaglika (fol. 138); *baštine* of widow Bilje (fol. 144) *baštine* of widow Katalina (fol. 456); *baštine* in the possession of the widow Vladisava (fol. 502); *baštine* of the widow Jeluša (fol. 529); *baštine* of the widow Dujka (fol. 529); *baštine* of the widow Cvita (fol. 529); *baštine* of the widow Alenka (fol. 660); *baštine* of the widow Milica (fol. 878); *baštine* of the widow Marćina (fol. 830). It is interesting to point out examples such as the widow Petruša, on the *baštine* (fol. 130), the widow Olivira, on the *baštine* (fol. 500), the widow Petruša, on the *baštine* (fol. 130) for which no more information about the previous origin of the *baštine* is given.

Several examples emphasize that the widow enjoys her son's *baštine*. Two such are mentioned in the list of the village of Čajković (fol. 138), the *baštine* of Vujič, son of Marko, [now] in the possession of the widow Jaglika, his mother, and the *baštine* of Živko, [son] of Milo, in the possession of the widow Mirada, his mother. The first mentioned Jaglika, or her namesake, was mentioned one more time in the list of the same village, briefly: the *baštine* of the widow Jaglika. The mother-son relationship is also visible in the example of the *baštine* of Vukas, in the possession of the widow Milica, his mother (fol. 158).

In contrast to the examples mentioned above, in which we cannot say anything reliably about the relationship of a man who is listed as the beneficiary of the *baštine* before or after a certain widow, the defter also records examples where it is precisely emphasized that widows enjoy the *baštine* of their husbands: the *baštine* of Ivankov, son of Milkov, in the possession of the widow Janka, his wife (fol. 144). The spousal relationship is emphasized in the example of the *baštine* of Đurašin, son of Vukča, in the possession of the widow Bilja, the wife of Radosav (fol. 144), but the example is also interesting because Bilja enjoys the *baštine* of one man and another man is listed as her husband. Here we can also speculate about possible relationships between these people, that Đurašin is father or first husband of Bilje and that Radosav is her second husband. It is also possible that Radosav is the husband she lost and that she is in another relationship with Đurašin. In the further list of the village of Gornji Štitar (fol. 144), the *baštine* of the widow Bilje is mentioned once more, and here we cannot say whether it is the same woman or her namesake, but there is a possibility that one woman may hold two *baštine*s in the same village.

Among the population of Novi Pazar itself, fourteen widows are listed, and that is so that their names are not listed, but only the names of their husbands. In the

mahalle of Mesjid Ahmed-bey (fol. 109), a total of ten widows are listed, and two are listed as the widow, the wife of tanner Alađoz, and the widow, the wife of tanner Ali. Therefore, their name was not given, but they were listed as someone's wife. We also emphasize that their husbands are not listed typically, first name, father's name, but their occupation is listed. In the next two Mahals of Novi Pazar, the Mahal of Subasha Skender (fol. 110), a widow, the wife of the tanner Mahmud, and in the Mahala of the Mosque of Kapıcıbaşı Hamza-voyvoda (fol. 112), a widow, the wife of Gazi Hasan, a widow, the mother of Oruča, a widow, widowed confectioners (pastacı) wife, Sinan's wife. Here we see two new examples, one widow is not given a name but is introduced as someone's mother while the other widow is further clarified as the wife of a pasta maker, but the pasta maker's name is also not given. In the mahal of Hajrudin's mašjid (fol. 113), a widow, the wife of Sulejman, the widow of Umur's son Jakub, then in the mahal of the mašjid of Skender-čelebi, son of Zaim Jakub (fol. 121), the widow of Alija's husband and the widow of Kasim's husband are listed. Mahala mašjid miner Sinan (fol. 121) lists three unnamed widows: the widow of the Burak, the widow, the wife of Ali, the Ahmed's widow. Two widows are mentioned in the village of Sarajevo (fol. 213), the widow Milašina and the widow Milorada, while the widow Radaka is mentioned in the village of Privor (fol. 537). The last example from the village of Rakovica (fol. 185) is interesting because it mentions the baštine of Vladisav, son of Dobrašin, in the possession of his daughter, the widow of Kemal Pasha. So this widow is not named, but we know the name of her father as well as her late husband. This woman probably belonged to the upper class of the population, because her husband holds the title of Pasha. (Özcan, 2007: 182). It is also interesting that she was married to a prominent member of the Muslim elite and herself came from a non-Muslim father. Most of the widows in this register, whose names are not given but are presented as someone's mothers, wives, daughters, are located in the city, predominantly in Novi Pazar, while only two are listed as residents of rural areas.

Women who are not widows were also recorded as beneficiaries of baštines in the Detailed Survey of the Sanjak of Bosnia from 1530, or at least this was not emphasized. Thus, in the village of Korča, belonging to Sarajevo, among the non-Muslim population, the baštine of Vukić, son of Vukas, in the possession of Šahbana, daughter of Mahmud (fol. 53), in the village of Izbice, belonging to Vrač (fol. 124) the baštine of Radosav, son of Stipan, in the possession of Halima, daughter of Mahmud and the baštine of Michael, in the possession of Ahmed, now in the possession of Halima, daughter of Mahmud are mentioned. Here, one woman enjoys two baštines, and the previous beneficiaries of the baštines are non-Muslims.

As one of the potentially richer women, a member of the elite, given the title of bey (Köprülü, 1992: 11) held by her father, Sejdi Bey's *baştine* is mentioned. It is further said that those are five meadows in the possession of Mrs. Đula, daughter of the deceased Omer-bey, son of Evrenos-bey. The mentioned meadows are in the possession of the mentioned lady with the obligation to pay *resm-i çift*. Now, according to the earlier decision, she processes them and pays *öşr* and *salarya* (fol. 151). So here, Mrs. Đula is fully portrayed as the head of the household, her father's heir, and obliged to pay taxes, *resm-i çift*, as a tax, a land tax that was mostly paid by Muslims (Emecen, 1993: 309-310), as well as *öşr* and salary (Kasumović, 2021: 27-28).

Women who are presented in some other kindred relationship with men, before marriage, are: village Karačić (fol. 471) *baştine* of Barak, son of Mahmud in the possession of Fatima, the sister of the mentioned Mahmud, in Priboj square, (fol. 1014) *baştine* of Lošilje, [son of] Izbuda, in the possession of Vladova, his mother, in the village of Radovlja (fol. 887) *baştine* of Stipan, [son of] Tvrđka, in the possession of Miluča, his mother, village of Babna, Mahala Čikola, *baştine* of Milun, in the possession of Kalemšaha, Mehmed's mother (fol. 542), and two women are marked as ladies - the village of Gradčac (fol. 642) Radonja's *baştine*, owned by Mrs. Džundi; the village of Aksović (fol. 594) the *baştine* of Radoj, [with] Mihosil, in the possession of Mrs. Džanišaha, Barak's wife.

Some males are mentioned as residents on female-owned *baştines*: in the village of Orlja (fol. 730) and the village of Islivna (fol. 738), Skender, son of Juraj, on his mother's *baştine*, and Nasuh, son of Milašin, on his mother's *baştine*, village of Tatunica are recorded as residents on the *baştine* of women. Ferhad, son of Radivoje, on his mother's estate (fol. 509), Višegrad square itself (fol. 158) Dragiša, son of Radonje, on the *baştine* of Ružica, his mother. The transfer of *baştines* into the possession of women also happened from the son to the mother, for example in the village of Bresnica (fol. 482, 483) the *baştine* of Jovan, son of Radovan, in the possession of the widow Vladka, his mother; the *baştine* of Radovan, in the possession of Todora, his mother. It is not known what happened, so the *baştine*, which was originally owned by the son, became the property of the mother. It is possible that the son died or moved away, but without a concrete indication we cannot say with certainty.

Women Enjoying “Çiftlik”³

In addition to *baştines*, women also enjoyed *çiftlik*. In the village of Slatina (fol. 798), the *Çiftlik* of Mehmed and Musa, the sons of Mustafa and Durbaşa-hatun, is recorded. In this example we can see the joint enjoyment of the *çiftlik* by man and a woman, and their relationship is not indicated. We have a little more information about a woman as a *çiftlik* enjoyer on the example of the village of Izbice (fol. 125) *Çiftlik* Ibrahim-čelebija. These are the lands that were left vacant after the non-Muslims Brajan and Radosav, so Ibrahim took them with a 200 akçe deed fee, and paid it. Later, that *çiftlik* was transferred to the miner Ahmed, on the basis of the Kadi hucet. The houses, garden and *çiftlik* that existed on it were given to his wife. But she had the right to the land only with the deed, and 500 akçe of the deed fee was taken from her and handed over to the imperial treasury, and the farm was given to her to use, with the condition that she cultivates it and pays *öşr* and salarye. So, the miner Ahmed was inherited by his wife, but as a completely new owner, she paid the deed fee in order to be able to use the homestead. A similar example was mentioned in the village of Jelaška (fol. 590), the estate of Halid-bey's mother. It is the *baştine* of Beloj in the village of Radičevići, in the Maglaj district. She was under a penalty of 120 akçe. Again, we are talking about a woman head of the household who is a member of the upper class of society, her son has the title of bey. The next example is from the village of Drakčinović (fol. 949) where a lady, a relative of Husein-aga, is mentioned in the context of enjoying *çiftlik* and *mezra*. “The estate of Jusuf, son of Božidar and Ahmed, son of Hamza, from the item Ibrahim, belongs to Sarajevo. It is a *mezra* called Depište, from the farmstead of Mrs. Sultanija, a relative of Husein-aga, in the *nahija* of Bijoska and part of the *baştine* of Bratilje.” It is similar in Visoko, (fol. 930) “The estate of Mrs. Seldžuka, daughter of Mehmed-bey, belongs to Visoko. These are the lands she enjoys in the village of Skugrići and (fol. 919 - 920) “Mrs. Fatima's *çiftlik*, belongs to Visoko, from the Nasuh, sipahi. Now it is enjoyed by her daughters Safija, Muhterem, Hadžija and Gevhera. It is the village of Grabovica in the village of Buci.” Here we are talking not only about the homestead that passed to the enjoyment of a woman, but also in the next generation that homestead continues to be enjoyed by women, her daughters.

We will also mention that in the village of Gradčanica, Aiša, the mother of Mustafa, and her son Mustafa, the son of Mahmud, took upon themselves the obligation of a *hassa* field and two vineyards, with taxes on the deed (fol. 917).

3 *Cifluk* represented a land holding of a certain size within the Ottoman agrarian system. (Inalcik, 1993: 313-314).

Women who Freed Slaves

Defter also records interesting cases of women who freed slaves. This is certainly an area for further research and discussion about how they acquired enough wealth to become “owners” of slaves, as well as the eventual motives that accompanied the release of slaves. In the village of Herčezi (fol. 867), „the Çiftlik of Mehmed and Lutfi, sons of Mustafa and Ilijas, son of Abdullah, belongs to Visoko. These are two farmsteads in the village of Milin. Now it has been established that the aforementioned Mehmed and Lutfi are sipahis and the sons of sipahis, and the aforementioned Ilijas is a freed slave of Mrs. Aiša, and this is how it was determined in the new defter. “We will not enter into a discussion about the çiftlik, its owners, and incidentally we will only emphasize that one of the enjoyers of the çiftlik is a certain Ilijas, the freed slave of Mrs. Aisha. The next example is in the village of Žrnovnica (fol. 684), where the baštine of Milić, in the possession of Ibrahim, a freed slave of Ejna-hatun, is registered in the Defter. According to the qualifier “hatun”, we see that here, as in the case of Aisha, we are talking about a woman who is a member of the upper class of society (Özcan, 1997: 499-500).

Interesting examples of conversions to Islam

Conversions to Islam during the Ottoman period are a question that never ceases to be in the focus of researchers of the history of the Southeastern Balkans. Surely the Detailed Survey of the Sanjak of Bosnia from 1530 will be a significant source that will help to monitor this issue in the area of the aforementioned Sanjak. Here we will highlight only a few examples that include women and from which the dynamics of acceptance of Islam can be seen. For example, in the village of Silje, (fol. 850) the baštine of Davud, son of Gojak, is listed in the possession of Jahja, his son, and Fatima, his wife. So, in this entry in the Defter, three generations of one Gojak family, his son Davud, and Davud’s son Jahja are listed. Here we can trace two generations of Muslims and a grandfather who is a non-Muslim. A Muslim’s wife is also listed with a Muslim name. The next example is in the village of Orahovica, (fol. 607) where the baštine of Mitrova, Vladimir’s wife, in the possession of Timurhan, Vladimir’s son, is listed. So, here we see the married couple Mitrova and Vladimir, non-Muslims, whose son, Timurhan, is a Muslim. Among the soldiers of the village of Tvrdomirić, (fol. 943) the baštine of Bali, son of Vukas, in the possession of Fatima and Kameršaha, his daughters, is mentioned. So here we are talking about grandfather Vukas, a non-Muslim, whose son is Muslim as well as his daughters, Vukas’ granddaughters. Among the soldiers of the village of Pohvalić, (fol. 801) the baštine of Radibrad, [son of] Živka, in the possession of Hadidža and Zejneb, his daughters, is mentioned.

This entry is particularly interesting because we see a non-Muslim man, the son of a non-Muslim, but his daughters are Muslim. It is possible that the father converted to Islam later, so he was not registered as a Muslim, but also that the daughters converted to Islam independently of the father. One rather excellent example is the village of Izenik, belonging to Sarajevo, (fol. 746) *baştines* of Mehmed, son of Radivac, owned by Bilja and Vasilija, his daughters. Here we see a Muslim whose father is non-Muslim but whose daughters are also non-Muslim.

Conclusion

The aim of this work was to show that although men were the householders of the family in the Ottoman Empire and therefore tax payers, information about women is found even in a document such as the Detailed Survey of the Sanjak of Bosnia, which would be expected to mention only men. The analysis showed that women were mentioned most often as widows, but these mentions can be analyzed and it can be seen that there are cases where women are beneficiaries of *baştine* or *çiftlik*, that these properties pass to their enjoyment from husbands, sons, fathers and other family members. Cases were also recorded when the names of widows were not listed, but were entered in the Defter as someone's wife or mother. Nevertheless, several women are presented as full householders who pay taxes just like men, and it is also interesting that some of them acquired so much wealth that they freed slaves. The publication of this source will certainly lead to new analyses, especially comparative ones, both with Defters from the same sanjak but from other periods, as well as with Defters created on other Ottoman sandjaks. It is important to say that through the entries of women in this Defter, we can also follow the interesting dynamics of conversions to Islam and the religious diversity that was present.

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